



EurOCEAN

ONE OCEAN ONE VOICE 2023

Vigo Declaration

Speaking with One Voice to achieve the One Ocean we want.



The Vigo Declaration was adopted on 11 October 2023 at the EurOCEAN 2023 Conference (10-11 October 2023, Vigo, Spain).

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Speaking with One Voice to achieve the One Ocean we want.

Climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss are pressing issues for humanity. Considering that the Ocean has long been impacted by human activities, and that all people depend directly or indirectly on the Ocean, we call on Europe to take responsibility and show leadership to live within Ocean and planetary boundaries, promote greater social and economic justice and ensure that all society benefits from our One Ocean. **The European marine science community will work together to provide transdisciplinary, science-based policy advice to all levels of governance (from local to international).**

Current geopolitics call for open strategic autonomy to ensure the resilience of the European Union (EU) through the achievement of long-term objectives of a greener, more digital, and more cohesive Europe. However, there is one global Ocean, connecting all areas of the planet. Actions taken in Europe or elsewhere have an impact both locally and globally. Thus, we must collaborate globally and act responsibly to ensure that we sustainably manage our interactions with our Seas and the global Ocean, while ensuring global equity and sustainability. **Equity and inclusion should be at the core of all actions, ensuring that the best decisions are made to leave no one behind.**

We, the European marine science community, represented at the EuroOCEAN 2023 Conference, acknowledge all efforts to advance knowledge of our Seas and Ocean gathered through international, EU, regional, Member and Associated States' research and management initiatives. We support the strategic objectives of the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030 and commit to engaging with its implementation and will strive to deliver the science we need for the Ocean we want under the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030).

Achieving climate neutrality, reducing pollution and restoring nature will not be possible without Ocean knowledge. We call for:

- **INTEGRATED LAND-SEA POLICIES AND MANAGEMENT:** European, regional, and national governments should ensure that the Integrated Maritime Policy is aligned with Land Policies for coherent, adaptive management of socio-ecological systems that address multiple-stressors including pollution, climate change impacts and biodiversity loss.
- **SUSTAINED AND BETTER COORDINATED OCEAN OBSERVATION:** Policy makers and science funders at all levels of governance should recognise and support the essential role of coordinated Ocean Observation to deliver Ocean Knowledge, and an open, accessible, and fit for purpose European Digital Twin of the Ocean.
- **COMMITTED CITIZENS:** Science funders and scientific institutions should support all forms of citizen engagement including Ocean Literacy, science communication, citizen science, the arts, and sporting events that focus on Ocean Literacy, to ensure citizen's empathy towards the Ocean and engagement in Ocean sustainability solutions.

To speak with One Voice to advance consensus on Ocean sustainability and provide transdisciplinary, science-based policy advice to all levels of governance, marine science and maritime communities will work together to identify common goals, research objectives, methodologies, and technologies to ensure that data collection take place at the appropriate time- and spatial scales, including in Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction. Speaking with One Voice highlights the need for all Ocean scientists to work towards a common goal, as highlighted in the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) and the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030. We welcome the vision of the EU's Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership and support the European Commission's efforts to ensure that Europe's Blue Economy is ecologically and socially sustainable within and beyond EU waters. Decarbonising our economy should not create sustainability problems nor damage vulnerable areas, ecosystems, or sectors within or outside Europe, and the extraction of raw materials outside of European waters should not disadvantage global citizens or cause any further biodiversity loss in the Ocean. We will work to co-create the solutions with all stakeholders.

To ensure integrated, adaptive, land-sea policies, management should take place across socio-ecological systems at the land-sea interface as done in Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM). We welcome the leadership shown by the EU in setting ambitious targets for achieving Good Environmental Status and for protecting and restoring marine ecosystems. However, managing our marine and terrestrial systems separately creates a discontinuity that hampers the resilience of coastal communities and systems. All aspects of land-sea-society interactions should be holistically included in EU policies. This will require greater support for social sciences and humanities research in relation to our interaction with the marine environment.

To obtain sustained and better coordinated Ocean observation, we call on the next European Commission to deliver the Ocean observation – sharing responsibility initiative as a priority to enable the objectives of the European Ocean Observing System (EOOS) Framework and support the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS). **To ensure that the European Digital Twin of the Ocean (DTO) is fit for purpose, open, and accessible to all,** we call on its developers and the European Commission to ensure that it is co-designed with stakeholders and adequately supported by Ocean data, managed according to the FAIR and CARE principles. The DTO will only be fit for purpose if its models are initialized and validated with sufficient observations and monitoring data at the appropriate temporal and spatial scales. Therefore, while the DTO is significant, it must not diminish the critical task of tackling ongoing obstacles that impede the coordination and sustained operation of the Ocean and Coastal observation systems, along with the sustained monitoring of Essential Ocean Variables.

To ensure committed Ocean citizens, we call on funders to recognize and fund citizen engagement activities, such as Ocean Literacy, science communication, citizen science, the arts and sporting events that focus on Ocean Literacy. The EU Missions offer an excellent opportunity to highlight the fundamental importance of the Ocean as part of the planetary system to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, also highlighted in the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030). The skills needed for co-creation, science communication and citizen engagement are critical for raising public awareness and empathy towards the challenges facing the Ocean and society and should be recognised and rewarded in academic careers.

If we can agree on a common goal, speak with One Voice, promote a system approach, collect sufficient Ocean data and co-design the DTO to be fit for purpose, we will be closer to managing our interactions with the Ocean to be sustainable.

10-11 October 2023

Auditorio y Palacio de Congresos Mar de Vigo
Vigo, Galicia, Spain

One Ocean, One Mission, One Decade - One Voice

EuroOCEAN conferences are major European marine science-policy conferences organized every 4-5 years. They provide a forum for the marine and maritime research community and wider stakeholders to interface with European and Member State policymakers and strategic planners. The aim of the EuroOCEAN 2023 science-policy conference is to highlight the synergies between the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030, other EU research and innovation, and management initiatives, and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. EuroOCEAN conferences attract marine policy makers, marine scientists, science stakeholders and communicators, maritime industry representatives and European and national decision makers and programme managers, i.e. those that set, manage and implement the marine science agenda.

More information at <http://www.euroceanconferences.eu/>

The EuroOCEAN 2023 conference supports the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030 and the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.



2021
2030 United Nations Decade
of Ocean Science
for Sustainable Development

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