

AMRA Delegation Visit to the USA Miami and Washington DC September 29th, 2008- October 2nd, 2008

AMRA Delegation

Prof. Paolo Gasparini, President of AMRA, Università di Napoli Federico II

Prof. Umberto Arena, Member of AMRA's Executive Committee, Seconda Università di Napoli

Prof. Gaetano Manfredi, Member of AMRA's Executive Committee, Università di Napoli
Federico II (*Miami*)

Prof. Andrea Prota, AMRA Consultant, Università di Napoli Federico II

Dott. Alfonso Rossi Filangieri, Project Manager AMRA Scarl

Prof. Antonio Nanni, AMRA Consultant, University of Miami

Dr. Alejandra Collarte, AMRA Consultant, University of Miami

Dott. Gennaro Basile, Representative of Regione Campania Department for Research

Dott. Daniela Virone, Executive Director of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Canada
(*Miami*)

Dott. Alberto De Luca, President of the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Canada
(*Washington*)

MIAMI

Agenda

September 29th, 2008

Start time	End time	Item	Location
9:30	11:30	Visit to UM-RSMAS Facilities Presentations Discussion	UM-RSMAS Campus Host: Dr. Brian Haus

Start time	End time	Item	Location
1:00	3:00	Meeting at the United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOMM)	USSOUTHCOMM
3:30	5:00	Meeting at the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce	Italy-America Chamber of Commerce
8:00	9:45	Dinner at the Consul Residence	

September 30th, 2008

Start time	End time	Item	Location
10:00	1:00	Meeting at the College of Engineering	UM-Coral Gables Campus

Start time	End time	Item	Location
1:00	2:00	Business Lunch at the Faculty Club	UM-Coral Gables Campus
3:00	5:00	NAP of the Americas Host: Mr. Xavier Gonzalez, Director, Corporate Communications for Terremark Worldwide, Inc	50 NE 9th Street, Miami, FL

Meetings at the University of Miami

Visit to Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science (RSMAS) of University of Miami

The visit at University of Miami-Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science (RSMAS) was hosted by **Dr. Brian Haus**, Research Associate Professor in the Division of Applied Marine Physics, who briefly illustrated his activities at RSMAS. He mainly deals with experimental studies of coastal ocean surface current, wave-current interactions; sediment transport; laboratory studies of air-sea interactions and turbulence in the ASIST facility.

The AMRA delegation visited the ASIST-Air-Sea Interaction Salt-water Tank.

The ASIST is a unique facility for teaching and for researchers from around the world to study processes at or near the air-water interface in a well controlled environment with state-of-the-art technology.

Meeting with **Dr. Roland Romeiser**, Associated Professor at the Division of Applied Marine Physics.

Dr. Roland Romeiser illustrated the CSTARS (Center for Southeastern Tropical Advanced Remote Sensing) Programme.

CSTARS (Center for Southeastern Tropical Advanced Remote Sensing) is the University of Miami's newest facility, dedicated to conduct research with remotely sensed data received from earth-orbiting satellite systems.

Information from the CSTARS Facility can be used for terrestrial applications, coastal studies, storm studies, etc.

Meeting with **Dr. Joseph M. Prospero**, Director of the Cooperative Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Studies.

CIMAS is a research institute bringing together the research resources of the University with those of NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-United States Department of Commerce) in order to develop a center of excellence in research that is relevant to understanding the Earth's oceans and atmosphere

Both meetings were also attended also by Silvia Gremes Cordero, Ph.D student, Tomoyuky Shibata, Ph. D. Postdoctoral Associate, and other Ph.D students from RSMAS.

A general presentation of AMRA and its main fields of activity was given at the beginning of the meetings.

Brochures and Memory Sticks containing information on the Center of Competence were distributed as well.

Visit to University of Miami

The delegation had a short guided tour of the Campus

Meeting at **College of Engineering.**

H. Solo-Gabriele, Professor and Associate Dean of the College of Engineering, welcomed the AMRA delegation and gave an overview of the research activities of the

CoE. She expressed the interest of the College in collaborating with AMRA on the basis of several complementary activities and competences. She highlighted the interest in research activities dealing with energy recovery from polluted wood.

