

InterRidge 2024 Update for SCOR

Prof. Sang-Mook Lee
Seoul National University
InterRidge

What is InterRidge?

- Initiated by John Delaney (UW USA) and Jean Francheteau (UBO France) in 1989
- The US needed an international outreach body for their big RIDGE NSF program.
- In the 90s, RIDGE spawned many similar programs in Europe and Japan.
- In the 2000s, RIDGE2000 started interdisciplinary work between deepsea geology and biology.
- InterRidge was kept small because many countries had their own national midocean ridge program. Exchange of information, scientific collaborations, and joining other cruises.

- The coalition started to crumble around 2015 with the end of the ridge programs in the US. On the other hand, countries like China, India, and Korea saw the immense practical potential of midocean ridge studies.
- Covering not just ridge crests but the entire oceanic crust (from ridges to subduction zones)

Membership

Principle Members

- Korea
- China

Regular Members

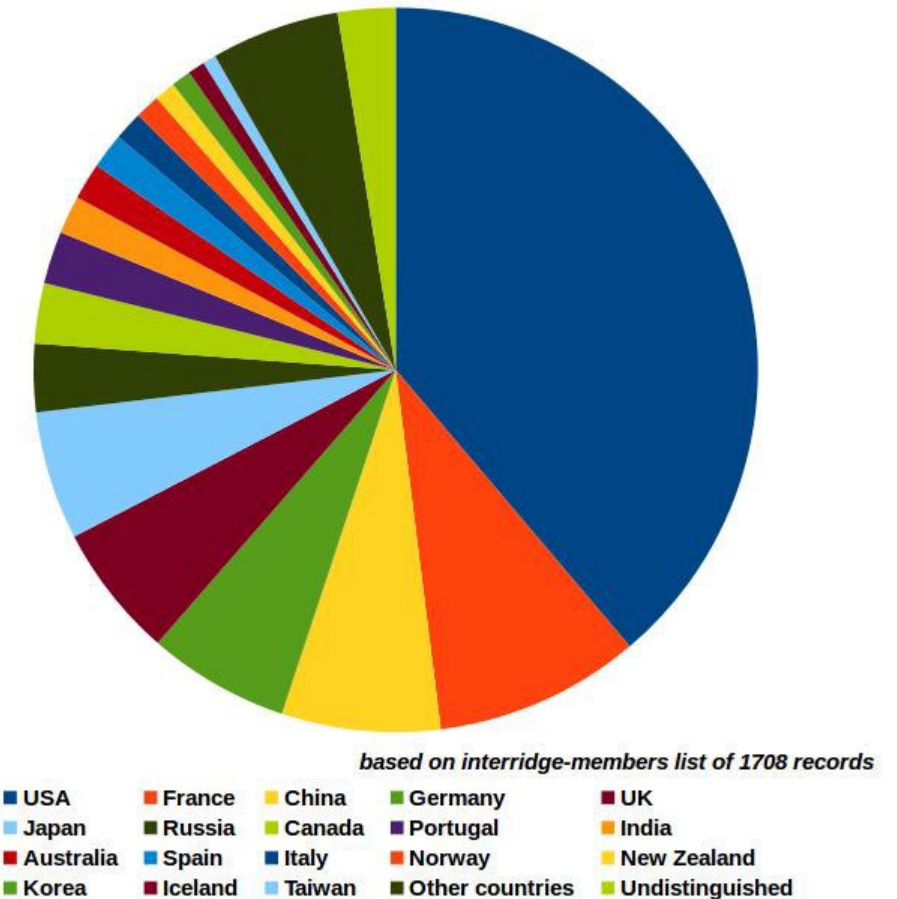
- *France*
- *Norway*
- Canada
- Germany
- India
- Japan
- USA

Corresponding Members:

Australia, Brazil, Chile, Italy, Mauritius, New Zealand, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, United Kingdom, Poland, South Africa

Current Status in 2023:

InterRidge is hosted by Korea at Seoul National University (SNU)
Sang-Mook Lee is the Chair
InterRidge is following the Third Decadal Plan 2014-2023



Crisis and Perhaps a New Opportunity

- China applied to become the next host in early 2023, but the young scientists (the Reform Committee) wanted a new set of changes
- However, what can be done without money was quite limited. In particular, the US NSF wanted young scientists to be heavily involved. At the same time, many countries, including the US, were doing mid-ocean ridge studies anyway without big national programs.
- Two opinions for and against InterRidge. We need a new name, and it is difficult to make something new like InterRidge.
- InterRidge basically dissolved in the middle of 2023 to allow young scientists in the Reform Committee an opportunity. Again, without money, the reality is harsh for blue sky research. Especially after the pandemic.

Renewal of InterRidge under SCOR

- I think it is time to re-engage InterRidge. There is substantial interest in China, India, Korea, and other countries (like Germany), especially in the Western Pacific and Indian Ocean. These interests include sources of minerals and chemistry, possible utilization of thermal energy and life under extreme environments. Also, science in these non-Western countries can improve substantially from studies of mid-ocean ridges.
- Breakthroughs in technology can be expected in deep-sea explorations.
- We seek help from SCOR to form a new working group focused on the Indian Ocean and Western Pacific in terms of both deepsea geology and biology.