



JUNE 2024 NEWSLETTER

*Bridging the Gap between
Ocean and Coastal Observation and Prediction and
Societal Needs to Deliver Actionable Information*

Announcements

Executive Director Emily Smail moves on to new adventures!

Dear GEO Blue Planet community,

After 8+ years, I decided it was time to take a leap and try something new. I also felt it was time to give our rising stars like Audrey and our Knauss fellows the opportunity to advance their leadership roles. I've had an amazing time working with you on GEO Blue Planet. I have loved seeing our community grow and support each other.

I started out my next chapter by launching an LLC, EcoSciSolutions, and was lining up consulting work for international activities and keeping the lookout for leadership opportunities in the US government and other arenas. Through my networking process, I was linked up with SSAI who offered me the opportunity to join their program leadership team. I will be working with them to support contracts at NASA Goddard. I'm excited about the opportunity to learn about other areas of Earth Observations such as Atmospheric Science and Global Modeling and Data Assimilation. I'm hoping these new experiences will allow me to support the ocean and coastal communities in integration into Earth System science.

I will always be part of the GEO Blue Planet community and look forward to continuing to work with you all in the future. I know this is a challenging time for many people in our community who are facing budgetary restraints. My thoughts are with you and I'm always here to help. You can connect with me anytime via LinkedIn. Don't be a stranger!

Just keep swimming!

Emily



**From the whole GEO Blue Planet Community, Emily,
THANK YOU for your time and dedication.
You have made GEO Blue Planet what it is today.
See all messages from the community [here](#)**

Natalie Lerma joins GEO Blue Planet as a Knauss fellow for 2024



Natalie R. Lerma joined GEO Blue Planet in February as a 2024 John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellow. In 2019, she graduated with a B.S. in Offshore and Coastal Systems Engineering, with minors in Mathematics and Maritime Administration from Texas A&M University-Galveston. She is pursuing her Ph.D. in Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Virginia. Her primary research interests include urban coastal flooding and the integration of Earth Observations (EO) with crowd-sourced data for collaborative, environmentally conscious stormwater management. Her work at GEO Blue Planet builds upon these interests by bridging water quantity (i.e., flooding) and water quality approaches to promote a holistic, systems-thinking approach to water resource management.

The Knauss fellowship is a prestigious NOAA Sea Grant fellowship that provides educational and professional experience to graduate students with an interest in ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources. GEO Blue Planet has hosted four Knauss Fellows to date, all of whom have contributed significantly to the success of GEO Blue Planet.

The GEO Blue Planet EU Office is seeking a new program officer

The successful candidate will provide scientific and technical support to Mercator Ocean International's activities aimed at bringing ocean science closer to policy-making by encouraging the co-design and co-development of concrete and relevant ocean information. These activities are carried out as part of the European office of the international GEO Blue Planet initiative, which is coordinated by Mercator Ocean International.



[Apply Here](#)

Upcoming GEO Secretariat and Regional GEOs Symposia

Find out more by clicking on each announcement. Let us know if you are involved in the organisation or if you are planning to attend.



Welcome to the new era of EuroGEO

EuroGEO is advancing Earth Observation (EO) in Europe with key initiatives aimed at **research, collaboration, and sustainability**. Plans that are presently unfolding include establishing a **dedicated Secretariat** to support coordination and research funding, developing a collaborative user uptake strategy with institutional partners, and **enhancing innovation and international cooperation**. These efforts align with the European Green Deal and the new GEO post-25 strategy, ensuring EuroGEO's contributions to global EO initiatives. The future of EuroGEO will be discussed at the EuroGEO Workshop 2024 in Krakow, Poland, solidifying its role in sustainable EO practices.

For inquiries, please contact: Thierry Ranchin, MINES ParisTech
contact@eurogeo.eu



GEO Blue Planet at the Ocean Predict Symposium

GEO Blue Planet sits at the Science Committee of the 11th Ocean Predict Symposium and will be giving a keynote at the session 7 "User applications and societal benefits".

The OceanPredict Symposium (OP'24) is planned as a four-day event (Monday to Thursday) and will focus on the development of the operational oceanography for societal benefit.

The Symposium will seek to:

accelerate the evolution of operational oceanography;

identify the growing and changing needs of users and how to enhance service delivery;

align the objectives with the goals of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (UN Ocean Decade, 2021-2030).



Join us by pre-registering and/or submitting an abstract until June 17th following [this link](#).

Recent GEO Blue Planet Events

Ocean Observation and Prediction for Coastal Sustainability in Africa



The workshop held in Nairobi 4-7 March 2024 convened experts and stakeholders to address pressing challenges facing Africa's oceans and coastal areas, recognizing the critical importance of sustainable ocean governance. With a focus on fostering a comprehensive strategy, the workshop aimed to leverage innovative technologies and enhance community engagement to catalyse cooperation for coastal sustainability in Africa.