Paolo Gasparini explained the main features of the Center of Competence, the main fields of activities and the key perspectives for development in the Americas.

AMRA gave the following three presentations:

- P. Gasparini: Early warning as an approach for real time risk mitigation: the European Commission strategy and the role of AMRA
- G. Manfredi: Advanced research network for the protection of structures and infrastructures from earthquakes and man produced disasters in Italy
- U. Arena: Innovative aspects of municipal solid waste management and the scientific contribution of AMRA

The UM faculty gave the following three presentations:

- S. Negahdaripour: Automated Target or Event Detection, Tracking and Classification in Polluted Turbid Environments by Sonar Imaging
- J. Englehardt: Predictive Bayesian Risk Assessment in a Multiplicative Correlated World
- R.Meyer: Risk Research at the University of Miami: Overview and Prospectus

Brochures and Memory Sticks containing information on the Center of Competence and its main activities were distributed.

Main outcomes

On the basis of the discussions held during the two-day visit, AMRA and the University of Miami have clearly understood that both Institutions use similar conceptual innovative approaches, although having a complementary and integrated expertise (AMRA in experimental and numerical approaches in earthquake, volcanic, landslide and anthropogenic risks; UM in experimental and numerical approaches to marine atmospheric and flood risks)

Furthermore, AMRA is a unique example of a non-profit Consortium of five Universities and three National Research Agencies organized under the form of a private Company, also bringing the added value of its European experience.

In addition, AMRA can obtain immense advantages from a joint collaboration with UM due to the above mentioned similarities and complementarities and to its strategic objective in regards to the Latin American Region.

Therefore, AMRA and the University of Miami have agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding serving as an umbrella for further separate agreements on specific projects.

In addition, a first follow up of the meetings will be the visit of Prof. Shahriar Negahdaripour to AMRA, probably at the end of October.

Meetings at The United States Southern Command (U.S.- SOUTHCOM), MIAMI

Participant list from U.S. SOUTHCOM:

COL Richard Conforti	Vice Director, Partnering Directorate
Ms. Joanna Gutierrez	Vice Director, Regional Issues & Command Economic Advisor
Mr. William Clark	Disaster Preparedness/Assessment
Mr. Juan Hurtado	Deputy Director of Science and Technology & Command Science Advisor
Mr. William Knightly	Assistant Deputy Director, Training Readiness and Exercises
Mr. Mike Landry	Defense Critical Infrastructure Protection Program Manager
Lt Col John Perez	USAF Special Assistant to the Commander
MAJ Juan Zavala	Chief, Political/Military Integration
MAJ Hector Paz	Country Desk Officer
Mr. Cesar Gonzalez	Energy Specialist
CPT Sybily Maxam-Rogers	Energy Specialist

Col. Richard "Pony" Conforti gave a presentation of the organizational structure of U.S. SOUTHCOM and of its main activities both in the military and non-military fields.

U.S. SOUTHCOM is a joint command comprised of more than 1,200 military and civilian personnel representing the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and several other federal agencies.

The U.S. Southern Command Area of Focus encompasses more than 30 countries (Central and South America) and covers about 15.6 million square miles. The region represents about one-sixth of the landmass of the world assigned to regional unified commands

Helping partners in the region prepare for, and respond to, natural and man-made disasters is a key part of SOUTHCOM's humanitarian assistance efforts. The command works year-round on projects that enhance the capacity of host nations to respond and recover when disasters strike

Paolo Gasparini explained the main features of the Center of Competence, its main fields of activities and the key perspectives for development in the Americas.

AMRA gave the following four presentations:

- P. Gasparini: The Amra's activities in the Environmental Risk
- U. Arena: Sustainable management of solid wastes: the Amra's activities

- G. Manfredi: The Amra's approach to reduce seismic risk
- A. Prota: Homeland security: the Amra's activities

Brochures and Memory Sticks containing information on the Center of Competence were distributed to U.S. SOUTHCOM participants.

