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Second Quarter
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Newsletter

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A Blue Planet Tribute to Professor Trevor Platt



By Paul DiGiacomo, Samy Djavidnia, and Sophie Seeyave

As long-time colleagues and friends of Trevor Platt, we enthusiastically worked together with him on the creation and development of the Blue Planet Initiative. Much has already been written about the many extraordinary scientific contributions of Trevor. We would also like to pay a heartfelt tribute to the significant contributions Trevor made to ocean observing, to international coordination efforts, and to the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) in particular.

Trevor became involved in GEO through his role as Executive Director of the Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO), which had been a Participating Organisation in GEO since its establishment in 2005. Trevor's wife and closest colleague, Shubha Sathyendranath, was the POGO Executive Director at the time GEO was formed, and they actively worked together on POGO, GEO and then subsequently Blue Planet, as they did with every other aspect of their work.

In those early years, Trevor and Shubha made a direct and concrete contribution to GEO by obtaining funding from the Canadian Space Agency (CSA) to establish new programmes on the societal benefits of ocean observations: the Chlorophyll Globally Integrated Network, ChloroGIN, and Societal Applications in Fisheries or Remotely-sensed Imagery, SAFARI [among many talents, Trevor was also the king of acronym coining; in fact, he demonstrated his humorous and playful side by endorsing the acronym "ChloroGIN" proposed by colleagues after a nocturnal visit to the Plymouth Gin Distillery, during the inaugural workshop that formally established the

referred to by GEO as exemplars of successful capacity building activities. [Continue reading here.](#)

Secretariat Updates

Leah Mupas Segui has joined the principal office of the GEO Blue Planet Secretariat. Leah will be with us for one year as part of the Sea Grant Knauss Fellowship. She graduated from Oregon State University with a Ph.D. degree in Zoology and is representing Oregon Sea Grant. Her dissertation focused on bridging the gap between empirical and theoretical ecology to understand how species interactions affect marine and freshwater ecological communities.

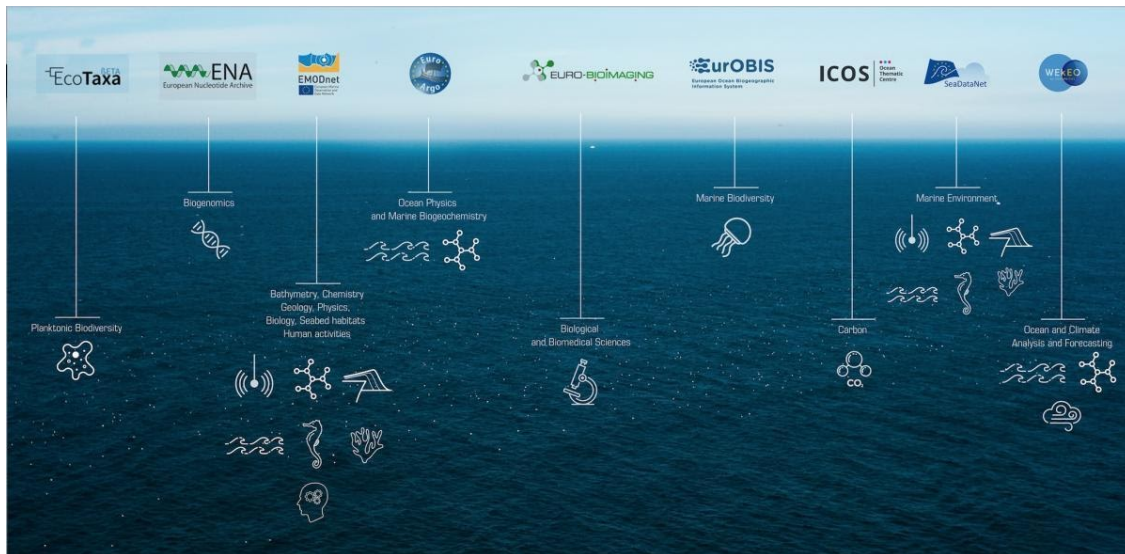


Collaborator Profile

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Fisheries and Aquaculture Department

The FAO of the UN fisheries department manages over 70 years of statistical data on global fisheries and aquaculture, and the widely known maps of [FAO Major Fishing Areas for Statistical Purposes](#). Among its many other activities, it provides accurate and reliable geospatial data through its [GeoNetwork](#) and fisheries maps such the [Atlas](#) of Tuna and Billfish catches. FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu recently launched the UN agency's Hand-in-Hand Initiative that will use sophisticated tools and advanced geo-spatial modelling and analysis to identify the best opportunities to improve the livelihoods of rural populations. As custodian of 21 SDG indicators, FAO has great interest in spatial data to feed other observational and analytical data-flows, and GEO

