

EOOS SG submission to MFF consultation 2025

We, the European Ocean Observing System (EOOS) Steering Group, call upon the future MFF to make appropriate investments into coordinating Europe's already mature, yet fragile and unsustainable, *in situ* ocean observation system. EOOS is a long-standing initiative for Europe's diverse *in situ* ocean observation, marine monitoring and data collection efforts. Whilst earth observations with satellites benefit from long-term funding and coordination, *in situ* observations taken in or around the ocean and coast remain largely funded by individual Member States. The sheer diversity of ocean data collection efforts from climate, hydrographic, environmental, geohazards monitoring, operational oceanography, fishery management and marine biodiversity poses a real challenge in assessing Europe's capability; identifying optimisation opportunities to reduce duplication; and ensuring fit-for-use marine knowledge to support policy, research and innovation, and the Sustainable Blue Economy.

EOOS has demonstrated its potential to be the solution: offering a community and stakeholder-driven coordination and advisory mechanism that is already making a difference. Co-Chaired by the EuroGOOS and European Marine Board Secretariats, EOOS already provides structured advice on the existing European ocean observing landscape and undertakes activities that directly benefit Member States, e.g., National Charts of ocean observation coordination, and supporting the future EC Ocean Observation Initiative. EOOS brings together key actors in the European marine knowledge value chain, with a Resource Forum of National ministry representatives led by JPI Oceans, an Operations Committee of key implementers including Marine Research Infrastructures, with strategic direction from a Steering Group which also includes Europe's two marine data services (EMODnet and Copernicus Marine Service), as well as representatives from the biodiversity community (MBON) and National Member States. However, despite its added value, EOOS coordination remains unfunded, keeping its impact far below its potential and leaving European ocean observing inadequately coordinated.

We, the EOOS Steering Group call upon the next MFF to fund an EOOS coordination office to ensure the continued coordination of ocean observations and its upscaling to match ambitious European ocean policies like the Oceans Pact with the appropriate and sustained (e.g., minimum 5 year horizon) funding of at least 1 Million EUR per year. This funding would ensure that the diverse and active EOOS stakeholder community could deliver its full potential by providing advice and support to Member States and the EC on implementation of the future EC Ocean Observation initiative. It can provide a coordinating role to increase operational efficiency and reduce administrative burdens for more impactful *in situ* ocean observations, data collection, data flows, technology development, and infrastructure use, and to ensure diverse and holistic marine and coastal data for the European Digital Twin Ocean, and to support a more competitive and Sustainable Blue Economy.

However, only funding the coordination costs of European ocean observing (i.e. EOOS coordination office) will not be sufficient. European ocean knowledge services (Copernicus Marine and Climate services, EMODnet, EU DTO) depend on globally funded *in-situ* ocean observations. Given that the USA funds more than 50% of the global *in-situ* ocean observing system, we recommend that the European Commission develops a direct funding line for global or pan-European networks. These networks are currently under threat and cannot be sustained by Member States alone. Sustained funding at the European level is required.