

**Minutes of the Sixth Meeting of the
InterMARGINS Steering Committee**

8th December 2002

Marriott Hotel, Fourth Street, San Francisco, CA, USA

1. Introduction

1.1 The Chairman, Professor Bob Whitmarsh, opened the meeting at 1215 hours by welcoming members and the relatively large number of observers and guests.

1.2 Those present were Dr Warner Brueckmann (Germany), Dr CHEONG Tai-Jin (S Korea), Professor Olav Eldholm (Norway), Dr Bilal Haq (NSF, USA), Dr Gary Karner (USA), Dr Louis Moresi (Australia), Dr Brian O'Reilly (Ireland), Dr Wonn SOH (Japan), Dr Rupert Sutherland (New Zealand), Dr Olaf Svenningsen (US MARGINS Office) and Professor Tony Watts (UK). Apologies for absence were received from Dr Paul Egerton (ESF), Dr John Hopper (Denmark), Professor JIN Xianglong (China) and Dr Jean-Claude Sibuet (France).

1.3 The tabled Agenda for the meeting was agreed.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting, which took place on 25th April 2002 in Nice, France, were circulated. There were only two matters arising not dealt with subsequently in the Agenda. Dr Haq had visited China in June 2002 and had made contact with a number of institutions that were keen to join InterMARGINS. He had forwarded the name and address of Prof. JIN Xianglong to the Chairman with whom further negotiations were being conducted. The Chairman reported that, as requested, he had created links on the InterMARGINS web site to the ODP CONCORD and COMPLEX Reports.

3. Membership

The Chairman reported that although there had been no increase in the paid-up membership of Japan, UK and USA, three other countries had expressed a strong interest in joining during the last year as well as a number of individuals in other countries expressing interest in their country joining.

3.1 Following a suggestion made by Dr Mienert at the last meeting an invitation had been sent to Dr Faleide, Chairman of the NORMAR Project in Norway. Professor Eldholm explained that membership of InterMARGINS was still under consideration but the decision was also wrapped up in a more general decision about the likely cost of Norwegian participation in Euromargins. He reported however that the Norwegian Research Council thought that the subscription to InterMARGINS was relatively high. The final decision will probably be made in January 2003.

3.2 A formal invitation to join InterMARGINS had similarly been made to Prof. Oncken in Germany. Here the Federal Ministry of Research and Education had formed a new entity called Geotechnologien within which margins research, and InterMARGINS membership in particular, would fall. However, Dr Brueckmann warned that funding in Germany was currently tight and that, given the current subscription level, Germany might not be able to join as a Principal Member.

3.3 After the contact made with Professor Jin in China that country too had been invited to join InterMARGINS as a Principal Member. It was presently unclear which stage the membership decision had reached in China. It was regrettable that Prof. Jin had been unable to attend the San Francisco meeting because of visa problems. The Chairman undertook to continue his consultations with Prof. Jin whom he hoped would find it easier to attend the next meeting in France.

4. National Reports

4.1 **Japan.** Dr. Soh reported that the role of InterMARGINS Japan is to endorse Japanese margins research although it has no official budget. InterMARGINS Japan is keen to better understand subduction tectonics and marginal basin formation, particularly in the western Pacific Ocean. He addressed three issues, the 2003 FY ship schedule, activities of the Asian Consortium and the scientific infrastructure in Japan.

In FY2003, InterMARGINS Japan will endorse cruises to the Nankai accretionary prism and the Mariana Arc. Cruises during FY2003 include several to the Nankai Trough aimed at obtaining very detailed side-scan sonar image from the deep trench slope to the forearc basin, and studies of the forearc and OBS experiments across the Mariana Arc, involving long-term monitoring of the sea bed across the fault zone off Hatsushima (Sagami Trough).

As part of Japan InterMARGINS activities in west Asia, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan held two meetings in June (Yokosuka, Japan) and September (Gyeongju, South Korea), 2002; the next meeting is scheduled in January 2003 (Taipei, Taiwan). The aim of the meetings is to promote scientific collaboration in continental margin-related science among Japan, South Korea and Taiwan under the umbrella of the Japan InterMARGINS program.

