First Brazilian Symposium on Dunes Systems and International Symposium on Coastal Dunes: A Report of Meeting

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The First Brazilian Symposium on Dunes Systems and International Symposium on Coastal Dunes (Management and Sustainable Development) were held on the Marina Park Hotel in Fortaleza, CE, Brazil, from August 24, 2005, to August 28, 2005.1 Luís Parente Maia and coworkers at the Institute of Marine Sciences at Federal University of Ceará (LABOMAR/UFC) organized the meeting. Cosponsors provided assistance in many ways that helped to make the meeting a success. Travel grants were made available to plenary speakers from overseas. With nearly 100 delegates in attendance, this was the largest single grouping on coastal dune research in Brazil. Because the main theme of the meeting focused on coastal sand dunes management and sustainable development, a range of research was presented by researchers with professional backgrounds in physics, geography, geology, biology, and various social and human sciences.

The format of the meeting included oral presentations, poster sessions, and a 3-day field excursion along the coast in Ceará (Jericoacoara Dune Field). All of the professional talks were presented in single plenary sessions with no concurrent sessions. This arrangement was effective because it provided participants with different professional training to appreciate new or different points of view. Half of the talks were delivered in English and half in Portuguese, both with simultaneous translation. The talks were of high quality and were accompanied by ample time for questions and discussion.

The venue for the meeting was appropriate, as the Jericoacoara are among the largest coastal dunes in the world, with slip face height between 40 and 60 m, and constitute important protected areas and tourist and recreational areas where many important economic and social activities are concentrated. It is thus evident that the increasing socio-economic pressure on this coastal dunes system calls for great understanding of the patterns of use and abuse if this fragile environment is to be conserved or maintained. This international meeting was therefore convened in an effort to draw attention to the need for research focused on this important ecosystem and to acquire an appreciation of efforts in Brazilian states and in other countries to apply the best management practices in coastal dunes systems.

The Institute of Marine Sciences at Federal University of Ceará (LABOMAR/UFC) and The Center of Earth and Marine Science and Technological at Univeristy of Vale do Itajaí (CTTMar/UNIVALI) groups decided to jointly organize the First Brazilian Symposium on Dune Systems for the overarching purpose of convening a meeting of Brazilian coastal dunes researchers that would encourage dissemination of research results in this thematic area to national and international scientific communities. Their intent was that this event would become a forum for discussion of this important coastal ecosystem. The attraction of the symposium, based on its potential scientific value to the coastal research community, gathered most of the Brazilian coastal researchers at one location where ideas could be exchanged, considered, and discussed. During the course of the technical sessions, 29 scientific papers were presented; there were also 13 technical presentations that were specifically devoted to the main theme of the meeting.

The symposium, convened by LABOMAR (UFC) and CTTMar (UNIVALI), was cosponsored by the Master on Geography (UFC), Brazilian Association of Oceanography, North Regional Brazilian Geology Association and Brazilian Association of Quaternary Studies, and Brazilian Institute of Environment, and supported by the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, Volkswagen Stiftung, Environment State of Ceará Secretary, SEBRAE, and Brazilian Research Council (CNPq, process number 452113/03-2). The event was also cospon-