Main outcomes

Opportunities for cooperation with some Joint Interagency Coordination Groups (JIACGs) or some Interagency Partnering Committees were mentioned, as a result of the discussions.

Specific potential cooperation on matters related to Energy Cooperation and Security in Latin American Countries.

Two additional opportunities need to be considered for future discussion:

- 1. collaboration with the National Defense University, specifically with the STAR-TIDES (Sustainable Technologies, Accelerated Research-Transportable Infrastructures and Emergency Support) Project;**
- 2. potential connectivity for the Cooperative Security and Transnational Information Sharing Coalition programs**

Alejandra Collarte is the point of contact for both AMRA and University of Miami and will be in charge of continuing the efforts to further develop these opportunities.

Meeting at the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce

In addition to the AMRA delegation the following people attended the meeting:

Giampiero Di Persia - President of Italy-America Chamber of Commerce
Silvia Cadamuro - Executive Director of Italy-America Chamber of Commerce
Roberto Tagliero - Trade & Liaison Officer, Consulate General of Italy in Miami
Vice Consul of Italy in Miami
Gary Schumann – Enterprise Florida

Paolo Gasparini, Gaetano Manfredi and Umberto Arena informed the participants about the general features of AMRA and its main fields of activity, with special reference to Solid Waste Management, Early Warning Systems and Eco-Sustainable buildings.

Brochures and Memory Sticks containing information on the Center of Competence were distributed.

Giampiero Di Persia gave a general overview of the activities of the Chamber of Commerce in Miami.

Gary Schumann presented Enterprise Florida Inc. (EFI), a public-private partnership serving as Florida's primary organization devoted to state-wide economic development.

Main outcomes

AMRA will keep the Italy-America Chamber of Commerce informed on potential future initiatives in Florida, being the Chamber of Commerce available to give support, in case it's needed.

Meeting at the residence of the Consul General of Italy in Miami

The AMRA delegation had a dinner meeting at the residence of Dott. Mario Rocca, Consul General of Italy in Miami.

The Consul was informed of the objectives of the mission, of the meetings held in Miami and of the meetings to be held in Washington DC.

AMRA will inform the Consul of the results of the mission and will keep him informed of all the future developments.

A representative from Beacon Council, Pamela Fuentes -International Economic Development - Vice President, also attended the dinner.

The Beacon Council is Miami-Dade County's official economic development partnership, in charged with bringing new investments to the community, while assisting existing business in their efforts to expand.

The Beacon Council is also available to assist AMRA in regards to its competences.

Visit to NAP of the Americas- Terremark Worldwide Inc.

The delegation visited the building in Miami and Dr.Xavier Gonzales explained the main features of their facilities and the activities carried out by NAP

WASHINGTON, DC

Agenda

October 1st

- 3:00 PM **United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC)**
- 5.30 PM **Embassy of Panama**

October 2nd

- 10:00 AM **IDB Infrastructure and Environment Sector- Environment, Rural Development, and Disaster Risk Management Division**
- 11:00 AM **IDB Infrastructure and Environment Sector- Division Energy**
- 12:30 PM **IDB Private Sector Liaison, Office of the US Executive Director**
- 1:30 PM **World Bank Lunch Meeting**
- 3:00 PM **IDB Italy Executive Directors**

Meeting at United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC)

ECLAC Participant List:

Inés Bustillo; Director of the Washington office
Rex D.Garcia-Hidalgo; Office of Washington
Ricardo Zapata; Regional Advisor, Focal Point for Disaster Evaluation (videoconference)

ECLAC, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, is one of 5 regional commissions of the United Nations, each of which is concerned with assisting and promoting economic and social development in a major region of the world. The Commission also work in close cooperation with universities and research centers.

ECLAC has a wide range of activities in the field of natural disaster: tools and technologies for risk assessment, mitigation and adaptation; proposal of policies for reducing risks; reports on direct impact of disasters.

It also carries out training to internal staff and to the staff of other Institutions such as World Bank.

