



Scenario for the organisation of conferences and symposia

Herman Hummel & Christiaan Hummel

Acknowledgements pictures front page:

Full page: Sea view from São Miguel, Azores,, Portugal (photograph by Herman Hummel)

Smaller inserts: All photos taken at the 51st European Marine Biology Symposium (EMBS) in Rhodes, Greece, by Nicolas Nanev (nnanev.com). Left to right: The second prize winning poster by Nikoletta Digka in the MARS and MBA Poster contest; The Greek trophy winners of the Yellow Submarine competition, together with symposium chair Artemis Nicolaidou; Oral presentation in the main hall by Herman Hummel on the EcoPotential project.

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Fourth edition
December 2016

NIOZ-Yerseke, Netherlands
NIOZ-report, 2016-1

Compiled in the frame of the
European Marine Biology Symposium series



Sponsored by MARS, the European network of Marine Research Institutes and Stations,
and
Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, Yerseke, Netherlands



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(former NIOO-CEMO being the former Delta Institute), Yerseke, the Netherlands
Updated December 2016 by Herman Hummel and Christiaan Hummel

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Introduction

This scenario for the organisation of conferences and symposia is intended to be used as a guideline for the organisation of the European Marine Biology Symposium (EMBS). This symposium already has a long standing history and due to its history, also some important traditions. This scenario consists of three parts:

1. A general introduction on the European Marine Biology Symposium, including a short history of the EMBS and the mission statement, affiliations and traditions
2. A time schedule with relevant information on how to structure the organisation of the EMBS
3. An appendix consisting of check lists, and some examples that may help you to compose letters of acceptance, and to set guidelines for both oral and poster presentations.

Also there are a number of points indicated in appendix 11 which should have been done in a different way at previous symposia. It is highly recommended to deal with the topics in this list.

Note to the 4th version:

The scenario has been further updated in 2016. Additions were mainly made to the history of the EMBS (p. 2), the overview of costs (appendix 1), guidelines for composing posters and oral presentations (with the kind help of Matt Frost of the MBA), and to the practical information and lessons learnt from previous symposia (appendix 11).

The 3rd edition appeared as:

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The 2nd edition appeared as:

Hummel, H. & Hummel, C.A. 2014. Scenario for the organisation of conferences and symposia. 2nd edition. NIOZ-Yerseke, Yerseke, the Netherlands. Monitor Taskforce Publication Series 2014-07, 35 pp.

The 1st edition appeared as:

Hummel, H. & Hummel, C.A. 2014. Scenario for the organisation of conferences and symposia. NIOZ-Yerseke, Yerseke, the Netherlands. Monitor Taskforce Publication Series 2014-3, 32pp.

On the EMBS

History

The history of the European Marine Biology Symposia dates back to 1960 when a series of German marine biological symposia was initiated by Otto Kinne, Director of the Biologische Anstalt Helgoland. These symposia attracted marine scientists from outside Germany and it was realized that European participation should be encouraged. In answer to a survey sent out in 1965, 98% were in favour of a European Marine Biology Symposium being held at regular intervals; 65% were against affiliation to any existing international bodies. As a result the first European Marine Biology Symposium was held on Helgoland in the early autumn of 1966.

For some relaxation it had been proposed to hold a light-hearted competition between the participating nations, but for what prize? It happened that during the summer of 1966 the Beatles had released an album containing the song (written for children!) 'The Yellow Submarine', which had rapidly gone to the top of the charts. When a few of the participants, including John Gray, saw a toy, plastic yellow submarine in a local shop window, they had the inspiration to buy it for the prize. So was born the tradition of the Yellow Submarine competition, which has enlivened every EMBS since then (Ryland 2009. Mar. Ecol. 30: 200–202).

This meeting was such a success that the EMBS is held annually since 1966. To date the EMBS has been organised in about 20 different European countries, some countries were even visited more than once.

The EMBS attracts marine scientists not just from Europe but from all over the world. Topics and organisation are left to the inviting institution. These topics usually reflect the interest of the organising institution. This may restrict the number of participants somewhat but allows for an efficient exchange of ideas and discussions.

At the first meeting in Helgoland an ad hoc Committee was set up consisting of a representative from each European country attending that meeting. Such a Committee meets during each year's Symposium. The purpose of the Committee meeting is to ensure the informal nature of these Symposia and their continuity, and also to give advice on organising institutions when necessary. There is a President, who holds office for 3 years and is supported by a Secretary. The late Harold Barnes of the Dunstaffnage Marine Laboratory, Scotland, was elected the first President.