Key aspects of the workshop included discussions on the value-chain approach to addressing **Shoreline Changes, Coastal Flooding and Inundation, Coastal Ecosystem Mapping and Coastal Waters Quality**, leveraging innovative technologies for comprehensive ocean and coastal monitoring, and enhancing community engagement through accessible tools and knowledge. During 2 days of plenaries and 2 days of parallel working session, participants explored strategies to bridge the gap between data and societal needs, emphasizing stakeholder engagement, cooperation, and capacity development.



Overall, the workshop provided a platform for experts and stakeholders to **exchange knowledge, share best practices, and develop strategies** to address coastal challenges in Africa, with a focus on building resilient and sustainable ocean economies for future generations.



[Access the Final Report](#)



[Access the Event Page](#)

UN Decade Conference



GEO Blue Planet has supported two satellite events in the framework of the Ocean Decade Conference 2024 in Barcelona, 8-12 April 2024.

Connecting the world around Ocean prediction: A vision for the Decade and beyond

Co-organised by the Ocean Prediction Decade Collaborative Centre and GEO Blue Planet, with funding from EU4OceanObs, this satellite event fostered a dynamic dialogue, followed by a networking reception with posters on the applications of prediction. This event has promoted action and foster collaborations under the “Predicted Ocean” outcome of the Decade towards a society that understands and can respond to changing ocean conditions.



[Replay and Presentations](#)



[Access the Event Page](#)

DT04ECOPS: Leveraging Ocean Data Networks with Cloud Technologies To Deliver the Ocean We Want, Today & Tomorrow

Co-organised by GEO Blue Planet in partnership with EDITO-Infra, Iliad and Invemar, the workshop has revisited existing ocean data sharing efforts across regions, including data & information management and capacity building initiatives and networks and take stock of ongoing ocean digital twinning efforts with a view to discuss how early career ocean professionals (ECOPs) can leverage these efforts and technologies to catalyse the successful delivery of Ocean Decade goals.



[Access the Final Report](#)



[Access the Event Page and Presentations](#)

Activities and Working Groups

If you wish to join a working group, send an email to info@geoblueplanet.org and we'll invite you to the next meeting.

Marine Litter Working Group

The Integrated Marine Debris Observing System (IMDOS) task team of the working group is moving forward with:

- Call for interest for new participants and for the constitution of the Steering Committee. It will soon be published on <http://imdos.org/>
- The news SC will be announced in September followed a first SC meeting on 2 Oct tbc.
- IMDOS is working closely with the UNEP GPML in the objective to support the continuing development of their digital platform.

IMDOS was present at the [4th session of the Intergov Negotiating Committee](#) for a global treaty in April in Ottawa.

Sargassum Working Group

The Sargassum WG has met monthly in 2024, with presentation duets on US capacity in remote sensing, diplomatic actions in the Caribbean, Modelling developments and Sargassum in Africa.

- Task Team 1 on the Sargassum Hub is working on updating the content of the website, a single access point to all information on Sargassum monitoring. <https://sargassumhub.org/>
- Task Team 3 is working on an In Situ Integrated Observing System to guide countries to develop monitoring programmes that will serve both regional warning systems and research.
- GEO Blue Planet is working on this topic with IOCARIBE and the UNEP Cartagena Convention to promote synergies.

Fisheries Working Group

The Fisheries WG is meeting monthly and manages 3 active actions on best practices for Earth Observations (EO) for Tuna Fisheries Management, the use of EO data for the fisheries sector and user requirements for forecast products for fisheries are also underway.

The WG is also drafting a concept note for an in-person meeting for the end of 2024/early 2025 in Rome, Italy titled "Earth Observation and prediction for global sustainable fisheries management". This stakeholder engagement workshop is thus aimed at enhancing cooperation between stakeholders and the fisheries experts to facilitate the use of EO-based information for global sustainable fisheries management.

The collection of stakeholder priorities and requirements in terms of EO and prediction are expected to stimulate the improvement of present and the shaping of future fisheries management solutions and applications.

Expected outcomes include:

- State of Art of EO application to Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Gaps and Barriers of using EO to Fisheries Management
- Coordination with Stakeholders
- Recommendations for Implementation



More news from the Fisheries Working Group: FAO releases "The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2024"

The Fisheries Working Group is glad to share that the FAO has released the [SOFIA 2024 report](#).

Published every two years since 1994, SOFIA has become, over the years, a key reference for governments, policymakers, practitioners, academics, and civil society organizations, guiding the conservation and effective management of marine resources, contributing to a healthy and productive Ocean.

Climate Adaptation Working Group

Members of this working group are wrapping up a white paper that will be presented to the UNFCCC to be supplementary material to the National Adaptation Plans guidelines. Co-authored by GEO Blue Planet and HEREON (Germany), this paper is currently titled "*The UNFCCC National Adaptation Plan Process for Coastal and Ocean Adaptation – Recommendations for Developing Supplementary Guidelines*".

Coastal Geomorphology, Oil Spill, Inundation and Flooding and Eutrophication Working Groups

These Working Groups are dormant or going at a slower pace since the beginning of the year. We will let members and the broader community know as we revive activities.

