

Part I

REPORTS, REVIEW, AND PUBLICATIONS

REPORT OF THE CALCOFI COMMITTEE FOR 1983

CalCOFI continued to evolve to new levels during the last year. The CalCOFI Committee, during a two-day retreat to define its goals, agreed that the mission of CalCOFI was to "develop a knowledge of the living marine resources and their environment in the waters off the Californias, i.e., to understand the physical and chemical ocean environment and how it changes with time; to determine productivity of the ecosystem; to make information on the biological and physical features of California waters readily available in timely fashion (e.g., publications, conferences, data bases). The ultimate goal is to understand and predict the fluctuations in marine populations and to provide the basis for wise use of resources."

Toward the above goals, several opportunities were investigated. The Committee began to consider accepting other academic or scientific institutions into CalCOFI. The Committee also received suggestions for a "CalCOFI-type" investigation of the nearshore areas in an attempt to solve some of the problems related to inshore resources. Also, a new five-year interagency CalCOFI agreement was drafted to replace the current one, which will expire in 1984. The Committee traveled to Mexico City in February to meet with representatives of Instituto Nacional de Pesca to discuss mutual needs and develop a cooperative agreement. We are optimistic that CalCOFI's scope will continue to expand in the coming months.

The 1983 CalCOFI Conference was held in October at ISOMATA in Idyllwild, California, and was attended by 137 scientists from four countries, representing twenty research institutions and two industries. A symposium entitled "Mesoscale Patterns and Processes" was convened by John McGowan. Fifty research papers and ten posters were presented. A minisymposium of papers relating to El Niño was chaired by George Hemingway.

The El Niño noted in last year's report has been watched and studied carefully in the waters off California. By October 1982, anomalously high coastal sea levels, high sea-surface temperatures, and enhanced inshore poleward flow of the California Countercurrent were being reported from Baja California to British Columbia. By December 1982 even the Gulf of Alaska was being affected. It was clear that a major El Niño event, at least as strong as that of 1957-58, was in progress in the California Current. The work of scientists aboard R/V *Townsend Cromwell* in February 1983 revealed extreme El Niño conditions off southern California. Nine transects off southern California were carried out during the remainder of the year by Scripps's Marine Life Research Group aboard R/V *Ellen B. Scripps* and R/V *New Horizon*, with additional support from the Office of Naval Research and the California Sea Grant College Program. Five other cruises off California were conducted by the Southwest Fisheries Center, La Jolla. Physical, chemical, and biological sampling was done on all these cruises. All the data, when compared with the appropriate long-term monthly CalCOFI mean, confirmed that the 1982-83 event surpassed the previous record holder, the 1957-58 event, in terms of its effects on the California Current. These effects are still seen in data taken during the 1984 CalCOFI work at sea.

Once again Julie Olfe was managing editor for *CalCOFI Reports*. The Committee would like to thank her for her continuing excellent work.

The CalCOFI Committee:
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