Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO)
Report to SCOR Annual General Meeting 2024

1. Introduction

POGO was established in 1999 by a group of directors of marine research institutions who met to discuss ways in which they could work together more effectively in support of global oceanography, and in particular ocean observations. Members value POGO as a forum in which they can meet their peer-directors at least annually, in well-attended meetings, to discuss matters of common interest. Currently, POGO has 56 members in 32 countries.

POGO's vision is to have by 2030, world-wide cooperation for a sustainable, state-of-the-art global ocean observing system that serves the needs of science and society.

POGO's mission is to:

1. Lead innovation and development of the crucial components of the ocean observing system.
2. Identify and contribute to the development of the key skills, capabilities and capacities needed to achieve the vision.
3. Work with governments, foundations and industry, to articulate the benefits to society and required funding to build and sustain the system.

More information on POGO can be found at www.pogo-ocean.org.

2. Collaboration with SCOR

SCOR is the leading international organisation in the marine science arena, and POGO has always enjoyed good relations with it. Examples of joint activities include the following:

- POGO runs jointly with SCOR a Fellowship programme that enables early-career scientists from developing countries to study for up to three months in a major oceanographic institution of their choice. The programme is now in its 24th year, and a total of 200 fellowships have been awarded to date (see section 2.1).
- SCOR also runs a Visiting Professorship modelled on the POGO one, and on several occasions the two programmes have complemented one another (for example, in Southern Africa).
- POGO and SCOR have collaborated in assessing capacity development in marine sciences at the global level and coordinate their respective capacity-development programmes. This was conducted initially through a series of workshops convened and funded by SCOR and, since 2015, SCOR and POGO Secretariats have worked on impact evaluation questionnaires sent to past trainees and trainers of their respective and joint programmes. They have analysed the data obtained and published the results in a joint article in *Oceanography* on the SCOR and POGO visiting scientist programmes. A complement to this article is currently being written and will be submitted to the forthcoming Special Issue "A Vision for Capacity Sharing in the Ocean Sciences" of Oceanography, under Topic 2, "Capacity Building and Capacity Sharing Programs: Examples and Best Practices".

- In 2022, SCOR along with POGO, the International Oceanographic Data Exchange (IODE) of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, and the International Science Council (ISC) organised a UN Ocean Conference virtual side event on Developing the capacity we need for the ocean we want.
- POGO and SCOR sponsored the participation of early career ocean professionals in the Trends, Reflections, Evolution, and Visions in Ocean Research (TREVOR) Symposium and in the preceding in-person component of the training 'Satellite based tools for investigating aquatic ecosystems', both held at Plymouth Marine Laboratory (UK), between 7 and 11 August 2023.
- Both POGO and SCOR have supported the Global Alliance of Continuous Plankton Recorder Surveys (GACS). In 2019, POGO provided support for a Workshop on "eDNA Tools for the CPR Survey" and also for training 2 scientists (from South Africa and Brazil) on "Continuous Plankton Recorder silk analysis methods, from cutting the silk to statistical data analysis and interpretation". Both events were held in Australia in Dec 2019.
- POGO contributed to the establishment, and continues to support the development of the SCOR-SCAR Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS). POGO provided funding to past (OASIIS workshop, held in Germany in 2017) and recent initiatives, such as the first SOOS Symposium, held this past August in Australia. POGO (and SCOR) sponsorship was applied to support participation of early career researchers from developing countries at the Symposium held in August 2023 (see here).
- SCOR established, jointly with POGO, the International Quiet Ocean Experiment (IQOE), a programme aimed at the acoustic background in the ocean, including its anthropogenic and natural components. POGO funded a Working Group to support the IQOE, which was instrumental in getting an Acoustic Essential Ocean Variable (EOV) accepted by GOOS, and the Ocean Sound EOV Implementation Plan can be found at https://zenodo.org/records/10067187. POGO encouraged its members to consider hosting an International Project Office for the IQOE programme, which led to the Alfred Wegener Institute recruiting 2 data managers to support IQOE and its Data Working Group in 2019/20. IQOE supports the Global Library of Underwater Biological Sounds (GLUBS) and gathers publications and metadata for a Global Hydrophone Network. In addition, IQOE has promoted several initiatives such as virtual workshops, a Working Group on Data Management and Access, and a Task Team on low-cost acoustic recorders for citizen science/educational purposes. This year, POGO has approved funding for a working group on Development of a low-cost hydrophone for research, education and community science. More information on IQOE can be found at https://www.iqoe.org/.

For more information on POGO funded initiatives, visit https://pogo-ocean.org/innovation-in-ocean-observing/activities/. For a summary on POGO activities in 2023, please refer to our latest Annual Report.