Paolo Gasparini, Andrea Prota and Umberto Arena informed ECLAC people about the general features of AMRA and its main fields of activity, with special reference to Solid Waste Management, experience in the field of risk assessment and mitigation and Eco-Sustainable buildings.

Material on AMRA and its activities were distributed.

As a result of the discussions, it was agreed that the main interest of ECLAC would be in regards to the expertise in studies related to estimating the socio-economic and environmental impacts of natural disasters.

Main outcomes

AMRA and ECLAC agreed on the mutual interest of exchanging further information on ongoing projects to better understand which would be the areas of collaboration between both organizations. A possible follow up of this activity could be the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding.

AMRA will send the CVs of its experts, so they can be included in the list of consultants of ECLAC and some “project results” as an example of its activities in the field of environmental disasters.

Meeting at the Embassy of Panama

Embassy Participant Lists:

Marco A. Mastellari; Economic Attachè
Veronica Jimenez-Isaza; Legal counselor

Antonio Nanni and Paolo Gasparini informed the Embassy representatives of the main objectives of the AMRA mission and of the mutual interests AMRA and UM have to set up a joint collaboration to pursue common goals in the Latin American Region.

One of the main goals is to establish a joint office in Panama to create the headquarters for a "UM-AMRA Regional Center of Excellence".

The location for this headquarter would be the City of Knowledge in Panama.

This "UM-AMRA Regional Center of Excellence" could address the needs of both Public and Private Sectors, the latter having the possibility of becoming partners, clients and beneficiaries of cutting-edge technologies.

The proposal was well received by the Embassy representatives and follow up meetings will be held in order to provide additional information about the nature of this project.

Mrs Jimenez-Isaza explained that one major problems in Panama is the pollution of the coastal waters. All the solutions that have already been offered are too expensive. Therefore, this could be a potential area of cooperation.

Main outcomes

Alejandra Collarte will continue the efforts to develop potential opportunities, on behalf of both AMRA and UM.

As a first follow-up, during a private meeting held with the VP of Panama, Alejandra Collarte informed the VP of the potential opportunities of collaboration, discussed during the trip to Washington DC and the idea of opening a "UM-AMRA Regional Center of Excellence" at the City of Knowledge. She also mentioned to the VP the proposal for a pilot project in the field of Solid Waste Management (the construction of a demonstrative scale Gasifier). Both ideas were very well received by the VP of Panama, who also offered his assistance and interest in regards to continuing the conversations at a future visit by UM-AMRA to Panama.

Paolo Gasparini will further investigate the possibility of a cooperation on the coastal remediation of Panama to be proposed to the Panama Government.

A joint AMRA and UM mission to Panama will be organized in the near future.

Meeting at IDB Infrastructure and Environment Sector- Environment, Rural Development, and Disaster Risk Management Division

IDB Participant List

Hector Malarian; Chief
Flavio Bazan; Senior Specialist

Paolo Gasparini explained the experience of AMRA in the field of natural disasters assessment and mitigation, giving an overview of the main projects with special reference to Early Warning Methodologies.

Brochures and Memory Sticks including a description of the main activities of AMRA and a copy of the book on Earthquake Early Warning were given to the IDB representatives.

Flavio Bazan gave an overview of the strategy and the policies of the Division and explained the main possibilities of funding. The Technical Cooperation is the most appropriate instrument for the type of activity of interest for AMRA.

Funds can be granted both on the basis of a competitive process and directly in some specific cases

Currently there are two projects under way:

- the first deals with seismic hazard in Lima (Peru) and is mainly focused on the microzonation of the city
- The second deals with hydro-geological and flood risks in Honduras, Belize, Guatemala and Bahamas

In the broader sense, IDB needs assistance for project design and therefore it needs to collaborate with consultants having a wide spectrum of competences.

Main outcomes

Alejandra Collajarte is the point of contact for both AMRA and University of Miami and will provide information on the future steps to participate in projects on seismic hazard and floods.

She will take care of keeping track of the projects in its different stages, as well as procurement of services, which can be of interest to AMRA. Alejandra Collarte will also make sure that AMRA complies with the necessary procedures, required by these multilateral organizations, in order to be able to provide them with its services.