Mission statement of the EMBS

The general objective of the European Marine Biology Symposia is to advance the science of Marine Biology within Europe. The Symposia promote Marine Biology by means of an annual meeting hosted within a European country, open to all with an interest in the subject. Wide dissemination of the scientific proceedings is by publication of selected refereed papers in a symposium volume.

The aims of the annual symposia are:

- To provide a forum for the presentation of current marine biological research verbally and by posters
- To encourage a wider interest in Marine Biology and an awareness of the need for the proper management of European seas and coasts among politicians, managers, industrialists, environmental planners, and the general public
- To support specialist group-discussions or workshops on themes of particular interest
- To foster inter-European links and cooperation between researchers in Marine Biology

Link of the EMBS to the MARS network

During the last years a stronger link between the EMBS and the MARS network has been established.

Services that the MARS network delivers to the EMBS (for free) are:

- Permanent web page development and maintenance (with the freedom for each organiser to develop own webpages and to position it at their own home-page)
- Promoting participation and increasing interest, through MARS poster awards (of about 100 to 250 €) at each EMBS meeting.

Potentially the MARS network is willing to assist in also other issues that may help the performance of the EMBS, yet it is each year up to the local EMBS Committee to decide on this. These issues could be:

- Archive of earlier symposia webpages
- Development and maintenance of databases on (potentially/earlier) EMBS participating institutes and participants in order to effectively deliver the EMBS related information to the wider community (based on lists of previous symposia, and extension with available Registers of Resources from MARS members), including:
 - o on-line changes of addresses in existing database of (potential) participants
 - o facilitation of electronic registration
- Increasing visibility through announcements (joint outreach) at/in MARS websites, MARS Newsletter (e.g. special EMBS pages), and through its entrances in related networks
- Help in fund raising through its network at international (EC, Unesco) level

The traditions of the EMBS

- **Annual meetings (end of August or September)**
- First conference call (and poster) for the next coming symposium is made public during the preceding meeting
- Topics and organisation are left to the inviting institution. The topics usually reflect the interest of the organising institution.
- **The international EMBS Committee meets during each year's meeting**, and consists of one representative from each European country attending that meeting. The Committee is thus an informal group (and does not consist of elected national delegates), with no official status, whose role is to ensure the continuity of the EMBS.
- The purpose of the Committee meeting is to ensure the continuity, to select the future meetings, and to give advice on organising institutions when necessary.
- There is a President, who holds office for 3 years and is supported by a Secretary.
- Opening and Closure of the Symposium by the EMBS President.
- **No (or only a few) parallel sessions.**
- MARS poster Prize.
- **The Yellow submarine competition (including winners of the past years, photograph (as the one on the right), and the story of the disappearance of the first yellow submarine)**

!!! Note that the Yellow Submarine competition is a long standing tradition at the EMBS, and therefore the organisation of the Yellow Submarine should not be taken lightly !!!



***Time Schedule for the organisation of the European Marine Biology
Symposium***

13 months before the EMBS

- Assignment of tasks:
 - **scientific team**
 - **technical team**
 - **financial/administrative team**
 - **yellow submarine team**
- Preparation of first official announcement
- Design logo for symposium (see appendix)
- Design website (see appendix)
- Design **the first flyer** with the announcement of topics, time and location to be presented at this year's EMBS (thus one EMBS just before yours).
- **Tasks of the scientific team:**
 - symposium topics
 - choosing number of parallel sessions / additional workshops
 - invitation of chairmen, guests, and key-note-speakers
 - instructions for lectures and posters (indication of size of poster)
 - instructions for papers (indication of available publishing time)
 - possibilities of competition for best lecture of junior scientists
 - editing procedure
 - publishing the symposium proceedings
 - indicating editors
 - fund-raising
 - sponsoring
 - advertising
 - send requests to town-hall, district authorities and musea for support, receptions etc.
 - press-reports
- **Tasks of the technical team:**
 - arrangements with conference-hall
 - arrangements with hotels
 - arrangements for food
 - where to get poster-boards
 - symposium-booklet and information in portfolio
 - photographs or video during symposium
 - preparation of overview of papers, posters
 - preparation of conference book (see appendix for contents)
 - preparation of name-boards
 - organisation of receptions and symposium diner
 - preparation and maintenance of the website (see appendix for contents)
 - preparation of the logo (see appendix)

