



MARCH 2025 NEWSLETTER

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

Announcements

Natalie Lerman, 2024 Knauss fellow finishes a year with GEO Blue Planet



Natalie R. Lerma joined GEO Blue Planet in February 2024 as a John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellow, stationed within the Satellite Oceanography and Climatology Division of NOAA NESDIS, while pursuing a Ph.D. in Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Virginia. Her work at GEO Blue Planet builds upon her experience and interests by bridging water quantity (i.e., flooding) and water quality data to promote a source-to-sea approach to nutrient management of water resources. At the request of UNEP, Natalie led efforts to identify GEO Work Programmes ready to collaborate to deliver a full view of the Nutrient life cycle to inform national action plans targeting a reduction of

nutrient pollution. In addition to facilitating multiple meetings with UNEP and GEO Work Programmes representatives, she served as a speaker and panelist at numerous sessions at the GEO Symposium and Open Data Open Knowledge Workshop in Hangzhou, China.

Natalie contributed to designing and hosting a workshop with the objective of connecting the GEO Work Programme and UNEP representatives to discuss global remotely sensed monitoring for national action plans on sustainable nutrient and nitrogen species management. Held in Paris, France, the workshop affirmed the need for a GEO-aided task team to monitor nutrients and nitrogen.

'I am deeply grateful to the GEO Blue Planet team for their trust and support throughout my Knauss fellowship. [...] Understanding the knowledge-action gap from a broader lens affirmed my belief in the importance of thoughtful and user-centered approaches to communicating science. I look forward to seeing the meaningful work that GEO Blue Planet, NOAA, and Mercator continue to do.'

Daphné Lecellier joins us as Programme Officer at the EU Office hosted by Mercator Ocean

Daphne Lecellier joined GEO Blue Planet in October 2024 as Program Manager. In 2018, she graduated a M.Sc. in Environmental Engineering from Ecole Polytechnique (France) and KTH - Royal Institute of Technology (Sweden). She has proven experience in scientific and environmental diplomacy. Her previous positions include 2 years at the Science and Technology Service of the Embassy of France in Japan and 3 years as the French negotiator on Carbon Markets under the Paris Agreement. Her work at GEO Blue Planet focuses on Marine Litter with the coordination of IMDOS and on fisheries.



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

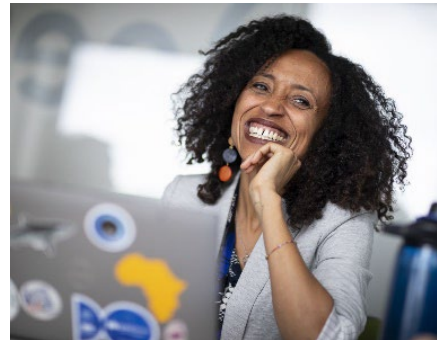
As Lillian Diarra, our esteemed colleague, is taking a significant step forward as the Programme Manager for a new EU project, Ocean Prediction Enhancement in Regions of Africa (OPERA), Mercator Ocean International (MOi) is looking for a communication and user engagement officer supporting the communication activities of the EU project EU4OceanObs. French is not mandatory. Non-EU citizens will be considered too.



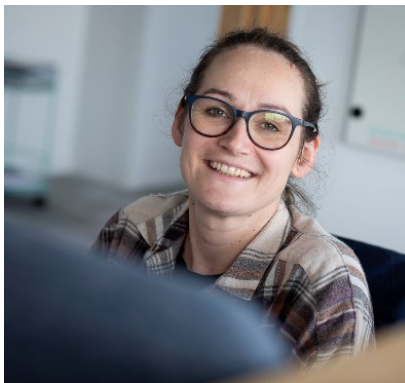
[Apply Here](#)

While Lillian remains at Mercator Ocean Intl, she will be greatly missed at GEO Blue Planet, where she played a crucial role in developing the new website, supporting events, and providing communication materials for the website, LinkedIn, and X.

A heartfelt thank you, Lillian, from the entire GEO Blue Planet community!