The CVs of the main experts will be prepared (English and Spanish) and submitted to the division.

Meeting at IDB Infrastructure and Environment Sector- Energy Division

IDB Participant List

Arnaldo Vieira De Carvalho; Energy Specialist

Juan Pablo Bonilla; Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Initiative (SECCI) – Coordinator

Helen Merovich – Phd

The IDB representatives explained the main activities of the Energy Division with special reference to Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Initiative (SECCI).

The main aim/objective is to support the Latin American Countries to find economically and environmentally sound energy options.

This initiative is based on four pillars:

- Pillar 1: Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (RE/EE)
- Pillar 2: Biofuel Development
- Pillar 3: Increasing Access to Carbon Finance
- Pillar 4: Adaptation to Climate Change

Umberto Arena gave a detailed description of AMRA's activities and of its Fluidized Bed Gasifier.

The possibility of carrying out a pilot project on gasification, probably in Panama, was very well received as it fits very well with the SECCI priorities. The main financial instrument for this type of project is the Investment Fund that can fund activities up to 1.5 million dollars.

This initiative must be requested by the Government of Panama and they are the ones to apply for funding

Main outcomes

Alejandra Collajarte is the point of contact for both AMRA and UM.

She has started talks and will further develop conversations with the Government of Panama to prepare and submit the pilot project on gasification.

In its turn, AMRA has already started outlining the main structure of the project, stressing the reasons and the advantages of implementing it in Panama.

Meeting at IDB Private Sector Liaison, Office of the US Executive Director

USA Office Representative
Dr. Todd Fox

Antonio Nanni and Paolo Gasparini explained the main goals of the cooperation between AMRA and UM and of their joint mission to Washington. Dr. Fox explained the main role of his office and expressed his interest in being informed about all the future initiatives with the IDB

World Bank Lunch Meeting

World Bank Representative:
Francis Ghesquiere; Regional Coordinator Hazard Risk Management Latin America and Caribbean

Paolo Gasparini and Francis Ghesquiere had an in-depth discussion on the potential areas of cooperation between AMRA-UM and the World Bank. Dr. Ghesquiere expressed his interest in developing joint actions in the field of natural risks and his attention on Earthquake Early Warning Systems (he received a copy of the book on this topic as well as other informative materials on the main activities of AMRA).

Main outcomes

The main short term outcome of the meeting has been the request from Dr. Ghesquiere to organize a Workshop on Earthquake Early Warning Systems to be held at the World Bank in Washington DC.

Meeting at IDB Italy Executive Directors

Dr. Francesca Manno-Alternate Executive Director

Dr Francesca Manno was informed of the main goals of the visit to IDB and of the cooperation between AMRA and UM. She briefly explained her role at IDB and the main funding possibilities. She will be kept informed of all the future initiatives with IDB.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS OF THE MISSIONS TO MIAMI AND WASHINGTON

1. an agreement was signed with the Department of Information Technology of the University of Miami for the appointment of Alejandra Collarte, Director of International and Corporate Affairs, as AMRA Scarl consultant.
2. a Memorandum of Understanding is being signed with the University of Miami
3. a proposal for the construction of a pilot/demonstrative scale fluidized bed gasifier is being prepared for the Panama Government to be reviewed and if approved to be submitted by the Government of Panama to the International Development Bank for funding;
4. the feasibility of opening a AMRA-University of Miami joint office at Panama, Ciudad del Saber, is being studied.
5. a mission to Panama to discuss with the local Government points 3 and 4 will be organized in November;
6. development of activities of interest to U.S. SOUTHCOMM are being pursued by A. Collarte
7. the availability of IDB to assign to AMRA/UM feasibility studies on Earthquake hazard assessment in Peru and multirisk assessment in the Caribbean Region has been verified. The possibility will be pursued by A.Collarte and should occur early in 2009;
8. the World Bank is interested in having AMRA among its collaborators. P.Gasparini and G.Manfredi were invited to give a conference on Earthquake Early Warning and to attend a discussion on the implementation of collaboration. The mission must take place in January 2009.