LECOB - Laboratoire d'écogéochimie des environnements benthiques

Rapport Hcéres

Research evaluation

REPORT ON THE RESEARCH UNIT:

Benthic ECOgeochemistry Laboratory (LECOB)

UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS AND RESEARCH BODIES:

Université Pierre et Marie Curie

Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique - CNRS

EVALUATION CAMPAIGN 2017-2018

GROUP D

In the name of Hcéres[1]:

Michel Cosnard, President

In the name of the expert committee[2]:

Ann Vanreusel, Chairwoman of the committee

Under the decree No.2014-1365 dated 14 November 2014,

[1] The president of Hcéres "countersigns the evaluation reports set up by the expert committees and signed by their chairman." (Article 8, paragraph 5);

[2] The evaluation reports "are signed by the chairman of the expert committee". (Article 11, paragraph 2).

This report is the sole result of the unit's evaluation by the expert committee, the composition of which is specified below. The assessments contained herein are the expression of an independent and collegial reviewing by the committee.

UNIT PRESENTATION

Unit name:	Benthic ECOgeochemistry Laboratory
Unit acronym:	LECOB
Requested label:	UMR
Application type:	Renewal
Current number:	UMR 8222
Head of the unit (2017-2018):	Ms Nadine LE BRIS
Project leader (2019-2023):	Ms Katell GUIZIEN
Number of themes:	3

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair: Ms Ann VANREUSEL, Université de Gent, Belgium

Experts:

Mr Rutger DE WIT, Université de Montpellier (representative of CNU)

Ms Florence DONNADIEU, Université de Clermont (supporting personnel)

Ms Anniet LAVERMAN, Université de Rennes (representative of CoNRS)

Mr Gérard THOUZEAU, Université de Brest

HCERES scientific officer:

Mr Yvan LAGADEUC

Representatives of supervising institutions and bodies:

Mr Sylvain LAMARE , CNRS

Mr Bertrand MEYER, UPMC

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION OF THE UNIT

LECOB is a joint research unit of the "Université Pierre et Marie Curie" (UPMC- U Paris 6) and CNRS. LECOB is one of the UMRs of the Ecology and Environment Institute of CNRS (CNRS INEE). It is part of the Oceanological Observatory of Banyuls (OOB–FR3724) associating 4 research units and the infrastructure and support services at the marine station. LECOB was created on January 1st 2010 under an initial temporary status (Formation de Recherche en Evolution FRE3350) and established as a Joint Research Unit (UMR8222) on October 1st 2012. It was formed by the association of an existing benthic ecology group, previously depending on the Biological Oceanography Laboratory (restructured in 2009-2010) with 4 scientists who recently joined the group (2 UPMC teacher-researchers, 1 CNRS researcher, 1 assistant engineer).

LECOB currently has 337 m^2 of allocated space in the A building of the marine station of Banyuls.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Nadine Le Bris has been the director since the creation of LECOB in 2010. Pierre Galand has been nominated deputy director in 2017.

HCERES NOMENCLATURE

SVE1 Agronomie, Biologie Végétale, Écologie, Environnement, Évolution.

SCIENTIFIC DOMAIN

LECOB activities focus on marine benthic ecosystems. LECOB's interdisciplinary research lies at the interface of functional ecology and environmental sciences, in agreement with the thematic priorities of section 30 of the CoNRS. Research on ecosystem dynamics and functions in marine benthic environments is mainly based on the present expertise of LECOB permanent staff in scientific domains such as benthic biodiversity (macro and meiofauna), microbial ecology, molecular biology marine chemistry and geochemistry, coastal oceanography and biogeochemistry. LECOBs research that is highly interdisciplinary has been organized along 2 research axes over the past 5 years, which will be continued in the next period. The first axe is focusing on "community dynamics and functions" the second on "ecosystem response to disturbances". An additional future focus is identified as a third axe entitled "the study of the impacts of human forcing on these systems". The group is also in charge of a monitoring program on Mediterranean benthic soft bottom communities.

