

13.7 Tuning of Student Dissemination Network

The Student Association Stakeholder Group continues to build a pan-European and worldwide network of students within the Aqua-TNET domain of aquaculture, fisheries research and aquatic resource management. Building upon already existing networks and groups, WP13 makes use of a variety of communication channels and means to reach the aspired target group. As summarized in deliverable WP13.4 “Development of Student Dissemination Network”, these activities include newsletters, communications and social networks.

Based on the preliminary experience with e-mail-based communications and social networks, as well as feedback given by community members, it is the WP13 members’ opinion that the target group of young people under the age of 30 and especially students can be reached in a very efficient and sustainable way. WP13 identified the following areas of activity as most auspicious to further tune the student dissemination network.

a) Social networks

Social networks on the internet are an accepted and accessible tool for communication and networking among students and young people. Especially facebook (www.facebook.com) is frequently used and offers a number of easy to use features to facilitate community building and communication. WP13 (represented by the EAS-SG) started an open-to-all facebook group (European Aquaculture Society Student Group, <http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=39637154114>) with currently 322 members (March 2010).

Albeit the formidable number of group members and the apparent value for uni-directional dissemination and flow of information, it is WP13’s believe that this group stays behind its possibilities as an interactive, professional community. WP13 will therefore continue developing a pro-actively administrated network of members sharing the willingness to actively participate and contribute to the community. In this sense, it is WP13 main task to further improve the target group related stimulation and to directly approach members with their specific needs. WP13 already started up (and will continue to do so) professional discussion areas related to “hot topics” in the domain. Based on the community member profiles, experts and moderators can be raised to keep interdisciplinary discussions going.

b) Inclusive range of member target group:

The members of the community should represent the full scope of the project domain. This diversity will attract members to cross-link their professional disciplines and make contacts in “unusual neighborhoods”.

WP13 approached existing networks (e.g. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Meeresforschung, DGM, www.meeresforschung.de, Germany; Studievereniging "De Veetelers" Aquarius, www.veetelers.nl, Netherlands; SARNISSA, Sustainable Aquaculture Research Networks for Sub Saharan Africa, www.sarnissa.org) and built cooperation in distributing information and help community building.