

CURRICULUM VITAE of SEAN THOMAS FENNESSY

CONTACT DETAILS

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PERSONAL DETAILS

Born: 17 November 1961
Citizenship: South African
Languages: English, Afrikaans (speak, read, write)

QUALIFICATIONS

PhD	University of Natal	(2001)
MSc	University of Natal	(1994)
BSc (Hons)	University of Durban-Westville	(1988)
BSc	University of Natal	(1982)

WORK EXPERIENCE

Employed at the Oceanographic Research Institute since March 1989.

POSITIONS HELD

Assistant Scientist	March 1989 to March 1994
Scientist	April 1994 to December 2001
Senior Scientist	January 2002 -

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Identification, execution and/or supervision of a diverse range of marine research projects
- Preparing and reviewing of project proposals, reports and other documents for local and international funders or agencies
- Selected fisheries consultancies in the Western Indian Ocean to support decision-makers
- Co-ordination of the fisheries science honours module at the University of KwaZulu-Natal and presentation of components thereof since 1996, and supervision of postgraduate students

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

I have undertaken marine research since 1989, while based at a unique research organization widely recognized for its contribution to marine science in South Africa and the wider western Indian Ocean region. My interests are broad, and I consider myself to be a combination of a fisheries scientist and marine biologist/ecologist. I have studied estuarine, reef and soft-sediment habitats, organisms and fisheries, as reflected in my publications.

My interests and specialized knowledge have led to my being invited to join two IUCN Species Specialist Groups (Groupers & Wrasses, and Sciaenids), requiring my undertaking of assessments and reviews of the conservation status of numerous species in/prior to international workshops in China and Brazil. I have also been asked to lead and/or attend international regional (Kenya, Madagascar, Mozambique) workshops on management/impacts of crustacean trawl fisheries. My expertise has also been requested for assessments and reviews of marine resources for WWF and the Marine Stewardship Council. I am closely involved in several components of the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Project; in particular I am the South Africa National Component Coordinator for demersal fishes in the SWIOF project, also providing scientific advice to the Regional Component Coordinator who is based in Tanzania. Based on this involvement I was recently invited to attend the inaugural South West Indian Ocean Commission Regional Working Group meeting on demersal and small pelagic fishes. My role in SWIOFP also led to my being appointed as local cruise leader on the Fridtjof Nansen survey of western Madagascar in 2009.

More locally, I was elected as the KwaZulu-Natal representative on the South African Network for Coastal and Oceanic Research (1999-2003), which is a local marine research community forum. On a more applied level, my research experience with the local crustacean trawl fishery underpins my input at the KZN Prawn Fisheries Development Association, as well as the management advice I regularly provide to the national Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the provincial conservation agency Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife. My expertise is also frequently required to assess fisheries and environmental impacts stemming from anthropogenic disturbances such as dredging, oil exploration, coastal zone development, undersea cables and dams.

Some specific projects on which I have been/am principal investigator:

- Investigation of bycatch of South African prawn trawlers, involving a description of composition and seasonality of catches, a description of the biology of the major fish species, assessment of the impact of trawlers, and bycatch reduction.
- Biological investigation and stock assessments of several marine demersal fish and invertebrate species in KwaZulu-Natal and Mozambique.
- Surveys and assessments of commercial, recreational and subsistence fisheries on the East coast of South Africa.
- Ecosystem functioning of the KZN Bight
- Connectivity of marine organisms between south-east Madagascar and KwaZulu-Natal

COMMITTEES

- Provincial representative on the steering committee of the South African Network for Coastal and Oceanic Research (SANCOR; 2000-2003)
- KZN Provincial Marine Resource Management Research Group (2000-2008)
- National Science Task Team, South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Project (SWIOFP)
- Prawn Fisheries Development Association
- KwaZulu-Natal Prawn Trawling Management Working Group
- Country Co-ordinator (South Africa) for the South West Indian Ocean Fisheries Project (SWIOFP) Component 3 - Demersal fishes

MEMBERSHIPS

- Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association
- South African Network for Coastal and Oceanic Research
- IUCN Species Survival Commission – Serranid (2001 -) and Sciaenid (2010 -) Specialist Groups
- Fisheries Society of the British Isles

OTHER

- National Research Foundation (NRF) rated scientist (category C3)
- Reviewing of manuscripts submitted to the African Journal of Marine Science, the Western Indian Ocean Journal of Marine Science, Fisheries Research, Journal of Fish Biology, Marine and Freshwater Research.
- Examining MSc and PhD theses from local and foreign universities
- > 200 days sea-time on marine commercial/research vessels
- Grade III (scientific) diver