UNIT WORKFORCE

Unit workforce	Number 30/06/2017	Number 01/01/2019
Permanent staff		
Full professors and similar positions	2	2
Assistant professors and similar positions	5	5
Full time research directors (Directeurs de recherche) and similar positions	1	2
Full time research associates (Chargés de recherche) and similar positions	3	3
Other scientists ("Conservateurs, cadres scientifiques des EPIC, fondations, industries, etc.")	0	0

High school teachers	0	0
Supporting personnel (ITAs, BIATSSs and others, notably of EPICs)	5	5
TOTAL permanent staff	**16**	**17**
Non-permanent staff		
Non-permanent professors and associate professors, including emeritus	0	
Non-permanent full time scientists, including emeritus, post-docs	11	
Non-permanent supporting personnel	1	
PhD Students	14	
TOTAL non-permanent staff	**26**	
TOTAL unit	**42**	

GLOBAL ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

The scientific outputs, reputation and appeal of the UMR LECOB is excellent, with an impressive publication record and notable interdisciplinary research, very good international collaborations and cutting-edge technological developments. Also LECOB's involvement in steering and scientific committees and advisory boards, both at national and international levels, is prominent. LECOB also shows an excellent record at the level of institutional collaboration (e.g. impact assessment, contribution to monitoring issues), while their contribution to outreach activities is very good being focused on aspects of marine biodiversity and ecology that are less known by the general public.

There is an excellent engagement in teaching by the UPMC teachers at LECOB, and their implications in European Masters and PhD programmes is highlighted. However, there are also some logistic difficulties with teaching tasks related to the distance from UPMC Paris. Overall LECOB is an excellent PhD environment although the recent PhD recruitment rate is low due to difficulties in obtaining national scholarships and the lack of access to regional grants.

LECOB has an excellent interdisciplinary, multifaceted scientific strategy to answer innovative research questions and to be successful in applications for national and international funding. The integration within the Research Federation (FR) "l'Observatoire Océanologique de Banyuls" (OOB) can be improved in order to ensure access to appropriate lab space and facilities, benefit from the FR staff, and enhance the scientific exchanges with the other UMRs of the FR.

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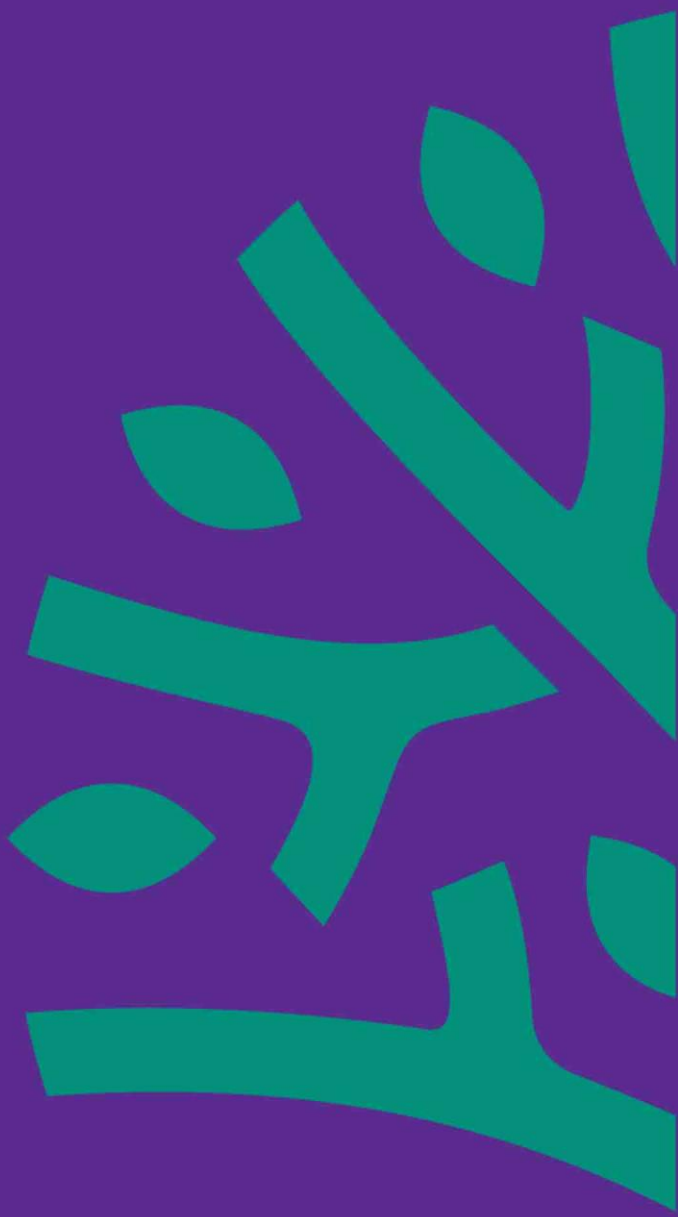
Evaluation of clusters of higher education and research institutions
Evaluation of higher education and research institutions
Evaluation of research
Evaluation of doctoral schools
Evaluation of programmes
International evaluation and accreditation



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