FAO Fisheries department has many activities relevant to SDG 14, Life below water. These include several projects to improve the publication of fisheries data as geo-data, and to use geo-data to improve atlases of fisheries and aquaculture. One example is the EU H2020 Flagship [Blue Cloud](#) project (below), where FAO coordinates two demonstrators; one on fisheries and another on aquaculture. [Continue reading here.](#)



Project and Working Group Updates

Marne Litter Working Group

GEO Blue Planet is providing support to the UN Environment Program (UNEP) in reaching UN Sustainable Development Goal 14.1 "by 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds (...)" which includes marine litter. At the request of UNEP, GEO Blue Planet and partners authored a white paper "A Global Platform for monitoring Marine Litter and Informing Action" on the development of a digital global platform for marine litter.

To bring the white paper to life, GEO Blue Planet attended a workshop hosted by the UN Science Business Policy Forum on the Environment in collaboration with IBM in New York, USA. Workshop participants discussed ways that different user groups, such as decision makers and citizen science organizations, would interact with the platform. UNEP and IBM are currently using meeting notes to develop version 1 of the platform.



UN-IBM workshop participants in front of IBM's Watson Research Center.

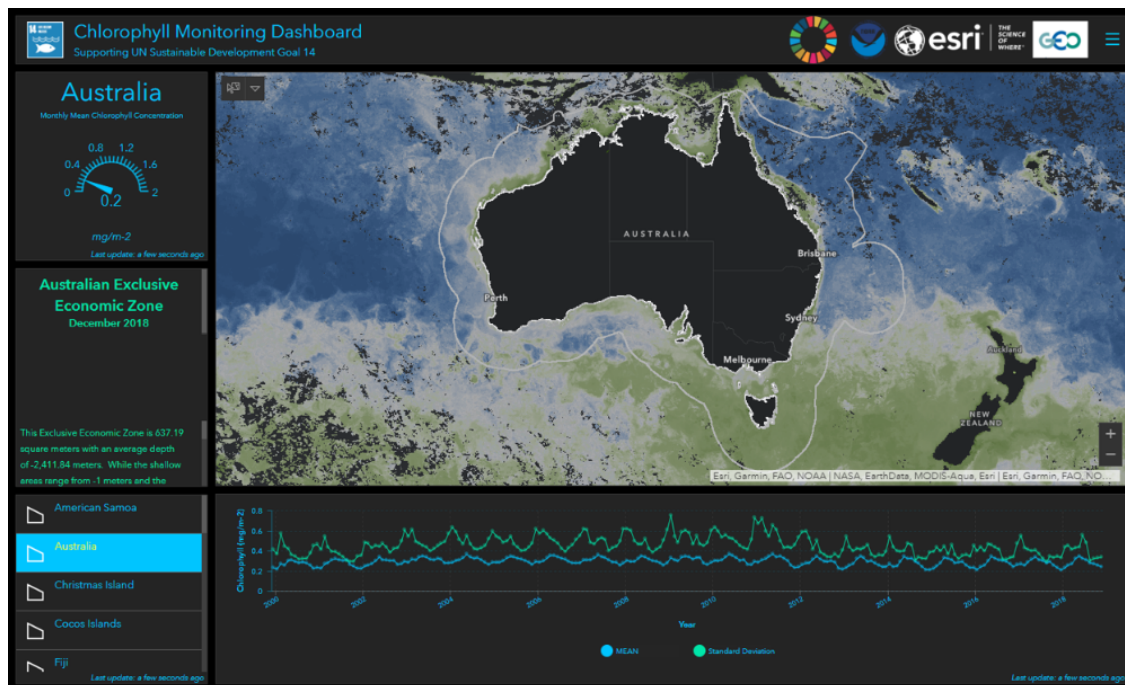
On the other side of the Atlantic, GEO Blue Planet attended the first International Atomic Energy Agency Technical Cooperation Project *Strengthening Capacities in Marine and Coastal Environments Using Nuclear and Isotopic Techniques* in Monaco. The meeting brought together experts from 18 countries to develop strategies involving nuclear and isotopic techniques to address environmental threats in Latin America and the Caribbean. These partnerships will allow GEO Blue Planet to help bridge the gap between the scientific community and decision makers.



