

**A PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE THAI-DANISH BIOSHELF SURVEYS (1996–2000)
OF THE WEST COAST OF THAILAND, ANDAMAN SEA**

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ABSTRACT

The project 'Biodiversity of the Andaman Sea Shelf (BIOSHELF)' attempted to cover the west coast of Thailand, from the Burmese border in the north to the Malaysian border in the south. The objective of the project, during 1996–2000, was to expand our general knowledge of the diversity of benthos at depths down to 1000 m within the Thai Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ). Ninety-eight stations from twelve transects were sampled at depths of 40–900 m, with an extra sixteen stations in the Thai EEZ and three near-shore stations, ten stations from Phang-nga Bay, three stations near Racha Yai Island, and three stations near Racha Noi Island. Materials were collected using the following equipment—Olsen box corer, Smith-McIntyre grab, Ockelmann detritus sledge, Percy-Rothlisberg epibenthic sledge, triangular dredge, heavy rectangular dredge, beam trawl, 2 m Agassiz trawl, otter trawl, and baited traps. Samples of polychaetes, crustaceans, molluscs, and fishes are currently being worked up. Some recent BIOSHELF material will be distributed to various specialists. The remaining material will be studied in greater detail in the future. This interim report gives an itinerary of the cruises and addresses progress, problems, comments and future plans for activities conducted under the BIOSHELF Project.