Audrey Hasson appointed Executive Director of GEO Blue Planet



Dr. Audrey Hasson has been appointed as the new Executive Director of GEO Blue Planet. As the EU Coordinator for GEO Blue Planet and a physical oceanographer at Mercator Ocean International, Dr. Hasson has played a key role in strengthening global collaborations, enhancing data accessibility, and supporting policy-driven solutions for ocean sustainability with GEO Blue Planet.

In this new role, she will lead GEO Blue Planet's efforts to expand Earth observation applications for ocean and coastal management, ensuring that decision-makers, researchers, and stakeholders have access to critical information for addressing marine challenges.

Upcoming GEO Global Forum in Rome, May 2025

GEO Blue Planet will be attending the GEO Global Forum, with a booth in the exhibition area and two community side events proposed on Nutrient Monitoring and on Sargassum.

If you wish to meet with us or share some videos, brochures or anything else at the GEO Blue Planet Booth, send an email to info@geoblueplanet.org

GEO Blue Planet will also be presenting at the EU booth in the exhibition area. If you wish to present a video or a e-poster to the EU booth you may contact organisers here: [EUSurvey - Survey](#)

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



The UN Ocean Conference and associated events are just around the corner!

The third UN Ocean Conference (UNOC3) will take place in Nice, France, in June 2025, bringing together global leaders, scientists, and stakeholders to drive action for ocean sustainability. GEO Blue Planet will take an active role in the conference and associated events.



**UN OCEAN
CONFERENCE
NICE 2025
FRANCE**

GEO Blue Planet will be contributing to the One Ocean Science Congress (OOSC), participating in the UNOC Green Zone's Digital Ocean Pavilion, and co-organizing and engaging in key side events. These efforts will highlight the importance of Earth observation in ocean management and policy. More details on GEO Blue Planet's involvement will be shared soon—stay tuned for updates on this important global event.

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

Secretariat Lead: Daphné Lecellier

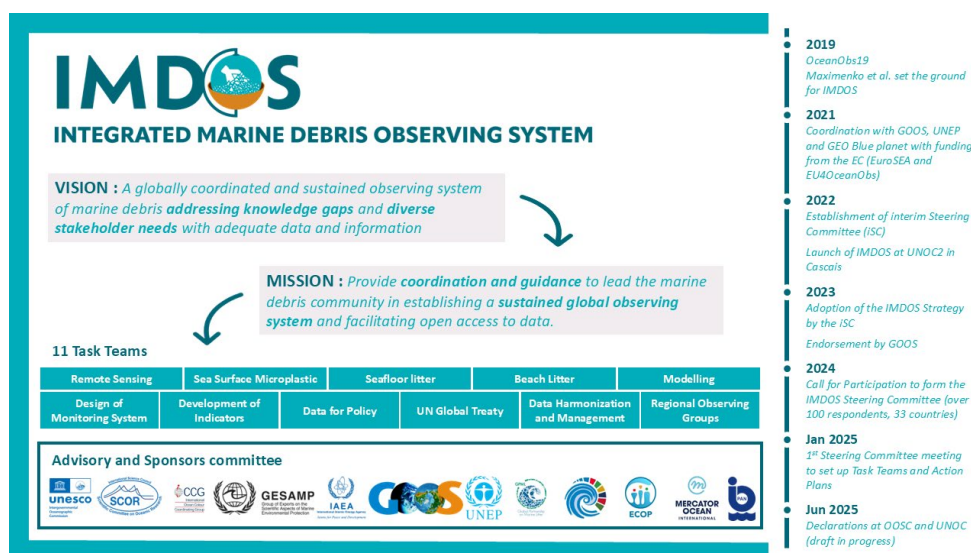
The Integrated Marine Debris Observing System (IMDOS) supported by the working group is moving forward with 11 task teams with 2 co-chairs that have been identified

Last summer's Call for interest for new participants and for the constitution of the Steering Committee was very successful with over 100 responders from 34 countries.

