

*Evolving European Ocean Observing*  
*Connecting communities for end-to-end solutions*

**21-23 November 2018, Brussels**

**Call to action**

What happens in our seas and oceans profoundly affects climate, weather and the livelihoods of billions who depend upon their resources. Technological progress is making marine resources more accessible, offering real solutions for clean energy and better health through resource-efficient food and breakthrough medicines. All these are essential to meet the needs of an increasing global human population if we are to avoid a climate catastrophe (IPCC; 2018<sup>1</sup>).

Systematic observing and monitoring of our seas and oceans delivers crucial data and information to underpin the knowledge we need to revolutionise the blue economy<sup>2</sup> and improve our understanding of ocean health, geohazards, and the oceans' role in climate regulation. We therefore need to ensure that enough of the right observations are being made now and into the future.

European countries and the EU have already invested significantly in ocean observing infrastructure and technology. Numerous observing platforms and coordination networks exist; some activities are already well coordinated at national, sea-basin, European and global levels. More connections are now needed across all communities to ensure coherent priority setting, to foster collaborations, to increase efficiency and to provide long-term sustainability. We have to move beyond current short-term solutions to substantially enhance the applicability and value of ocean observations as a "public utility" for the benefit of all society.

We welcome the efforts undertaken to date to strengthen the coordination framework of ocean observing in Europe. An open and inclusive process is now imperative to move forward.

***We therefore call on European countries and the EU to examine what is currently being done under their responsibility and establish roadmaps with specific actions and indicators to move towards a more integrated, transparent and coordinated approach. The following key actions should be undertaken:***

- 1. Countries should coordinate all national marine and coastal data collection efforts to improve efficiency, and identify priorities and gaps to meet policy and societal needs. Observations should be standardised and operationalised within and across regional seas, building on the work done via existing regional coordination frameworks;**
- 2. EU agencies and authorities should consider how the EU can best rationalize its investment and activities related to ocean observing activities. This requires a concerted effort to ensure that different EU investments in marine and coastal data collection infrastructures are better connected and are linked to existing data management and sharing initiatives; and**
- 3. Both national and European authorities should support integration and drive innovation in infrastructure and technology development to reduce the cost and expand the coverage of ocean data collection, while optimising data analyses, synthesis and use.**

Possible further actions are suggested in an implementation plan prepared by some of the observing community (see <http://www.eoos-ocean.eu/strategy-and-implementation/>) which is a living document intended to encourage continued community contributions.

Progress of this Call to Action will be evaluated in one year's time by the members of the conference advisory committee, with support from the co-organising secretariats.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://report.ipcc.ch/sr15/pdf/sr15\\_spm\\_final.pdf](http://report.ipcc.ch/sr15/pdf/sr15_spm_final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> all economic activities related to oceans, seas and coastal areas