2.1. POGO-SCOR Fellowship Programme

This programme, co-funded by POGO and SCOR and administered by the POGO Secretariat, is designed to promote training and capacity development leading towards a global observation scheme for the ocean. The Programme has been a success for 24 years, with 200 fellowships awarded since 2001 (Figure 1).

The fellowship programme is open to scientists, technicians, postgraduate students (preferably of PhD level) and post-doctoral fellows of developing countries and countries with economies in transition and

involved in oceanographic work. The main purpose of the programme is to advance sustained ocean observations and their applications by supporting training in oceanographic observations. Selected fellows are offered the opportunity to visit another oceanographic centre for a short period (1 to 3 months) for training on any aspect of oceanographic observations, analyses, and interpretation.

The POGO-SCOR Visiting Fellowship receives an average of 45 applications every year. The Selection Committee, consisting of 1-2 members of the Secretariat, 1-2 representatives of the SCOR Secretariat and Capacity Development Committee, and 1-2 additional/independent reviewers (usually former host supervisors), evaluates all valid applications considering the quality of the application and applicant CV, relevance of the application to the POGO & SCOR priority areas, and evidence that the training will lead to capacity-building with potential lasting impact on regional observations. The highest-scored applicants are selected according to the budget available, with consideration given to gender and geographical balance, as well as occasionally other factors such as whether the candidate has received POGO or SCOR funding previously.

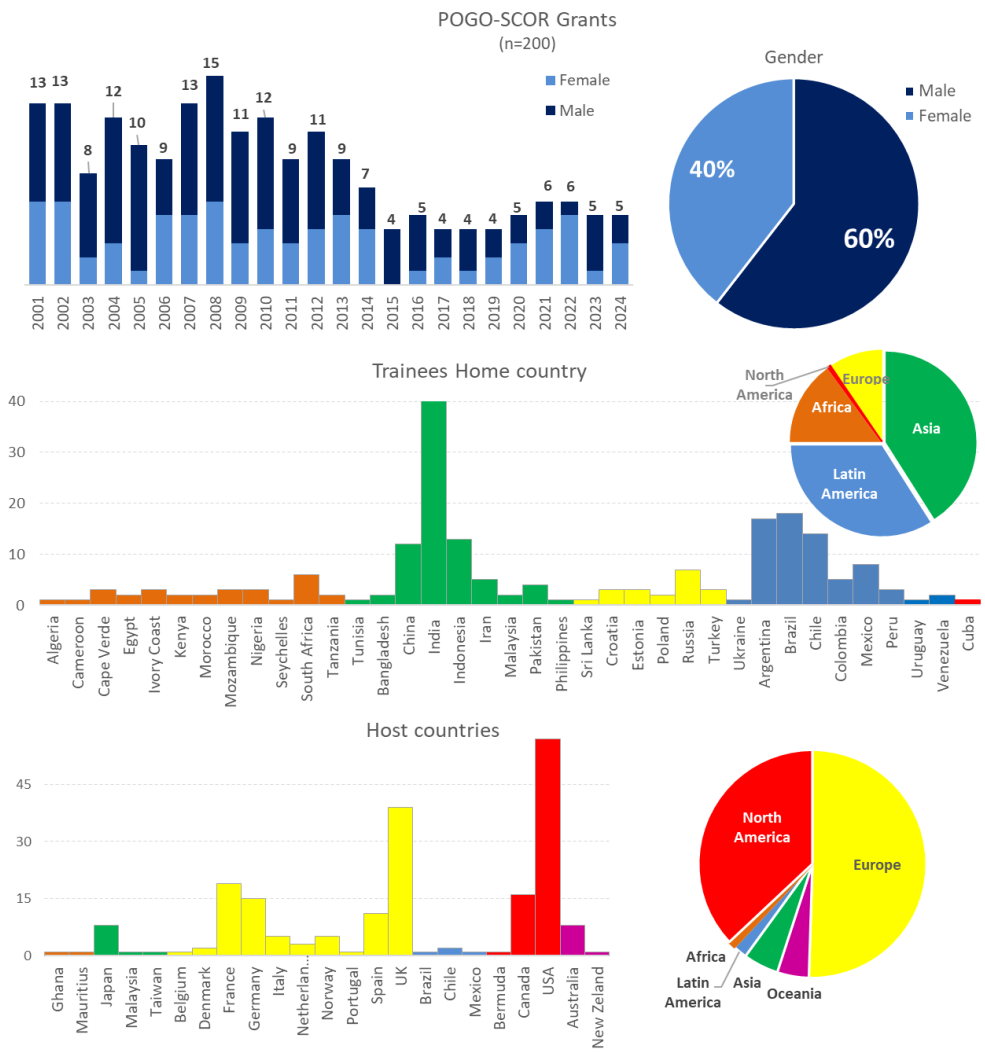

Fig. 1. Statistics for POGO-SCOR Visiting Fellowships grants between 2001 and 2024.