Dr Soh finished his report by noting that the Japanese scientific infrastructure to promote solid earth marine science is changing as the result of the newly created Japan Drilling Consortium.

4.2 **UK.** Prof. Watts reported that the UK runs a 5-year thematic programme called Ocean Margins which is focussed on better understanding the rifting, sedimentary and fluid flow processes that occur in present-day rifted margins and their analogues in the rock record. The programme is funded as a 50:50 partnership between the Natural Environment Research

Council (NERC) and the Department of Trade Industry's (DTI's) LINK programme to a level of ~£9m. The programme was developed following a Town Meeting attended by 80-90 UK-based scientists from a wide range of sub-disciplines in the Earth Sciences in June 1996 and the first meeting of the Programme Management Committee (PMC) took place in September 1999. Reflecting the NERC/LINK partnership, the committee comprises six academic and six industrial researchers and is presently chaired by Dr. Edwin Cullen, formerly of Amerada Hess. The PMC oversees the running of the Ocean Margins programme and recommends the award of research grants. The day-to-day running of the programme is carried out by Dr. Paul Egerton, the Programme Science Co-ordinator.

The programme was launched in January 2000 with an Announcement of Opportunity (AO) for "scoping" proposals. The AO was cash-limited and was intended to support a wide range of research topics, some of which it was hoped could be developed into full proposals at a later date. This was followed by an AO for two rounds of full research grants. To date, the committee has recommended 19 research grants for funding (total £1.8m) that range in scope from topics such as rift "architecture" and magmatism, through evaluation of the stability of continental slopes, to fault sealing processes and trap development in deep marine reservoirs. The grants address both the so-called "volcanic" and "non-volcanic" margin types in the North and South Atlantic and Red Sea regions and include two major seismic reflection and refraction cruises. Further details of the funded projects can be found on the NERC/LINK Ocean Margins web-site ([http://www.nerc.ac.uk/oceanmargins/](#)).

In addition to research grants, the committee has awarded nine stand-alone three-year Ph.D. studentships and there are plans to fund at least two post-doctoral fellowships to carry out a research programme over at least three years on any aspect of the main research themes of Ocean Margins. In November 2003 Ocean Margins hosted its first Partnership meeting where researchers had the opportunity to present the projects funded under the programme and to discuss their results in the context of other projects and with industry representatives. One of the main aims of the meeting was to develop research partnerships for future round(s) of funded research and to develop ways of strengthening links between Ocean Margins and other on-going programmes such as the new Integrated Ocean Drilling Program (IODP), the US MARGINS Program, and the European Science Foundation's EUROMARGINS programme.

4.3 USA. Dr Karner reported that ten new proposals have been funded by NSF that span all four initiatives of the MARGINS Program. All MARGINS funded proposals can be viewed on the MARGINS web site ([http://www.margins.org/](#)). These are SEIZE (Seismogenic Zone Experiment), Subduction Factory (SubFac), Rupturing Continental Lithosphere (RCL) and, for the first time, Source to Sink (S2S). The funding level for FY2003 will be about US\$6.0-7.5 million.

A new data policy has been established within MARGINS (<http://www.ideo.columbia.edu/margins/DataPolicy.html>) which calls on PI's to submit metadata within 60 days of the end of a cruise and to be able to share actual geological

and geophysical data within two years of the end of a cruise. The MARGINS Office has recently issued a request for the design and generation of a database situated on a focus site which elicited five responses by the 1 November 2002 deadline.

MARGINS has established a Fellowship scheme which has elicited four responses, all from within the USA. MARGINS particularly wishes to encourage applications from nationals of other countries involved in the MARGINS program, namely Costa Rica, Egypt, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea and Saudi Arabia. The Fellowships are intended for individuals in the early stages of their professional career, typically within five years of being awarded a Ph.D.