- **Tasks of the financial/administrative team:**
 - overview of costs: prognoses and actual costs (see appendix)
 - possibilities of funds
 - fund raising
 - indication of symposium fee (on basis of expected number of participants, costs and funds)
 - support for students
 - completion of list of potential participants
 - sending announcements (see appendix)
 - registration of participants
 - secretarial support

- **Tasks of the yellow submarine team:**
 - organise yellow submarine competition
 - excursion programme

- Number of members needed for all teams
 - **Scientific team** (4 or 5 p.; including general coordinator)
 - **Technical team** (3 or 4 p.)
 - **Financial and administrative team** (2 or 3 p.)
 - **Yellow Submarine team** (3 to 4 p.)
 - Secretarial support (1 p.)
 - Assistance for registration and information desk during symposium (first 2 days 3 p., later 1 or 2 p)

12 months before the EMBS

All teams:

- Check list of actions of the previous meeting
 - fix responsibilities and tasks
 - fix scientific programme
 - additions and acceptance of final scenario
- Who accepted invitations for chairmen, key-note lectures (send confirmations)
- Overview of potential conference-halls, hotels
- Finalisation of first official announcement
- Finalisation of the website (see appendix for contents)

11 months before the EMBS

All teams:

- Presentation of first official announcement at the previous EMBS symposium
- Website **MUST** be up and running (for contents see appendix)

10 months before the EMBS

Technical team:

- Are conference hall, hotels etc. contacted?
 - check personally in some rooms
- In conference hall all facilities have to be checked:
 - beamer-projection has to be clear and readable in the back of the hall
 - microphone system has to be without echo
 - for questions additional microphones have to be available
 - red/green light indicators near speakers
 - entrances at side and back
 - two additional little halls should be available nearby in the same building for additional workshops
 - possibilities for serving coffee and tea at several places (to prevent long queues)
 - seats near places to drink coffee and tea
 - places for posters have to be nearby main lecture hall, especially on the way from/to the coffee and tea
 - places for posters have to open during the symposium
 - tables for exposition of journals, equipment, etc.
 - key staff should understand and speak English
 - are facilities for lunch in the same building or nearby?
- places for symposium dinner should have “additional value”
 - food has to be more than “just good”
 - service has to be accurate
 - possibilities for vegetarians or other special needs (allergies, etc.)
- space for additional activities (music, speeches, drinks, etc.)
- make deals about prices

Yellow submarine team:

- Places for Yellow Submarine competition have to be spacious when inside a building, preferably the Yellow submarine competition should be held (partly) outside.

9 months before the EMBS

All teams:

- Check lists of actions of previous meetings
- Make an overview of potential participants
- Decide where to organise the symposium dinner and Yellow Submarine competition
- Which organisations reacted positively to organising receptions, guided tours, etc.
 - send confirmations
- Fix hotels, conference hall and place for symposium dinner
- **!!!technical team should make contracts and confirmations!!!**
- Preparation of the second announcement
 - information on hotels
 - information on excursion
- **Criteria for acceptance of abstracts of papers and posters**
 - who will be the referees?
- Additions to scenario
- **Administrative team has to send second announcement**

7 months before the EMBS

Scientific team:

- First selection of papers (abstracts)

5 months before the EMBS

!!DEADLINE for submissions!!

Scientific team:

- Final decision on acceptance of papers (abstracts)
 - Will the abstracts be included in a separate book of abstracts or included in the conference book for participants?

Technical and administrative team:

- Administrative team has to send letter of acceptance or refusal of presentation (see examples in the appendix)
 - In case of rejection: give the possibility for revision of the abstract within two weeks
- Technical team can start to make book of abstracts / conference-book for participants
- Make overview of participants
- Inform hotels on numbers of participants

4 months before the EMBS

All teams:

- Check lists of action of previous meetings
- Additions to scenario
- Choose badges
 - *technical team* has to make badges
- Press-communications
 - Invitations for television / newspaper reporters?
 - Make announcements on social media (youtube, twitter, facebook, etc.)
- Symposium dinner
 - who presents additional programme (music, ...)
 - who will be invited as speakers at the symposium
 - who will be master of ceremonies
 - special guests (Mayor, President of Academy, Director of Institute, other important people)
- Receptions
 - when/where
 - who are contact persons
- Excursions
 - costs
 - who are contact persons
- Yellow submarine
 - which games?
- !!!Contact Journal for publication of symposium proceedings!!!
 - JMBA
- Final set-up for provisional symposium-programme

3 months before the EMBS

Technical and **administrative** team:

