

COCARDE -ICA and -ERN A global network to study the “rocks of life”

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Carbonates are important contributors of life in different environmental settings, from warm-water to cold-water, shallow to deep and throughout the geological history. They are the key-players in the biosphere-geosphere coupling to deserve the appellation of “rocks of life”.

The initial network COCARDE (Cold-Water Carbonate Reservoir Systems in Deep Environment) was conceived in Ghent in 2008. Its two off-springs COCARDE-ICA supported since 2009 by the FWO and COCARDE-ERN launched in 2011 and funded by ESF aim at investigating carbonate mounds in space and time and in the various geological settings where they are formed. These complementary networks represent an ideal platform to apply a flexible and modular Industry-Academia Partnership to consolidate sustainable carbonate mound research and capacity building. Their synergy has the potential to shape the COCARDE Network to a global dimension; COCARDE-Canada and COCARDE-USA are taking shape and will get on tracks in the near future.

Milestones of COCARDE-ICA and -ERN are:

- The ESF Magellan COCARDE Workshop in Fribourg, Switzerland, January 21-24, 2009.
- The ESF MiCROSYSTEMS – FWO COCARDE Flanders – ESF CHECREEF Workshop and Field Seminar, Oviedo, Spain, September 16–20, 2009.
- The COCARDE Workshop and Field Seminar in Rabat and the Moroccan Sahara in October 2011.
- The COCARDE Fluid flow-related carbonate build-ups: from lacustrine to (early) marine environments – *The Ries Impact Crater as a Natural Laboratory*, Nördlingen, Germany, 15-19 October 2012.
- The COCARDE Eurofleets CWC Moira cruise, on the RV Belgica in June 2012, along the Irish off-shore.
- The COCARDE Eurofleets Mediterranean Gateway cruise on the RV Marion Dufresne, June 2013, along Cadiz-Alboran Gateway.

The Workshop “Bridging off-shore and on-land research on carbonate mounds: common concepts and techniques”, Catania 23-27 September 2013 is the logical and successful continuation of synergy among the carbonate mound scientific community.