MARGINS has run a number of major workshops. In 2002 there were workshops on a Community Sediment Model (Boulder, February), the Izu-Bonin-Mariana Arcs (Hawaii, September) and on Subduction Modelling (Michigan, October). Funding has also been approved for the second MARGINS Theoretical and Experimental Institute on the Seismogenic Zone (March, 2003). Finally, a major international workshop in New Zealand (May 2003) will be used to help summarise the current research efforts and results associated with the Waipaoa Source-to-Sink system and the preparation of collaborative proposals for the next MARGINS proposal deadline.

The MARGINS Office has adopted a new role of overseeing and taking responsibility for workshop logistics and assisting principal investigators in setting up the budgets for their workshop and theoretical institute proposals.

Negotiations are proceeding with Saudi and Egyptian organisations to prepare Memoranda of Understanding relative to onshore and offshore proposals for work within the Gulf of Suez/northern Red Sea focus site of the RCL initiative.

4.4 **Australia.** Dr Moresi reported that there has been a very strong push in Australia towards the numerical simulation of processes. This has led to the enhancement of the national infrastructure in the form of the Australian Computational Earth Science Systems Simulator (ACCESS). This development has provided the seed for several proposals including the dynamics of plates and margins. Dietmar Mueller is leading the Gplates Consortium which will make available open access 'plates' software for modelling stress patterns, paleostress and many other factors.

4.5 **European Science Foundation.** Prof. Watts described EUROMARGINS, a new activity of the European Science Foundation (ESF) that has as its principle focus the imaging, monitoring and modelling of the physical, chemical, and biological processes that occur at rifted continental margins. Formed following an "Exploratory Workshop" in Kiel, Germany in September 1998 and a Workshop in Sitges, Spain in February 2000, EUROMARGINS is one of ESF's first EUROCORES programmes (see <http://www.esf.org> for more details).

The EUROMARGINS programme, as defined at the first Science Steering Committee (SSC) meeting, has four main research themes: Volcanic rifted margins, Extension in a convergent plate setting, Sediment dynamics, and Fluid flow.

The first call for outline proposals was published in March 2001. The call gave priority to integrated multi-national studies of the Northwest European Margin and the margins in the Mediterranean Sea, and their conjugates. However, studies where particular margin processes could be optimally addressed, as well as studies of ancient margin systems, were also encouraged. Sixty-one outline proposals were received by ESF by the December 2001 deadline and the SSC considered which of these proposals should be submitted as full proposals. The full proposals, which ranged in topics from the crustal architecture of conjugate volcanic margins, through studies of slope stability, to studies of cold seeps and gas emission on the seafloor, were subsequently peer-reviewed and a Review Panel was convened in Strasbourg in September 2002 to consider the relative merits of each proposal.

EUROMARGINS is a research programme that was defined by the participating ESF Member Organisations (MOs). The MOs currently comprise Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands, and the UK. Representatives of the MOs have been involved in all aspects of the review and grading of individual proposals. Funding decisions, however, reside with participating national bodies and the outcome of the first EUROMARGINS call for proposals is expected later in 2002.

4.6 Germany. Dr Brueckmann informed the Committee that proposals for a national German Margins Program under the umbrella of the Geotechnologien Program () - funded by the Ministry of Science, BMBF - are still being evaluated and the final decision is expected by the end of 2002. Funding is expected to commence in 2003.

In June 2002 an international consortium for continental margin research (IRCCM) was established at the International University Bremen (IUB) (), an affiliate of Rice University, Houston. Geoscience and oceanographic research institutions in Northern Germany, in collaboration with transatlantic and industrial partners, have come together to investigate geochemical and biological processes along with environmental and economic issues concerning the ocean margins of Europe. German partners include the International University Bremen (where the organisational centre will be located), the Alfred Wegener Institute in Bremerhaven, the Ocean Margins Research Centre at the University of Bremen, the GEOMAR Research Centre in Kiel, and the Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology in Bremen. American partners include Rice University, the University of New Hampshire, and the Netherlands Institute for Marine Research, Texel (NIOZ). The project has strong support from the industrial sector and specific industrial partners will be announced in the coming months. The combined resources of this partnership will allow the group as a whole to jointly tackle problems that would transcend the capabilities of any single institution. The partnership between academic and industrial research teams is an additional important factor.