- Participants get:
 - confirmation of participation
 - confirmation of payments
 - information on how to reach symposium centre/addresses
 - provisional programme
- Make agreements on transport
 - from airport to hotels
 - during symposium from and to hotels
 - during symposium from and to social events

2 months before the EMBS

All teams:

- Check lists of action of previous meetings
 - check problems and solve
 - check hotel reservations
- Additions to scenario
- Preparation of conference-book
 - for organisation with scheme per hour
 - with allocation of tasks during symposium
 - for participants

Beginning of the last month before the EMBS

Technical team:

- Final draft for conference-book
- Make name-boards for all chairmen and invited (key-note) speakers for the table in the lecture hall

Last month before the EMBS

All teams:

- Check lists of action of previous meetings
 - check for problems, solve problems
- Additions to scenario
- Control conference-books (for participants and for organisation)
 - control allocation of tasks during symposium
 - conference book for participants has to be printed by technical team
 - give order to print conference books
- Make list of materials necessary for symposium (for help see appendix)
- How far is organisation of Yellow Submarine competition
 - what are the games?
- Screening list of participants
 - are badges ready?
- Make instructions for chairmen (keep strict to total period of X minutes lecture plus Y minutes discussion, mostly 10 minutes lecture and 5 minutes discussion)
 - use good (light-)indications to warn speakers
- Make big indications for all rooms in the conference-hall

Last week before the EMBS

All teams:

- Check lists of action of previous meetings
- Check list of participants
 - how many new, who cancelled?
 - who is guiding/accompanying VIPs and invited people
- Check if all materials from the "list of materials necessary for the symposium" are available
- Decide who makes photographs?
- Check social programmes
 - contributions of official organisations, receptions
 - excursions
 - competitions
 - yellow Submarine
 - symposium dinner
 - make a reserved table for VIPS
 - put name-cards on tables for VIPs and other invited people
- Check transport
 - from airport to registration or hotel
 - during symposium from and to hotels
 - during symposium from and to social events
- Additions to scenario and conference book for organisation

!!!In the Appendices is a list of lessons learnt from previous symposia. It is highly recommended to incorporate these learning points!!!

Friday of the last week (2 days until EMBS)

Technical team:

- Collect all materials for symposium (see appendix)
- Consultation of management of conference-hall
- Check all technical supplies at the basis of the conference-programme
- Check details on lunch, coffee-and tea-breaks
- Check (the number of) poster-boards
 - if necessary install additional boards
- Check if cars for transport are ready
- Make a scheme who will drive when from/to where

!!!The registration and information desk has to be 'manned' at all times!!!

!!!Indicate the responsible persons for each item!!!

!!!In the Appendices is a list of lessons learnt from previous symposia. It is highly recommended to incorporate these learning points!!!

!!!!Start of the EMBS!!!!

12.00 Departure to conference-hall

!!!Signs outside the conference-hall have to be placed!!!

Arrange, prepare, control or check the following:

- indicators to all rooms
- poster-boards
- tables for expositions
- coffee/tea-room
- main conference hall
- beamer
- microphones
- additional halls
- registration-desk
- telephone
- xerox-copier
- computers
- information on symposium
- conference-books
- badges
- list of participants
- for consultation:
 - city-guide
 - schedules of city-bus, trains, air-planes
 - beside registration desk and on door of main lecture-hall: put programme of actual day and indicate clearly:
 - last changes (also for next days)
 - additions (also for next days)
 - (emergency) calls

15.00 Last instructions of technical team, consultation of technical staff of conference-hall

15.30 Last instructions of registration desk assistance, the registration/information desk always has to be manned by at least one person

16.00 Start registration of participants

Check:

- names
- payments
- hotel-reservation

Give to participants:

- conference-book
- tickets for lunches
- dinner -ticket for symposium dinner

- ticket for Yellow Submarine
- optional excursions and questionnaire
- info on city (map, musea, cultural events)

!!!ask for manuscripts of oral contribution!!!

!!!instruct that PowerPoint presentation has to be given to the technician before their session starts!!!

!!!indicate place for posters!!!

17.00 Welcome drink and dinner (ice-breaker)

20.00 Closure of registration desk. Check, make and announce necessary additions and changes to the programme.

!!! Already try to select some referees for the first received manuscripts to speed up publication of the proceedings, during the symposium!!!

