

# One stop-shop for seamount managers and researchers: Launch of new SeamountsOnline portal

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Seamounts Online will provide new search tools to help deep-sea researchers and managers identify biological communities that live on seamounts. Credit: CenSeam/NIWA, 2009

A free online portal is providing deep-sea researchers and managers with new tools for finding and accessing information on the biological communities that live on seamounts (undersea mountains), facilitating improved management of seamount resources, and conservation of seamount habitat.

Since 2005, SeamountsOnline (<http://seamounts.sdsc.edu/>) has been collecting data on species that have been recorded from seamounts all over world, and making data available through the online [portal](#). Now,

through a partnership between the San Diego Supercomputer Center (<http://www.sdsc.edu/>) and the Global Census of Marine Life on Seamounts (CenSeam; <http://censeam.niwa.co.nz>), the portal has been expanded to include new spatial searching tools.

With its increased usability and practical applications the new SeamountsOnline interface will be demonstrated at the upcoming Seamounts '09 meeting, an international workshop for seamount specialists, from March 19-21st at [Scripps Institution of Oceanography](#), La Jolla, CA. [New search tools](#) will be showcased which include users being able to generate taxonomic trees; and seamount experts will have the opportunity to road test SeamountsOnline for themselves. Through a map interface, users are able to select seamounts of interest, or see the distribution of taxa globally. Information can be searched by management boundaries, such as Exclusive Economic Zones, and biogeographic regions, such as Longhurst Provinces, and seamount summit depth - an important criterion for planning future expeditions or assessing seamounts within fishable depths.

Says portal manager Dr Karen Stocks:

"To understand the big picture for seamounts and their role in the biology of the ocean, you simply have to look across results from the many different studies being done globally. SeamountsOnline is developing the first one-stop shop for data on the biology of seamounts - a place where researchers and managers can find the information they need, and where international scientists can share what they know."

Valuable expedition data from seamounts have been published in many papers and reports, and in the data collections of multiple natural history museums and research institutions. These data are often difficult to find, and frequently only available in print form. SeamountsOnline is bringing this data together for the first time in one convenient, easily searchable

web-based source, ultimately enabling researchers, managers, and conservationists alike to obtain a greater understanding of seamount ecosystems.

Source: Census of Marine Life

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