The new SC was formed and had a **1st in person hybrid SC meeting in Paris, January 8th 2025**. The SC is composed of co-chairs of the 11 task teams and ex-officio members of the Advisory and Sponsors committee. The SC reviewed existing monitoring activities and discussed possible Task Team Action Plans for the first year, years 2-5, and beyond. Emphasizing the need for sustained funding, they explored financial sources to ensure IMDOS's long-term viability and enhance awareness of marine debris issues

SC composition, report of meeting and more information are available here: <https://imdos.org/news>

IMDOS is working closely with the UNEP GPML in the objective to support the continuing development of their digital platform. IMDOS will be present at the Community of Practice meeting in Monaco 11-13 March 2025.



GEO Blue Planet to focus support on the 3 "stakeholder engagement" Task Teams

- Data to Policy
- Link with the treaty
- Coordination of Regional actions

Daphné has represented IMDOS at the [5th session of the Intergov Negotiating Committee](#) for a global treaty in November in Busan. See below. A second leg of this session will take place in Geneva, 4-15 August 2025. IMDOS is already planning to attend.

IMDOS will be presented by Belen Alfonso (Kyushu University) at the coming Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Workshop on Marine Litter held in Bangkok, in March 2025.

This WG will be presented at the One Ocean Science Congress and at the Digital Ocean Pavilion of UNOC3 and is working on hosting green zone side event.

Sargassum Working Group

Secretariat Lead: Audrey Hasson

The WG is composed of about 30+ members from all stakeholder groups. It has been identified as the expert group on monitoring by main actors (IOCARIBE, UNEP Cartagena Convention, etc) 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.

6 Task Teams have been identified with priority given to:

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/> This update is supported by the EU4OceanObs project.

Task Team 2. Community lead decision support tool, which will be developed in the framework of the SargCOOP2 Interreg project piloted by the Region Guadeloupe.

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.

A community event has been proposed at the GEO Global Forum.

This WG will be presented at the One Ocean Science Congress and at the Digital Ocean Pavilion of UNOC3 and is working on hosting blue and green zones side events.



SAVE THE DATE //////////////////////////////////////

As part of the launch of the second phase of the sargassum cooperation programme (SARGCOOP II), the Regional Council of Guadeloupe is pleased to invite you to an international sequence on sargassum to be held from 25 to 28 March 2025 in Guadeloupe.

This international sequence will address the following points in dedicated workshops :

- High-level meeting of members of the French international initiative on sargassum
- Steering committee for the official launch of the SARGCOOP II programme
- Presentation of the results of the study to set up an air quality network in the Caribbean.
- Presentation of the results of the study on national policy responses to sargassum influxes conducted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

Date : from 25th to 28th of march 2025
📍 Guadeloupe.

The detailed programme for this international event will be sent to you in February 2025.



Fisheries Working Group

Secretariat Lead: Daphné Lecellier

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 planning for an in-person workshop for the fall of 2025 with the Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) Secretariat Networks (RSN). The workshop is titled "Earth Observation and prediction for global sustainable fisheries management". This stakeholder engagement workshop is 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



Climate Adaptation Working Group

Secretariat Lead: Audrey Hasson

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 "*Coastal and ocean adaptation: Recommendations to improve the inclusion of coastal and ocean adaptation requirements in the development of National Adaptation Plans*". The paper is foreseen be declined in short version for the UNFCCC and a longer Technical Report.



The document will be launched at the NAP EXPO 2025, 8-11 April 2025 in Zambia.

This work will be presented at UNOC3, in the Digital Ocean Pavilion and discussions are on-going for the organisation of a dedicated side event (Green Zone).

Eutrophication Working Group

Secretariat Lead: Merrie Beth Neely

This Working Group focus is currently being discussed with members to reflect advances in current and past actions and the work done by Natalie Lerma (Knauss Fellow 2024 @ US Office).

This WG is seeking new members and 2 new co-chairs, as current co-chairs are wishing to step down - Merrie Beth Neely (NOAA) and Keith VanGraafeiland (ESRI). If you are interested in joining or self-nominating for co-chair, please email mbneely@geoblueplanet.org.

ESRI is autonomous in providing data for the indicator SDG 14.1.1a to UNEP. Methodology is in the process of being written up for publication with Emily Smail (NOAA) leading the process.