Week after the EMBS

All teams:

- Final discussion on symposium
- Installing editors for symposium proceedings
- Call for submission of manuscripts for the EMBS Proceedings
- Sending papers for review to referees
- Financial report

Appendices

1. Indication of costs
2. Check-list of "Materials necessary during symposium"
3. Announcements to be made
4. Some guidance for the Conference-book
5. The EMBS Website
6. On the EMBS logo
7. Example of letter of acceptance poster presentation
8. Example of letter of acceptance oral presentation
9. Example of Oral and Poster presentations guidance
10. Guidelines for the proceedings
11. Practical information and lessons learnt from previous symposia

1. Indication of costs

Mind that per location strong differences may occur in costs and financial support (in kind, financial) by mother organisations and/or professional congress organisers. At some locations the local organisers obtained generous additional support from exhibitors, funding organisations, banks, publishers or industry.

The registration fee is normally around 400 € for regular participants (50 or 100 € higher at late registration).

For students (MSc, PhD) the fee is kept as low as possible and normally around 200 € (they have to proof their status). Students normally amount to about 30 to 40 % of the audience.

The number of attendants may help to calculate a break-even budget-calculation. The typical number of participants attending the EMBS fluctuates from about 150 to 250 colleagues. When assuming a minimal number of 150 participants and 5000 Euro additional income, the total budget would be $(100 \cdot 400 + 50 \cdot 200 + 5000) = 55000$ Euro.

For the modest fees the organisers mostly can/do offer a catered lunch for all participants on all days, twice a dinner (including the symposium dinner), and 2 poster sessions (traditionally in the late afternoon and early evening with beer and snacks).

There is no tradition of giving additional support to "poor" colleagues. Fees are always very modest, so support is not needed. Of course local organiser may decide to deviate from this.

The MARS foundation gives 2 or 3 best-poster prizes, the MBA gives also 2 or 3 best-poster prizes (all for young researchers, and very modest of about 100 to 250 Euro).

Elements for calculating the costs are:

- **Expenses**
 - Rent of conference-hall
 - Costs of transport
 - Coffee, tea
 - Xerox-copies
 - Printing costs:
 - Abstract books
 - Proceedings
 - Bags, badges
 - Ice breaker
 - Symposium dinner
 - Excursions
 - Key-note speakers
 - Various costs of organising teams
 - Support for students and others
 - Secretarial assistance
 - Unforeseen
- **Income**
 - Registration
 - Participants
 - Students
 - Funding

A budget based on the previous elements, and assuming 175 participants, may be as follows.

Budget EMBS

COSTS	Main issues	Optional
Renting facilities/halls for lectures/posters	10.000	
Coffee/Lunches/(Symposium)dinner	20.000	
Transport (incl. Excursion)	5.000	
Travel cost/hotels invited participants (key lectures)	7.500	
Administration/paper etc	7.500	
Unforeseen costs	5.000	
SUM	55.000	
Optional costs (possible in case of sufficient sponsors, high number of attendees, or offered by local authorities or university)		
Reception (e.g. ice-breaker)		5.000
Dinner/lunch during Excursion and/or Yellow Submarine)(if separate from Symposium dinner)		5.000
Printing costs proceedings (if not JMBA)		5.000
INCOME		
Early Bird registrations: 50 (300 €)	15000	
Late registrations: 50 (400 €)	20000	
Students: 75 (200 €)	15000	
Sponsors	5000	
SUM	55.000	

2. Check-list of "Materials necessary during symposium"

- EMBS stickers and posters
- Portable computers and printers
- Printing paper
- Official institute paper
- Stamp of institute
- Notebooks
- Pencils
- Stapler
- Paperclips
- Cello tape
- Markers
- Scissors
- Needle, thread, safety-pins and some buttons
- Dictionary French, German, English
- Folder of institute
- Flag of institute
- Lists of publications of institute
- Major publications of institute
- Road indications of symposium
- Indications of rooms and registration/information
- Desk in conference hall
- Cards with indication "reserved"
- Name-boards of chairmen and key-note speakers
- Poster-boards and adhesive materials or pins
- Beamer
- Remote control for computer
- Mouse
- Clocks and indicators for end of lecture-period
- List of participants
 - on memory stick
 - on paper
 - with indications who paid or has to pay or is invited
 - with open table to indicate excursions, ore other remarks
- Badges (both named and blank)
- Final programme (conference-book)
- Conference-book for organisation
- All original registrations and abstracts
- Money for change, payments and refunds
- Book of receipts
- Tickets for lunches, dinner, symposium dinner, excursions, receptions
- Photo-camera / video-camera
- Maps of city
- Lists of hotels
- Railway-, bus-, and metro-guides
- Tickets for bus and metro

