



CoML SSC meets in Punta Arenas, Chile and travels together to Antarctica

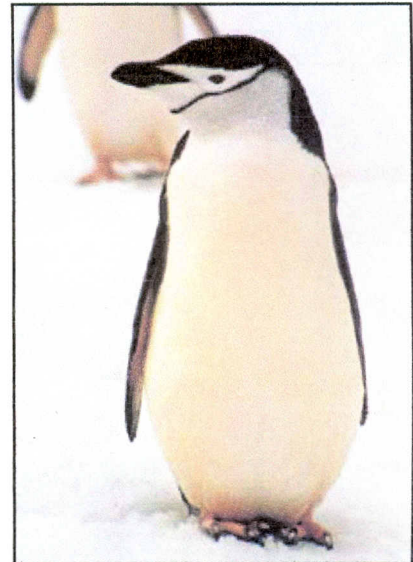
The Census of Marine Life (CoML) Scientific Steering Committee (SSC) met in Punta Arenas, Chile on February 17-18, 2008. Much of the meeting focused on Census legacies, partnerships and strategies for the 2010 synthesis, including the methods and personnel needed to deliver the numerous synthesis products such as books, summary reports and journal articles. The SSC also contemplated the objectives for the upcoming 1-2 May 2008 CoML Regional Synthesis Planning Workshop in Washington, D.C. where the National and Regional Implementation Committees (NRICs) will discuss their contribution of a regional synthesis volume to the 2010 products. Given the location of the SSC meeting, a portion of the discussion focused on polar activities and presentations were made on CoML project-related Antarctic activities as well as Chilean military activities in the Antarctic. The SSC conferred the CoML polar projects CAML (Census of Antarctic Marine Life) and ArcOD (Arctic Ocean Diversity) should integrate data and determine the similarities, and possibly interesting contrasts, of the Arctic and Antarctic systems as a major Census finding for 2010.

While in Punta Arenas, the SSC members toured the Spanish Antarctic Vessel "Las Palmas" and visited the Otway Sound Penguin Colony, home to thousands of Magellan penguins.

The SSC members were also fortunate enough to travel to King George Island, Antarctica for two days where they were guests at the Chilean Eduardo Frei Montalva Air Base. The SSC also visited the Great Wall Base of the People's



The SSC in Antarctica



Chinstrap Penguin, Antarctica

Republic of China, as well as the Russian Bellingshausen and Uruguayan Artigas Antarctic Bases. Guided expeditions took the group to the Chilean Antarctic Institute (INACH), Villa Las Estrellas (home to many of the Chilean military officers and their families) and nearby areas to view Elephant seals and Chinstrap penguins. The trip was a once in a lifetime experience and the SSC members are grateful to all those that played a part in making the trip a success.

The SSC will meet next in Hangzhou, China on 24-25 May 2008. ★

Frequently Asked Questions about the Census of Marine Life #2

Q: How can the Census help me in my research?

A: The Census is developing many technologies, however, one of the most universally useful is the Ocean Biogeographic Information System (OBIS). As national, regional, and international projects gather and expand existing or new datasets they are assembled into OBIS, the CoML data management infrastructure. Since 2000, OBIS has grown to 14 million records of 80,000 species from 232 databases. OBIS maps species occurrences over space and time. Check it out at www.iobis.org.