Three major margins-related programs funded by the German Science Foundation (DFG) are currently active, dealing with the Hellenic Arc, the Andes (headed by Prof. Oncken, GFZ) and Middle America. The latter is dealing primarily with subduction factory issues under the title "Volatiles and Fluids in Subduction Zones" (). DFG has also established a new Research Centre on Ocean Margins at the University of Bremen, which addresses margins related topics in paleoenvironmental studies, biogeochemical processes, sedimentation processes and Use Impact Research; details can be found at .

4.7 Ireland. Dr O'Reilly began his report with the STRATAGEM project, funded by the EU 5th Framework Programme, which is involved with an analysis of the Neogene stratigraphy of the glaciated margin of NW Europe from the Lofoten Islands to Porcupine Bank. University College, Dublin (UCD) is one of the partners in the project, which is co-ordinated by the British Geological Survey. The project, which involved several marine cruises that acquired seismic and other geophysical data, will be completed in February 2003, has involved an integrated analysis of seismic and well data from the Neogene of the Atlantic Margin and has led to the production of an Atlas of the Neogene succession. A unified model of basin margin processes (downslope and alongslope integration) will be developed for the Neogene evolution of the margin.

Two other projects, GEOMOUND/ECOMOUND, also funded by the EU 5th Framework Programme, involve an analysis of the large deep-water carbonate mound provinces on the margins of the Porcupine Seabight and Rockall Trough in the Irish offshore. The projects have involved several marine cruises that acquired seismic and shallow core information and will be completed in 2003. UCD is involved in the GEOMOUND project, which is concerned with the external, geological, controls on the location and development of the mounds. A parallel project (ACES), also funded by the EU, is targeted at the biology/taxonomy of the mounds with involvement from the National University of Ireland, Galway.

Two wide-angle seismic projects (RAPIDS and HADES), located in the Porcupine, Rockall and Hatton basins and margins offshore Ireland, have been funded by the Irish Petroleum Infrastructure Programme (PIP) and the Geological Survey of Ireland. The project aims are to investigate the crustal and large-scale sedimentary geometry of the Irish offshore Atlantic Margin region. They involve a research consortium of the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies (DIAS), UCD and the German company GeoPro. RAPIDS profiles 1, 2, 3 were acquired and modelled in the last 10 years while the HADES and RAPIDS profile 4 data were acquired in 2002.

The TRIM (TOBI Rockall Irish Margins) project was funded by the Irish PIP and was aimed at providing a detailed picture of the nature of the steep eastern margin and part of the western margin of the Rockall Trough. Emphasis was placed on mapping slope failure features and the distribution of canyon systems and carbonate mounds. DIAS and UCD were involved in the project. The project followed on from the Irish Government funded AIRS project (with a cruise in 1996) which used the surface- towed GLORIA sidescan system

from the Southampton Oceanography Centre. The TRIM data were used in selecting sites for boreholes and high resolution seismic reflection profiles and several ancillary projects are based on it (see below).

PIP also funded a deep boreholes project on the Rockall margin. This involved acquiring high-resolution seismic site survey data and the drilling of four deep boreholes along the eastern margin of the Rockall Trough. It led to several smaller projects on aspects of the geology and basin development of the region.

A new PhD project on slopes and slope failures in the Tertiary succession, funded by Enterprise Ireland (the Irish science funding agency), commenced at UCD in September 2002. This involved the detailed analysis of all available seismic and well data in order to constrain the morphology, timing and controls on slope failure in the Porcupine and Rockall margins. Another PhD project, based on sedimentology of the Recent deposits of the Rockall margins, is in its third year at UCD. It is based on the analysis of ~50 gravity cores and is funded by PIP.

The Irish Seabed Survey is funded exclusively by the Irish government and involves collecting multibeam bathymetric data using the SIMRAD systems in addition to pinger, gravity and magnetic data and gravity/box cores. For more information consult the Geological Survey of Ireland webpages (<http://www.gsi.ie/>).