3. Announcements to be made

- Topics
- Organising Institute
- Location
- Language
- Address of symposium secretariat
 - telephone number
 - fax number
 - email addresses
- Deadlines
- Fee and way to pay (bank transfer, credit card, cash)
- Possibilities of return of fee
- Reduced fee for students: only when showing student card and or signed declaration of director / head of faculty
- Student-fee is without proceedings
- Where the symposium proceedings will be published / editing procedure
- Advise on Hotels including telephone number, fax number, email address
- Prices of lunches, dinners
- Social events
- Instructions for posters (indication of size of poster)
- Instructions for oral presentation (format, duration)
- Instructions for papers (in English)
- Possibilities of competition for best lecture and poster of young scientists
- Second circular will be sent only to those who reacted to the first announcement
- In second announcement also short programme and key-note speakers

4. Some guidance for the Conference-book

Indicate in the Conference book:

- Manuscripts can be submitted from the first day of the symposium.
- Manuscripts can be refereed during the symposium
- Volunteers for reviewing are requested to report at the registration/information-desk
- Transport from and to reception, symposium dinner, Yellow Submarine is organised by the EMBS. Also indicate place of departure!!
- Symposium fee includes , and does not include
- Sponsors
- List of expositions
- Additional arrangements for a longer stay cannot be arranged through the EMBS, they have to be arranged at the hotel and paid directly to them.

5. The EMBS Website

The local website could include the following features (to be shown/linked also at/to the general website):

- !!: Web page locatable by a Google search 12 months prior to meeting.
- !!: Eventual create a Facebook site
- Date of the EMBS
 - !!: Meeting timetable to be available 3 months prior to meeting
- Conference themes
 - !!: Themes advertised 10 months in advance
- Registration
 - !!: Easy online booking system using debit and credit cards/paypal/official purchase orders to ensure secure and rapid transfer of funds in ONE step as part of registration
- Fees
 - !!: Reduced fees for students
 - !!: Fees for conference dinner should not be excessive otherwise students cannot afford this, and preferably included in the symposium fee.
- Invited speakers
 - !!: Key note speakers to be advertised as soon as they are confirmed
- Abstract submission
- Proceedings
 - !!: Journal of publication is in principle the JMBA (Journal of Marine Biological Association), and can be indicated from the first announcements
 - !!: Submission and publication schedule can be found in Appendix 10
- Accommodation
 - !!: Cheap accommodation for students
- Travel arrangements
- Social programme
- General information
- About the organising institution
- Contact
- Awards (normally the MARS foundation funds 3 poster awards, and the MBA also 3 poster awards, ranging from 100 to 250 Euro)

6. On the EMBS logo

The “original” logo originates from the Portuguese EMBS event in Aveiro during 2003. The EMBS committee at that time agreed that the logo used in Aveiro would be the basis for further symposia**.

The main features of the logo from 2003 should remain the same. However, although the colour scheme in the original is also blue and white, in later logos they used the “negative” colours, as you can see below.

The main features, such as the colours and the fonts, must remain the same while small adaptations can be made by the organisers of each Symposium.



EMBS 2003; Aveiro, Portugal EMBS 2005; Vienna, Austria EMBS 2010; Edinburg, UK

** : Minutes of the Committee Meeting 2003, 38th European Marine Biology Symposium, Aveiro, Portugal,
- Issue 8. The logo prepared for the present Symposium met the approval of the Committee. It was, thus, adopted as the EMBS logo. The main features, such as the colours and the fonts, must remain the same while small adaptations can be made by the organisers of each Symposium.

7. Example of letter of acceptance poster presentation

Dear Christiaan Hummel,

I am happy to inform you that your abstract ” Changes in the fish populations of the Eastern Scheldt due to changes of the tidal regime ” has been accepted for poster presentation in Theme 4: General Marine Biology at the The 47th European Marine Biology Symposium, Arendal, Norway, 3 – 7 September 2012 (<http://www.imr.no/embs/en>). If you accept this offer, please respond to me as soon as possible, and not later than 15 May 2012.

If you need accommodation during your stay in Arendal, I recommend that you register and pay the registration fee and accommodation cost (Hove Campus) as early as possible, due to limited accommodation capacity. The hotel reservation will only be valid after payment of the registration fee.

