

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT
DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY, NATURE PROTECTION AND LANDSCAPE

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22 December 2006

Mr Ahmed DjoghlaF
Executive Secretary
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
World Trade Centre
393 St. Jacques Street West, suite 300
Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1N9 Canada

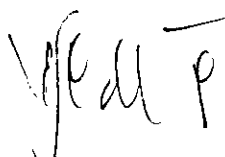
Research activities related to deep seabed genetic resources

Dear Mr. Ahmed DjoghlaF,

Pursuant to the notification No.2006-069 of 23 June 2006 please find enclosed information on Polish research activities related to deep seabed genetic resources.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



Edward Lenart
Deputy Director

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Information on Polish research activities related to deep seabed genetic resources

There are some institutions in Poland which provide genetic resources researches in deep seabed: The Sea Fisheries Institute in Gdynia, The Genetics and Marine Biotechnology Department at the Institute of Oceanology Polish Academy of Science in Gdynia and The Department of Polar Biology and Oceanobiology at the University of Łódź. These institutions have been carrying those researches for many years and have got great experiences in that field.

Since the 1970's the Sea Fisheries Institute (SFI) in Gdynia has been carrying research on fishing resources both in the coastal and international waters. The research regarded fishery activity of the Polish deep-water fishery in the all regions of the Global Ocean, and mainly in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, as well as the Atlantic Sector of the Antarctic Zone. Research realized by the SFI consisted in sampling biological materials, namely fish species exploited by Polish fishery. In case of cruises of SFI's research vessels the research have been expanded by identification of resources, determination of biomass and fish distribution, engineering suitability, and marine environment. In case of monitoring of resources exploited by Polish fishery, the following biological information has been gathered: species composition of the catch, length, weight, sexual maturity, feeding and morphometry of basic fish species. Otolites or scales have been also collected in order to determine fish age. Obtained materials have been developed by the SFI in form of reports to be used by fishery administration and fishing companies. Part of the data has been published.

Recently, the SFI carries the biological and fishery research only in the international waters of the North Atlantic. The research regard: redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) from the Irminger Sea, cod (*Gadus morhua*) from the region of the Fishery Protection Zone around Svalbard and redfish (*Sebastes mentella*) from the international waters of the Norwegian Sea.

Please find enclosed the list of Institute's publication from the last ten years (annex I).

The Genetics and Marine Biotechnology Department at the Institute of Oceanology, Polish Academy of Sciences in Gdynia (the main seat of the Institute is located in Sopot) has been realizing research in population genetics, molecular genetics and genomics of the exploited species of marine organisms for many years. The researches involve blue mussels

(*Mytilus*) in the European coastal waters, as well as economically significant species of marine fish (cod, herring, flatfish). The scientists have studied samples of cod originating from the region of Bear Island, from international waters and from waters under jurisdiction of Great Britain, Denmark and Poland. Samples of herring were taken from the national zone, and samples of flatfish from the national and Danish zones. Enclosed there are short summaries presenting results of the realized research and the list of publications (Annex II). Short information concerning the Laboratory is presented on the Department website.

The Department of Polar Biology and Oceanobiology at the University of Łódź has been for almost 30 years carrying zoological and ecological research in various parts of the Global Ocean, and the most intense research have been realized in the polar seas located beyond the national jurisdiction, namely in the region of Antarctic fiord – Admiralty Bay of King George Island, using the logistic support of “Arctowski” Polish Antarctic Station, opened in 1977. Admiralty Bay, thanks to the scientific activities of Polish, Brazilian, Belgian and German biologists working in that area, is now one of the best recognized Antarctic semi enclosed basins. The Department specializes in precision (down to the species level) identification of marine organisms, mostly diatoms (*Bacillariophyta*) and groups of invertebrates, such as bristleworms (*Polychaeta*), crustaceans (*Crustacea*) and echinoderms (*Echinodermata*). This precision constitutes a foundation for all other kinds of biological research connected with evaluation of biodiversity, and its possible changes resulting from climate changes (greenhouse effect). The scope of its research is documented by the list of publications. The list includes only original scientific papers (excluding abstracts from conference speeches or review articles) (Annex III).

On account of the upcoming International Polar Year 2007-2008 the Department of Polar Biology and Oceanobiology makes efforts to continue the current fauna and ecological research in the Admiralty Bay, in the South Shetland Archipelago. Participating in the grant ordered by the Committee of Polar Research of the Polish Academy of Science in the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, entitled: “Structure, evolution and dynamics of lithosphere, cryosphere and biosphere in the Arctic and Antarctic”, in March and April 2007 some members of the team will take part in ocean and biology research in the Admiralty Bay. The Department plans continuation of this research within the framework of the special grant entitled “Structural and eco-functional aspects of sea bottom complexes in the Western Antarctic Zone, with special attention paid to the Admiralty Bay” that has been recently submitted for evaluation by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education.