New activities with the UNEP Global Partnership on Nutrient Management (GPNM) and the UNEP Working Group on Nitrogen are being explored to convene the GEO Work Programme to provide a coordinated answer to their needs along the entire nutrient lifecycle.

The GEO Blue Planet Nutrient Monitoring workshop took place on January 9, 2025, in Paris, funded by the EU4OceanObs2 Horizon Project and organized by GEO Blue Planet, with support from UNEP. The workshop aimed to assess the need for a task team to coordinate cross-GEO efforts in nutrient and nitrogen species monitoring using Earth observation data. Experts from UNEP and some representatives of the Work Programme discussed leveraging satellite remote sensing to support UNEP in developing National Action Plans to reduce pollution. Key outcomes included establishing the task team's scope, defining its strategy and deliverables for the first 24 months, and setting next steps for implementation. Further discussions helped shape the team's objectives and future direction. The Workshop Summary Report is available [here](#).



A community event has been proposed at the GEO Global Forum.

Coastal changes, Oil Spill, Inundation and Flooding 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.

GEO Blue Planet at Recent Events

Ocean Space Forum *July 2024*



Audrey Hasson attended the Ocean Space Forum held in July 2024 in Monaco. She has presented GEO Blue Planet and took part of a panel discussion in the plenary session on Space for Sustainable Oceans together with Driss El HADANI (UNOOSA), Claire JOLLY(OECD) and Anne-Laure BECK (ACRI-ST).

More here: <https://promethee.earth/ocean-space-forum-edition-2024/>

GEO Symposium *September 2024*

The GEO Symposium and Open Data & Open Knowledge Workshop (ODOK) took place in Hangzhou, China, between September 23 and 26, 2024. The event focused on developing the GEO Post-2025 strategy into a detailed Implementation Plan and enhancing collaboration among GEO Work Programme activities.

Holistic nutrient monitoring

At the Parallel Session, "Water and Land Sustainability, Natalie Lerma joined fellow panellists to discuss the interdependencies between water and land sustainability and the role of Earth Observations for effective and integrated land-water management and conservation strategies. Natalie presented the concept of a holistic source-to-sea nutrient monitoring system.

Earth Observation in National Adaptation Plans

GEO Blue Planet's Dr Louis Celliers, who works at Climate Service Center Germany (GERICS) of Helmholtz-Zentrum Hereon, joined the Parallel Session "Co-developing National Adaptation Plans with Regional GEOs and National GEOs." The session focused on the dynamics, opportunities, and requirements for supporting the uptake of Earth observation in climate National Adaptation Plans.

One ocean, one health

At the One Health Parallel Session, Natalie Lerma discussed the link between ocean health and human health and how GEO Blue Planet supports One Health. The One Health Initiative calls for "the collaborative efforts of multiple disciplines working locally, nationally, and globally, to attain optimal health for people, animals and our environment."



More on this: <https://geoblueplanet.org/geo-symposium-china/>

ESA - EO for Africa Symposium *September 2024*



Lillian Diarra, EU4oceanObs Communication Officer for GEO Blue Planet presented at the EO for Africa Symposium organised by the European Space Agency (ESA) held in September, in Italy. The Symposium aims to showcase EO advancements for Africa, foster Africa-Europe collaboration, identify research priorities, share future EO opportunities, and discuss challenges in operational service integration. Lillian showcased the outcome of the GEO Blue Planet / UNEP workshop on EO for coastal sustainability in Africa of March 2024.

More on the event here : <https://eo4society.esa.int/event/eo-for-africa-symposium-2024/>

EUROGEO Workshop *October 2024*

The 2024 EuroGEO Workshop in October in Krakow, Poland, brought together policymakers, researchers, industry leaders, and GEO representatives to discuss the future of Earth Intelligence. Organized with the European Commission and supported by the Polish Space Agency (POLSA), the workshop aligned EuroGEO with GEO's Post-2025 Work Programme, emphasizing equity and global information accessibility.

Marine and coastal topics were central, with a session on the Marine Action Group, led by GEO Blue Planet's European office, exploring its future direction. Discussions focused on expanding its scope, engaging with EU-funded projects, and fostering co-design strategies.