ISLE (Irish Seismic Lithospheric Experiment) is a broadband teleseismic experiment funded by Enterprise Ireland and designed and run by DIAS. In November 2002 an array of 22 broadband seismic instruments was deployed within the Iapetus Suture Zone to investigate the cause of a P-wave travel-time anomaly detected during the VARNET96 experiment. The experiment will last about one year and will provide information on the structure of the lithosphere and upper mantle beneath Ireland. A postdoc and a PhD student are working on the project, which will involve tomography, shear wave splitting analysis, receiver function studies, surface wave dispersion and studies of seismic wave attenuation. It is the first project of its kind to be undertaken in Ireland and it is intended to extend these studies offshore to the broader North Atlantic region in the future to investigate the impact of Caledonian and later tectonic processes on the structure of the upper mantle beneath Ireland and the sedimentary basins offshore. This will help test and develop geodynamic models of the North Atlantic region. The University of Karlsruhe is also involved.

4.8 New Zealand. Dr Sutherland reported that in recent years New Zealand scientists have been involved in a number of major international programmes related to margins research. Other work is still on-going.

1996-98 saw the execution of the South Island Geophysical Transect (SIGHT). SIGHT involved an offshore-onshore active source seismic experiment focussed on the convergent, continental plate-boundary through South Island, New Zealand. This was a joint project

between the Institute of Geological and Nuclear Sciences (IGNS) and Victoria University of Wellington, from New Zealand, and a group of seven US universities led by the University of Southern California and the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution. Passive seismology (SAPSE) and magnetotelluric (MT) experiments were also associated with the study. The project comprised two major transects across the South Island that extended out to about 200 km offshore. The extremities of the transects provide information on the margins of the New Zealand sub-continent and continental rift basins to the east of South Island.

SIGHT was followed in 2000-2001 by the North Island Geophysical Transect (NIGHT). Here an offshore-onshore, active-source, seismic experiment focussed on the convergent oceanic-continental plate margin along the east coast of North Island, New Zealand. This transect was a joint project between IGNS and Victoria University of Wellington, from New Zealand, and the University of Cambridge, UK. Passive seismology (CNIPSE) and MT experiments were also associated with the study. SIGHT comprised one major transect across the east coast of North Island out to about 200 km offshore to the east, with a north-south sub-transect along the Central Volcanic Region of North Island (the continental back-arc basin).

Since 1995, work has also been conducted on the rifted margin of the Transantarctic Mountains in Antarctica. Several projects are involved that are aimed at understanding the evolution of the major rifted margin forming the Transantarctic Mountains in the Ross Sea region. Work has been focussed on the McMurdo Sound area, mainly started in 1984 with the *SP Lee* geophysical survey (USGS and NZDSIR). It includes aspects of the Cape Roberts Project (1997-2000; a stratigraphic drilling programme in north-western McMurdo Sound aimed at paleoclimate and tectonic objectives involving the IGNS and Victoria University of Wellington with scientists from Australia, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, UK and USA), a passive broadband seismology array study of the Dry Valley areas (IGNS and ANU, Australia) and onshore field geology studies (IGNS).

Another, ongoing, marine geology and geophysics project is to study the Structure and evolution of the South Fiji basin - Norfolk basin - northern New Zealand region, the south-eastern New Caledonia basin, Reinga basin and western New Zealand, and the Hikurangi plateau, Chatham Rise and northern Bounty Trough. A proposed reflection-refraction geophysical experiment that is aimed at refining our knowledge of North Island subduction zone evolution, from initiation, through back-arc spreading and reorganisation, to its present situation. This will be achieved by acquiring crustal/mantle structure information in key areas through which the system evolved, specifically a series of transects running into the South Fiji Basin (). In addition there are ongoing investigations by IGNS scientists of the major sedimentary basins of the New Zealand sub-continent (e.g. the Great South Basin off south-west South Island).

4.9 Norway. Olav Eldholm said he was attending the meeting as a representative of the Norwegian Margin Network (NORMAR). The network consists of participants from research institutions, government agencies and the hydrocarbon industry. The network is funded by the Research Council of Norway (NFR) and is co-ordinated by a steering committee consisting

of Jan Inge Faleide, chair (University of Oslo), Jurgen Mienert (University of Tromsø), Rolf Mjelde (University of Bergen), Stig-Morten Knutsen (Norsk Hydro) and Vidar B. Larsen (Statoil). The NORMAR web site may be reached via the InterMARGINS web site (<http://www.geologi.uio.no/geofysikk/normar/index.html>).

