

Dear Colleague,

Good marine life science and data are needed to make every decision involving the ocean!

The UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (the Ocean Decade) is an opportunity to bring this vision to reality, to satisfy local needs and national reporting requirements for targets of Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

No single nation or group can advance all the goals of the Ocean Decade. The grand challenges of the Ocean Decade require robust collaborations across the globe so that each community has the information needed to adapt and plan for resilience and sustainable use of the ocean.

The Marine Biodiversity Observation Network (MBON) fosters and coordinates a global community of practice for the collection, curation, analysis, and communication of marine biodiversity data, and the development of information products that convey information about biodiversity, from genes to ecosystems. By bringing together groups that are diverse in gender, discipline, culture, career stage, and representation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including the social sciences and education, the MBON aims to accelerate progress and address the complex challenges of the Ocean Decade which cannot be solved in isolation. This requires coordination and collaboration among countries, organizations, networks, individuals, and many other groups.

The MBON promotes existing efforts and co-design strategies for marine life knowledge in collaboration with the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), the Ocean Biodiversity Information System (OBIS), the Ocean Best Practices System (OBPS), the Ocean Knowledge Action Network (Ocean KAN), and many others. Collaborations, monitoring networks, and common standards are in place to support marine life monitoring and to exchange and adapt our knowledge for the benefit of human communities. Yet significant gaps in investment and understanding still exist.

Therefore, the MBON calls on nations, scientists, sponsors, and stakeholders to work together as a community of practice to:

1. Invest in long-term efforts to provide and share knowledge about marine life and how it is changing in the face of multiple stressors to enable the conservation, management, and sustainable use of ocean ecosystems.
2. Encourage the use of standards and best practices for marine life data and metadata collection and sharing [Essential Ocean Variables (EOVs), Essential Biodiversity Variables (EBVs),

following Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable (FAIR) and Collective Benefit, Authority to Control, Responsibility, and Ethics (CARE) principles].

3. Provide a space for meaningful dialogue among stakeholders, seeking collaborations to conserve and conduct responsible use of the ocean, including the deep ocean, marginal seas, and coastal ecosystems in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 14 (SDG 14) and other relevant SDGs.

4. Increase co-production of knowledge and capacity development to lessen regional inequalities and ensure informed collection and application of biodiversity and ecosystem information to address human community needs.

5. Increase support for the coordination and collaboration of regional efforts for a successful Ocean Decade in which sustainable development and conservation guide all actions.

The MBON community aims to help accomplish these items, linking individual organizations to existing Ocean Decade Actions. These links are intended to address user requirements, synergize science and technology solutions, and improve human well-being while advancing conservation and ocean stewardship.

The MBON will work with the Ocean Decade Coordination Unit, the leads of Marine Life 2030, and other biology focused Ocean Decade endorsed programmes, to enable a dialogue, and coordination and cooperation between programmes.

We invite individuals, groups, and organizations to participate in this process and help build the Ocean Decade by joining the MBON ([GEO BON Members](#)) and volunteering for the Ocean Decade Marine Life 2030 program ([Join Us - Marine Life 2030](#) | [The Principles and Criteria for Projects and Partners](#)).