2.1.1. POGO-SCOR Fellowship 2024

In 2024, 59 valid applications (50.8% male and 49.2% female) were received from African (37.3%), Asian (32.2%), Latin American (28.8%) and European (1.7%) candidates (Fig.2). Applicants proposed trainings of one, two or three months in oceanographic centres in all continents (Europe, 39%, North America, 33.9%, Asia, 11.9%, Africa, 6.8%, Latin America, 5.1% and Oceania, 3.4%).

After collating all evaluations, interviews were conducted with the five top-ranked candidates and their respective host supervisors. This approach, being newly introduced in the programme, aimed to get a sense of familiarity between candidates and host supervisors, and to ensure that the training objectives and structure work for both. All five candidates were approved and have accepted the fellowships. Their training will start between September 2024 and January 2025.

Table 1 – Appointed POGO-SCOR trainees for the year 2024.

Year	Trainee	Parent institute	Host institute	Training period
2024	Fernando Becker	Servicio de Hidrografía Naval, Argentina	Mediterranean Institute of oceanography, France	2 months
2024	Amirotul Bahiyah	Sriwijaya University, Indonesia	Scripps Institution of Oceanography, United States	3 months
2024	Michelle Glory G Jonik	Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia	National Sun Yat-sen University, Taiwan	1 month
2024	Gabriel Diez Barroso	Centro de Investigación y de Estudios Avanzados del IPN, Mexico	Institute for Earth System Predictions, Italy	3 months
2024	Esther Oghenede	Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research, Nigeria	University of Ghana, Ghana	3 months

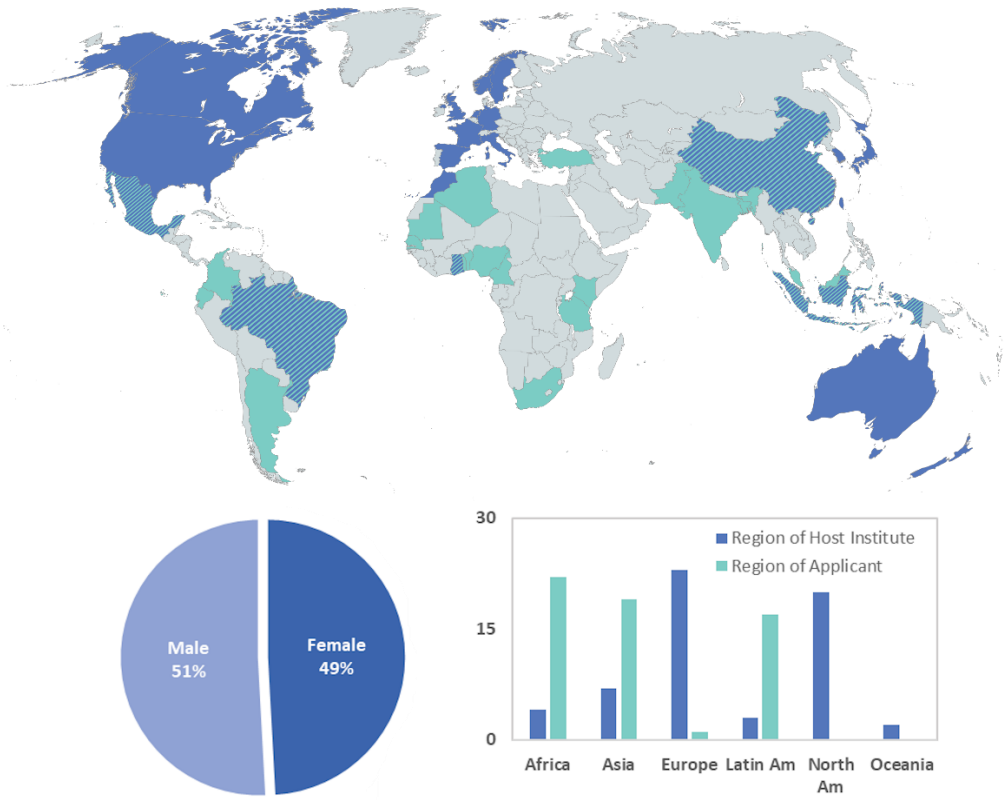

Fig. 2. Demography of 2024 POGO-SCOR Visiting Fellowships applicants (n=59).