Prof. Eldholm reported that margin research activity is presently quite extensive in Norway. Norwegian scientists are also co-PIs in a number of proposals submitted to the European Science Foundation's "Euromargins" program. Several of the proposals are highly ranked and the final decision regarding funding is expected shortly.

The NFR wishes to consider all infrastructure costs related to margin activities as a single budget item. This includes InterMARGINS. A decision will not be made before the infrastructure costs related to the proposed Norwegian participation in Euromargins have been determined, probably early in 2003. Nonetheless, the signals from NFR are that membership of InterMARGINS is contingent on the existence of a constitution outlining the organisation and objectives of InterMARGINS and that an annual budget should be developed. Finally, the full membership fee of USD 15,000 is considered somewhat high.

4.10 South Korea. Dr Cheong said that most research within universities is restricted to coastal areas because of the lack of research equipment including research and survey ships.

There are two main Research Institutes within South Korea that conduct marine research. These are the Korea Institute of Geoscience and Mineral Resources (KIGAM) and the Korea Ocean Research and Development Institute (KORDI).

KIGAM is conducting a major geological mapping project of the Korean continental shelf that began in 1979 and is expected to continue until 2010. The project principally consists of the acquisition of shallow seismic profiles and cores. A map is published every two years. A second project is the Basin Analysis Project which began in 2000 and will continue until 2005. The objective is to analyse the processes involved in basin formation. Deep seismic, gravity and magnetic profiles are being acquired. Within KORDI most researchers are working on the continental shelf area except for a project on manganese nodules.

Two workshops have already been held to explore ways that scientists in South Korea and Japan can collaborate.

5. InterMARGINS Office Report

The Chairman reported on his activities since the last meeting. He stated that his main objective had been to increase membership, to improve the visibility of InterMARGINS and the size of its community. Membership had already been discussed in the previous Agenda item.

5.1 InterMARGINS web site. The web site was now receiving about 60 hits per week. The first InterMARGINS Newsletter, displaying the new logo, was now available in printed paper form and could also be downloaded from the InterMARGINS web site. Finally, the Chairman

reported that he had been invited to give a presentation about InterMARGINS, in Gent, Belgium in late August, to the interim Planning Committee of IODP which was also attended by many members of the ODP Scientific Committee (SCICOM).

5.2 **Sponsorship.** Sponsorship was another means by which InterMARGINS was able to advertise itself and support margins research. This is addressed later in the Minutes.

5.3 **Communication.** The Chairman closed by requesting better feedback from national contacts. It was not possible to run a thriving and up-to-date web site and Office without a flow of information and timely responses to emails from national contacts. He also agreed to extract information for future editions of the Newsletter from other web sites and relevant publications and newsletters.

5.4 **Finance.** The financial situation was discussed in a later Agenda item.

In the discussion following the Chairman's report Dr Soh suggested that IODP might request InterMARGINS to supply a watchdog to attend the biannual SEPs committee meetings which evaluate IODP proposals. Dr Karner was concerned about who would pay for this. InterMARGINS was an international organisation not covered by the arrangements made for OPD delegates from individual countries. Prof. Eldholm thought it more appropriate for an IODP watchdog to attend InterMARGINS meetings. This solution, should it need to be implemented, was endorsed by other members of the Steering Committee. Dr Karner also made a plea for more project information to be 'harvested' and imported into the InterMARGINS web site from sources such as the IODP SEPs committee reports and the ESF web site [Action Prof. Whitmarsh].

6. The future development of InterMARGINS

The Chairman opened a discussion of future objectives and invited suggestions.

6.1 **Newsletter.** Dr Haq said that he liked the Newsletter but that it should contain more figures.

The Chairman concurred but said that this was the first issue and had necessarily been kept simple.