IAEA meeting participants in Monaco

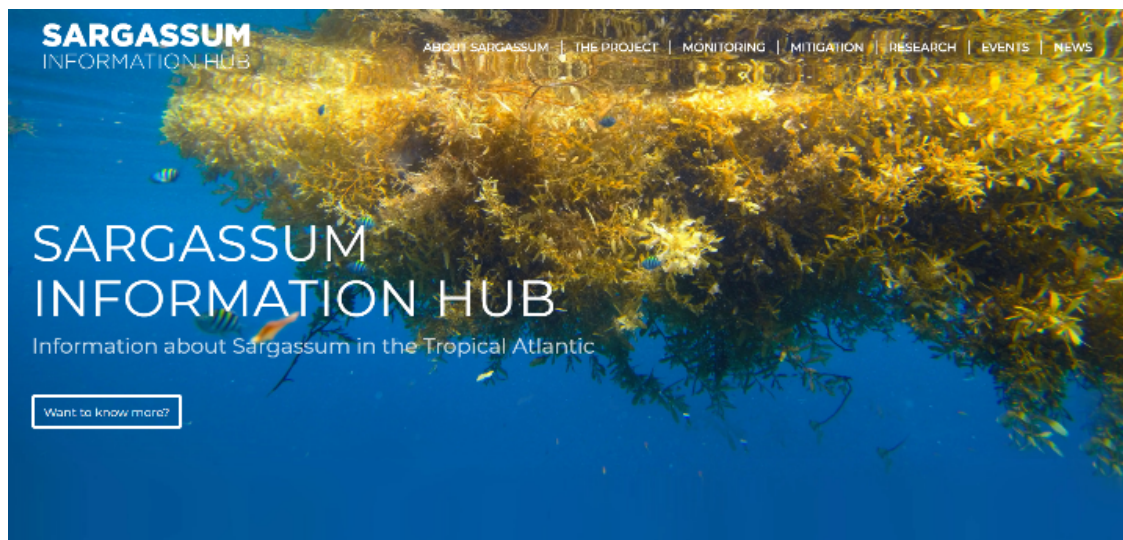
Global Eutrophication Monitoring Project

Esri, GEO Blue Planet and partners are developing a dashboard to identify increases in chlorophyll-a by country within its Exclusive Economic Zone. This tool will help users identify areas with high algal growth, which may be a proxy for excessive nutrient inputs.



Multi-hazard Information and Forecasting System for the Wider Caribbean

information and tools for the mitigation and management of Sargassum blooms. This hub will support an integrated approach to monitor and forecast concentrations of Sargassum based on satellite and ocean instrument measurements, and promote best practices for managing and using Sargassum.



Additional work in the Wider Caribbean includes an upcoming workshop hosted by GEO Blue Planet to gauge user needs on oil spill monitoring and alerts. This is in conjunction with AmeriGEO and the [Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre – Caribe](#).

Fisheries Working Group

The working group is creating a “Fisheries-scape” online inventory of local, regional and global fisheries data services. This will link the fisheries service community in order to raise awareness on what and how data are used for fisheries management and create a network for information and resource sharing.

Ongoing projects include a tech transfer between the University of Ghana, Shahjalal University and An Organisation for Socio-Economic Development (AOSED) to provide Bangladesh with potential fishing zone and ocean state SMS alerts for their artisanal fishing communities. Additionally, the Aerospace Information Research Institute, Chinese Academy of Sciences (AIR-CAS) is exploring the potential of using satellites to monitor fisheries in Bangladesh during monsoon season.



Oceanscape project

Oceanscape is an effort of the [GEO Blue Planet](#) Initiative to identify the numerous organisations (including projects, programmes, and other structures) working in the “ocean space”, and to clarify the connections between them (as well as identifying opportunities to make connections where none exist). There are now 74 organizations on Oceanscape. [Find out how to add your organization here!](#)



Filter by:

Organisation types:

Geographical scope:

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- Manual of Digital Earth is a new book that covers topics such as digital Earth platforms, satellite applications, citizen science and more. [Download the book for free.](#)
 - Press release on the [first successful study to detect marine plastic pollution using satellites.](#)
 - Sargassum in the Caribbean and West Africa: Key Challenges, Responses and Collaboration webinar presentations can be downloaded from [here.](#)
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Upcoming Events

- [The Great Atlantic Sargassum belt: The new golden floating rainforest](#) webinar for the Virtual Blue Decade Platform launch 8 June 2020
 - [Local solutions to the global challenge of ocean plastic pollution](#) 10 June 2020
 - The first [GEO Virtual Symposium](#) 15 - 19 June 2020
 - [TMA Blue Tech Global Connect webinar](#) 18 June 2020
 - [Second International Operational Satellite Oceanography Symposium](#) 25 - 27 May 2021, Darmstadt, Germany
 - 5th GEO Blue Planet Symposium postponed to 2021
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Have an announcement for our next Newsletter?
Send your update to Leah.Segui@noaa.gov



