

John Heidelberg of TIGR headed off the talks with a presentation on what TIGR and the Venter Institute are doing towards marine metagenomics. Metagenomics is very much an exploratory science and does not test theories or models. John described the results of their shotgun sequencing work off of Bermuda that consisted of 4 samples and 1.6 million sequence reads. In this work, they detected 1,100 16S sequences. There is a second expedition going on called the Global Ocean Survey that in part aims to trace the steps of the Beagle and Challenger Expeditions. It began in Bermuda and is currently in Australia. John and colleagues Bill Nelson and Ed DeLong are developing a database to make the data from these voyages available to the scientific community. They are searching for ways to make the data they have collected useful to other researchers. Researchers would probably be happier with metabolic maps but these are still a long way from becoming readily available. So far they have 7.7 million reads, 3 million assemblies and 4.5 billion base pairs of DNA.