6.2 **Objectives.** Dr Sutherland stated that InterMARGINS seemed to have very diverse interests. He questioned what members would get out of their membership. Prof. Eldholm agreed. He recalled the rather long and complex mission document that had been produced at the founding meeting in Washington DC in 1999. He suggested that a briefer document was required summarising the earlier one, giving the organic structure of InterMARGINS and a *pro forma* budget. The Chairman agreed to do this [Action Prof. Whitmarsh]. Prof. Watts recalled that the Washington DC meeting had envisaged the creation of a national margins programme in each country but this had not happened in all cases. Dr Karner noted the consequent lack of a facilitating role feeding into InterMARGINS.

6.3 **Data release.** Dr Karner suggested that InterMARGINS might have a role to play in

facilitating the release of data between countries on a bilateral basis. The Chairman considered that InterMARGINS might offer assistance in cases of extreme difficulty but that in the first instance informal scientist-to-scientist contacts offered a better route.

6.4 **Web site.** Prof. Eldholm suggested that the InterMARGINS web site could list information about margins research on a country-by-country basis. The Chairman undertook to investigate this [Action Prof. Whitmarsh].

6.5 **Wider links.** Dr Haq suggested that InterMARGINS could offer assistance to scientists in underdeveloped and developing countries with making contact with researchers working on the margins of their country. The Chairman undertook to discuss this idea with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) in Paris [Action Prof. Whitmarsh].

6.6 **Priorities.** Prof. Eldholm ended by saying that he agreed with all the above suggestions but there was a need to prioritise objectives. In his opinion the prime need was to reach a critical mass of member countries. It was generally agreed by the Committee that the current membership was insufficient.

7. **Finance.** The Chairman introduced the discussion by circulating a spreadsheet of the current financial status of InterMARGINS. Income for the year and carried over funds from 2001 came to £38,000 while expenditure was expected to be £6,000 giving a balance of around £32,000. This led to a discussion of whether the current subscription level of \$15,000 p.a. for a Principal Member was too high. Opinions differed but there was a strong feeling that the subscription could be reduced, at least temporarily, to attract more members. The Associate Membership of \$5,000 was also thought to be attractive but it was not clear what (lesser) rights would accrue to such members. Prof. Eldholm wanted it to be clear what the funds were likely to be spent on. The Chairman undertook to develop and circulate a range of options for a revised financial plan which would include the option of a, possibly temporarily, reduced subscription for Principal Membership [Action Prof. Whitmarsh].

8. **Sponsorship.** The Chairman reminded members that it had been agreed at the last meeting to sponsor special sessions at conferences and financially assist speakers or perhaps students with travel to such meetings recognising that it might however be appropriate to give first priority to assisting people from countries that were fully paid-up members of InterMARGINS.

8.1 Consequently the Chairman had already agreed to offer an InterMARGINS prize of \pounds 400 for the best student poster or presentation at the EGU session TS3.03 on Conjugate Rifted Continental Margins next April.

8.2 The Chairman presented a request from Dr Hodgson, University of Liverpool, UK for \pounds 2,000-3,000 to support overseas speakers to an international conference on Submarine Slope Systems entitled SLOPE. After some discussion it was agreed to offer \pounds 2,000 subject to submission of a case-by-case argument for the support of each speaker.

8.3 The Chairman next presented a further request for support from the organisers of a Workshop on Conjugate Rifted Margins to be held immediately prior to the EGU Meeting next April in Southampton, UK. Funds were requested to assist with the accommodation of overseas attendees during the workshop. After some vigorous discussion the Committee decided not to support this request. It was felt that the interest of the workshop was too geographically focused and that it was a more suitable subject for support from Euromargins. The view was expressed that InterMARGINS should run its own workshops, comparable to the USA MARGINS Theoretical Workshops, and not support those run by others.

9. Dates of the next meeting

The Chairman announced that the next meeting of the InterMARGINS Steering Committee would, subject to the Programme of the EGU which had not yet been announced, take place at 16.30 on Wednesday 9th April 2003 in Nice, France (joint EGS/EUG/AGU Assembly).

10. Closure of the meeting

There being no further business the Chairman thanked members for travelling to San Francisco and closed the meeting at 1500 hours.