Yours sincerely

Erlend Moksness

8. Example of letter of acceptance oral presentation

Dear Christiaan A. Hummel,

I am happy to inform you that your abstract "Changes in the fish populations of the Eastern Scheldt due to changes of the tidal regime" has been accepted for oral presentation in Theme 4: General Marine Biology at the The 47th European Marine Biology Symposium, Arendal, Norway, 3 – 7 September 2012 (<http://www.imr.no/embs/en>). If you accept this offer, please respond to me as soon as possible, and not later than 15 May 2012.

If you need accommodation during your stay in Arendal, I recommend that you register and pay the registration fee and accommodation cost (Hove Campus) as early as possible, due to limited accommodation capacity. The hotel reservation will only be valid after payment of the registration fee.

Yours sincerely

Erlend Moksness

9. Guidelines for composing Oral and Poster presentations

Guidance for giving an oral presentation

Participants giving oral presentations are requested to read the instructions and information below.

Format and duration of presentations:

Visual aids for oral presentations must be in PowerPoint format. No other visual aid equipment will be provided.

Oral presentations will be a maximum of 20 minutes in duration including time for introduction and discussion, except for keynote lectures at the start of each theme, which will be 30 or 45 minutes

NB. Speakers are encouraged to talk for less than the time specified above to allow time for questions, and speakers should note that under no circumstances will they be allowed to exceed the maximum time given. Speakers will be signalled when they have 5 minutes remaining.

Award for oral presentations

Criteria for award-winning Oral Presentations (by Dr. Matt Frost, MBA, Plymouth, UK):

- 1) Clear slides: people tend to fill slides with text you haven't time to read, figures you can't see etc. There is no point doing this.
- 2) Not reading the slides: you should talk 'around' the slide
- 3) Tell a clear story: The conclusion should clearly address the title/question.
- 4) Clear presentation: eye contact and clear speaking. Enthusiasm can always be conveyed.
- 5) Timing: there is simply no excuse for having to rush your last 7 slides because you mistimed it and put too much information in.
- 6) Appropriate amount of content: really think about the key point(s) to get across.
- 7) Appreciation of audience: you don't want to be explaining the concept of tides or basic ecology to an audience of marine biologists. However, the opposite is far more common i.e. people assume everyone knows what all their acronyms stand for, how to interpret their statistical outputs, what their genomic data outputs mean etc.. Giving 20 seconds background to your species/habitat or explaining an MDS plot is really useful.

Guidance for Posters

Maximum poster size is: 100 cm x 70 cm (height and width) (A0 format)

We encourage participants to mount the poster during the first day in the poster room, and to leave them till the last day.

Award for Poster presentations

An award will be given to the best student poster presentations (MARS and MBA awards)

Criteria for award-winning Poster Presentations (by Prof.Dr. Herman Hummel & Christiaan Hummel MSc, NIOZ, Yerseke, NL):

- 1) Easy to understand message, with a logic order
- 2) Innovative, not too descriptive, content (in crisp and clear short texts)
- 2) Eye-catching layout (yet consistent use of colors and not too fuzzy and sharp)
- 3) An "over-the-shoulders-readable" text (sufficient big letters to be read at some distance)
- 4) NOT a "complete publication" on the poster, and NO references to literature
- 5) Proper subscripts to easy understandable figures and diagrams
- 6) Photograph of the author present at the conference

10. Guidelines for the proceedings

Journal of publication for the EMBS Proceedings is in principle the JMBA (Journal of the Marine Biological Association), and can be indicated from the first announcements.

Before the conference the possibility of publication is announced at the website in e-mails, including some guidelines so that potential authors know how manuscripts will be handled, e.g.

- c) Submission of manuscripts can be based on oral as well as poster contributions. Reviews are welcomed. The quality of the manuscript is decisive.
- a) All papers will be refereed according to JMBA quality.
- b) Papers can be submitted via the Scholar One system and follow the normal review process.
- d) The Guest Editor(s), associated to EMBS, can make at the EMBS meeting (for those who wish so) a “pre-review” of manuscripts before submission.
- e) Publication is aimed for within one year from submission, in order to have the special EMBS issue ready just before the next year’s EMBS.

After the conference a message on the following procedure can be published at the website and sent by e-mail to all conference participants:

- a) submission at “<http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jmba>” through “Scholar one”
- b) deadline submission: 30 October (or 15 November)
- c) deadline for reviewers: 31 December
- d) deadline submission revisions: 31 January
- e) deadline review of revisions: 30 February
- f) March: all manuscripts to Editor in chief
- g) April-June: Check grammar, style; Proofs
- h) August: Publication

11. Practical information and lessons learnt from previous symposia

The time of the conference should ideally be late September, although it was noted that August was possible or even beginning October.