Audrey Hasson participated in synergy panels, addressing the link between land and ocean sustainability and EuroGEO's role in supporting Copernicus Marine. Marine initiatives were also showcased through exhibitions featuring the Copernicus Marine Service, the EU Digital Ocean Twin, and the GEO Blue Planet Sargassum Information Hub.



More information: <https://www.eu4oceanobs.eu/marine-coasal-topics-eurogeo-workshop-2024/> and <https://www.eurogeosec.eu>

AAORIA Forum *October 2024*

Funded by EU4OceanObs/Mercator Ocean in the framework of the OceanBRIDGES initiative of GEO Blue Planet, three Early Career Ocean Professionals (ECOPs), Blessing Charuka, Nikia Gooding, and Hind Azidane, were among the ECOPs who participated in Intergenerational Dialogue of the 2024 All-Atlantic Ocean Research and Innovation Alliance (AAORIA) Forum held in October 2024 in Ottawa. Collectively, ECOPs engaged in discussions on coastal resilience, and ocean observation and monitoring, and contributed perspectives on integrating local knowledge and scientific data. They also discussed leadership, diversity, equity, inclusivity, and the need for cross-generational knowledge exchange to advance ocean science and drive innovation.

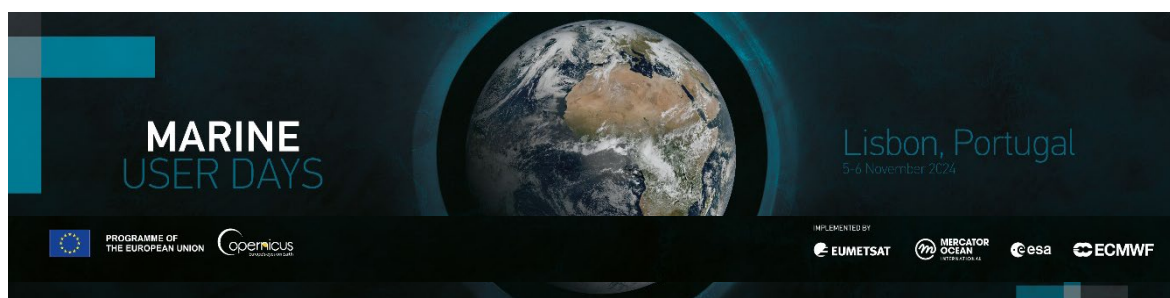


More on this: <https://www.eu4oceanobs.eu/empowering-next-gen-leadership-participation-of-early-career-ocean-professionals-at-the-2024-all-atlantic-ocean-research-and-innovation-alliance-aaoria-forum/>

Marine User Days *November 2024*

The Marine User Days event was hosted by [EUMETSAT](#) and partners in Lisbon, Portugal on 5-6 November 2024. The Marine User Days brought together existing and prospective users from across the diverse marine user community. Focusing on the data provided by the European organisations involved in the Copernicus programme and their role in oceanography and marine applications, the event acted as a showcase for use cases with networking opportunities for users across the value chain. The event also included a workshop to engage with user needs and feedback.

Audrey Hasson presented the EU4OceanObs Horizon project that supports the Eu office of GEO Blue Planet with an accent on the full Ocean Observation value chain and the need for Science in Diplomacy that GEO Blue Planet brings through the activities of its working groups.



OceanPredict Symposium (OP'24) *November 2024*

The OP'24 focused on the development of the operational oceanography for societal benefit. It specifically aimed 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).

Audrey Hasson, Executive Director of GEO Blue Planet, participated in a round table on international mobilization for fit for purpose ocean prediction capabilities where she highlighted the need for enhancing connection between ocean observations, forecasting and applications to serve society. She also delivered the keynote for the "User applications and societal benefits" plenary session. The presentation, "From Data to Policy: The Ocean Observation Value Circle," highlighted the role of GEO Blue Planet as a science-diplomacy instrument, catalysing essential partnerships between European and international infrastructures and programmes across the ocean observation chain.