To continue the long-standing traditions of the EMBS it is not advised to hire an external bureau for the organisation for the conference. External bureaus often use a “one size fits all” whereby the unique features of the EMBS are lost against higher prizes for participants.

The typical length of the EMBS is 5 days, starting around lunch at first day (mostly Monday) and ending with lunch at last day (mostly Friday), allowing participants to arrive at the morning of the first day and to leave in the afternoon of the last day. Yet, sometimes the symposium starts with an ice-breaker and snacks at the (Sunday) evening before and the lectures begin on the first day around 10 h (however, a start in the weekend is not preferred).

Normally the announcement of topics, time and location (including a flyer) of the next EMBS is launched at the EMBS just before.

For the EMBS a logo is used that can be slightly adapted by the local organisers (see Appendix 6).

The typical number of participants attending the EMBS fluctuates from about 150 to 250 colleagues.

The MARS secretariat can eventually provide a database on earlier participants

Halfway (mostly third day) in the afternoon a short excursion along the environment is organised, eventually together with the so-called Yellow Submarine Competition, i.e. a short competition full of "marine games" between country-teams, mostly followed by the Symposium Dinner in the evening.

For the excursions care might be taken to make a connection to the marine biological character of the EMBS, although further characteristic aspects of the (environment of the) location may receive equal attention.

The overall cost should be determined taking affordability into account, especially for students (encourage a wide participation) (see further for costs also Appendix 1).

Therefore:

- the Conference Fee should include the Conference Dinner and the EMBS Excursion (to encourage full participation, especially for students; and in case of a separate fee for the Conference Dinner it should not be excessive otherwise students cannot afford this),.
- the attendance of students as well as retired scientists can be promoted by reduced fees for these categories of participants.
- Package deals with hotels (if such cannot be omitted) should be such that affordability is taken care of (prizes of hotel rooms should remain very modest).

Having lunch included in the symposium fee, and being provided on-site, is much better for networking.

Acceptance of abstracts for oral or poster presentation should be known before the registration deadline (which is a more honest approach towards the participants, and it prevents unwanted withdrawals).

Key-note speakers should be urged to publish their key-notes in the proceedings. The organizers should make this clear when inviting keynote speakers.

There is a MoU between the EMBS and the JMBA journal. Proceedings can thus appear in special volumes of the JMBA (following regular refereeing; for that special volume a guest editor is chosen from the local organisation). Proceedings are published within 1 year.

Submission of manuscripts is open for both poster and oral presenters. The key is the quality of the submitted papers. In order to guarantee the timeliness of the proceedings, the manuscript should be submitted at the conference.

The book of abstracts should be organized in alphabetical order.

Indicate the affiliation of speakers in the programme (incl. institute, city, country).

A list of participants and updates of the programme should be mounted to the door of the lecture hall(s). A copy of the list of participants should be available through internet and at the registration desk.

Inform chairpersons (on the spot) in time (before a session starts) on changes in the programme.

Poster sessions should be organised in two (separate) sessions. First a session for the odd-numbered posters and a next session for the even-numbered posters. This will allow also those who present a poster to visit the other posters. In addition, posters could be colour-marked by themes in order to facilitate the spread of information.

Leave the posters during the full period of the symposium on the billboards, preferably nearby the coffee break facilities, to allow for an optimal transfer of ideas.

For an optimal transfer of (scientific) ideas it is advised to avoid parallel sessions. It is EMBS tradition to have only one session at the same time.

Similarly, back to back meetings with the EMBS are also not advised, since (part of) the audience may become distracted towards the other meeting.

Serve during the poster sessions some drinks and food/snacks, in order to promote a strong attendance during the poster sessions.

In order to allow a timely presentation of the Poster and Oral Presentation Awards (now by MARS and MBA, respectively) no student presentations should be planned for the last day (experience shows that several prize winners already left the conference before the closing session).

The list of current EMBS Committee delegates (i.e. those delegates of the last 3 years being present at the current EMBS) should be visible near the registration desk in order to promote discussions between committee delegates and symposium participants on relevant issues (and to engage new delegates for countries not represented).

There could be separate days for industry, i.e. topics of interest to end-users and stakeholders might be better clustered (and announced) in order to increase their participation.

The locations to be chosen for the future EMBS should be preferably geographically accessible to minimise travel time/costs.

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The mission of NIOZ is to gain and communicate scientific knowledge on seas and oceans for a better understanding and sustainability of our planet, to manage the national facilities for sea research and to support research and education in the Netherlands and in Europe.