Read more about OP'24:

<https://www.oceanpredict24.org/content/op-24-summay>

<https://www.eu4oceanobs.eu/mobilization-and-connections-at-oceanpredict24/>



Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) 5th session side events *November 2024*

In 2022, the United Nations Environment Assembly adopted a resolution agreeing to adopt a legally binding instrument on plastic pollution by the end of 2024. Negotiations on the treaty details take place at Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) sessions, which have taken place since 2022. In November 2024, the fifth INC session (INC-5) took place in Busan, Republic of Korea.

GEO Blue Planet's Marine Litter Working Group lead, Daphné Lecellier attended two of those side events – one exploring East Asian perspectives and one exploring global knowledge sharing and capacity building.

The joint Korea Maritime Institute (KMI), hosting the Asian Office for GEO Blue Planet – Coordinating Body on the Seas of East Asia (COBSEA) Collaborative Action to Address Marine Plastic Pollution regional knowledge-sharing event looked at some of the unique challenges facing the region. Representatives from several Asian countries shared their experiences with waste management practices and data sharing, offering valuable insights into potential solutions.



Meanwhile, at the Global Partnership on Plastic Pollution and Marine Litter's (GMPL) Multi-Stakeholder Event, participants reflected on the INC process and how GPML can bolster knowledge sharing and capacity.

Read full article here: <https://www.eu4oceanobs.eu/moving-forward-with-a-global-plastics-treaty/>

More Upcoming Events

IORA Workshop on Marine Litter, 24-26 March, Bangkok. Register [here](#)

SargCOOP2 Kick-off, 25-28 March, Guadeloupe.

9th European Marine Board Forum, 2 April, Brussels (Hybrid) More [here](#)

NAPEXpo 2025, 8-11 April, Lusaka. More [here](#)

10th Our Ocean Conference, 28-30 April, Busan. More [here](#)

GEO Global Forum, 5-9 May, Rome. More [here](#)

European Maritime Day, 21-23 May, Cork. More [here](#)

European Digital Ocean Pavilion, 28 May – 15 June, Nice. More [here](#)

One Ocean Science Congress, 3-6 June, Nice. More [here](#)

UN Ocean Conference 3, 9-13 June, Nice. More [here](#)

Oceans Conference 2025, Brest 16-19 June, Brest. More [here](#)

INC 5.2, 5-14 August, Geneva. More [here](#)

More events on the [Ocean Decade Website](#)



Opportunities

The Open Sea Lab Hackathon 4.0 will be held online 25-27 March 2025. Marine data experts, scientists, engineers, policymakers, businesses, and students will develop solutions using EMODnet and Copernicus marine data. Participants will tackle five key challenges, network, gain skills on the European Digital Twin Ocean platform, and receive mentorship.

Register [here](#) by March 17 to join.

The EU4Ocean Summer School on Ocean Literacy & Collaboration, bringing together ocean advocates, educators, and professionals to advance ocean literacy and collaboration. This immersive program offers workshops, field activities, and networking opportunities to explore innovative approaches for ocean sustainability. Participants will engage with experts, share best practices, and strengthen their impact on marine education and conservation. It will be held 7-11 July in Venice. Learn more [here](#).

🗨️ Mercator Ocean International (MOi) is looking for a [communication and user engagement officer](#) supporting the communication activities of the **EU project EU4OceanObs** (G7 FSOI and GEO Blue Planet). French is not mandatory. Non-EU citizens will be considered too. In person in Toulouse, France.

🕒 No Deadline: apply asap if interested

🗨️ Mercator Ocean International (MOi) is currently hiring for eight exciting positions in **Digital Twin Ocean**, working at the forefront of ocean data, modeling, and sustainability. For details and application links, please visit:

4 positions [thematic expert of Digital Twin Ocean](#)

4 positions [developer and operators of Digital Twin Ocean](#)

🕒 No Deadline: apply asap if interested

If you wish to have opportunities from your institution posted here, please send them as they go to info@geoblueplanet.org

Useful Links

[GEO Blue Planet SharePoint \(limited access\)](#)

[GEO Blue Planet Operations and Governance Plan](#)

[Past GEO Blue Planet updates](#)

Have an update for next month? Send your update to info@geoblueplanet.org.

Visit our website at <https://geoblueplanet.org/>.