



Towards integrated European marine  
research strategy and programmes

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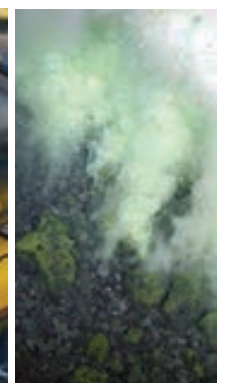


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# Third SEAS-ERA Strategic Forum Report

WP 1. Task 3  
Deliverable 1.3.1c

April, 2014  
Author: European Marine Board

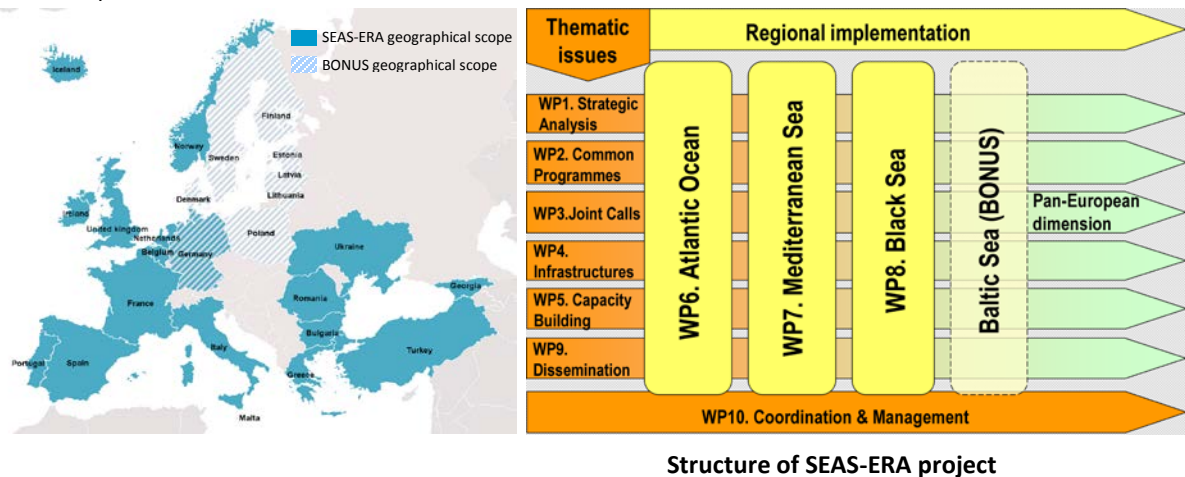


## The SEAS-ERA Project

The FP7 SEAS ERA project (2010-2014) is a network of European marine research funding organizations (RFOs) consisting of 21 partners from 18 Member and Associated Member States located along the European seaboard in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Black Sea. The SEAS-ERA partnership maintains close contacts with the Baltic Sea RFOs through the EU BONUS project ([www.bonusportal.org](http://www.bonusportal.org)).

The principle aims of the SEAS-ERA Network are to improve co-operation between national competitive marine research funding programmes, to facilitate better co-operation in addressing shared opportunities and challenges, to ensure better use of existing resources and capacities, to bridge identified gaps, to avoid duplication, to jointly fund strategic projects of mutual interest and in so doing, contribute to the sustainable development of marine resources and progress the establishment of the marine component of the European Research Area (ERA).

The SEAS-ERA project builds on the experience of the previous EU FP6 ERA-NETS: **MarinERA** (<http://marinera.seas-era.eu/>) which involved 16 partners from 13 countries and organized a joint €5 million call for proposals; **AMPERA** (<http://www.cid.csic.es/ampera>) which involved 10 partners from 8 countries and organized a joint €2.25 million call for proposals; and **MarIFISH** (<http://www.marifish.net>) which involved 18 partners from 16 countries and organized a joint €4.1 million call for proposals and common programming within five topics.



### Summary of WP1 Strategic Analysis Tasks

Work package 1 of the SEAS-ERA project, entitled “Strategic Analysis”, supported a number of tasks designed to map the current strategic research priorities in participating member countries across the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Black Sea regions and to support the development of three regional marine research agendas for the SEAS-ERA project. WP1 comprised three tasks:

- 1.1 Inventory and analysis of existing national and regional science and technology plans and strategic priorities (EMB)
- 1.2 Support to the organization of Regional Strategic Analysis Workshops (MI, GSRT, and TUBITAK)
- 1.3 Establishment of a Pan-European Strategic Forum (EMB)

### Disclaimer:

SEAS-ERA Deliverable 1.3.1c was produced by the European Marine Board Secretariat (authors: Nan-Chin Chu, Veronica French and Niall McDonough) for the FP7 SEAS-ERA consortium.

The information and views set out in this report are those of the SEAS-ERA partnership and do not necessarily reflect the formal opinion of the European Marine Board or its member organizations.

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**Summary**

The SEAS-ERA Pan-European Strategic Forum is designed to provide a platform for the partner RFOs to interact and engage with stakeholders and international initiatives. The European Marine Board organized the 3<sup>rd</sup> and last Forum on 25 February 2014 in Brussels to present the key outputs and legacy of each work package. The Forum was attended by 60 participants and ended with a panel discussion on perspectives for activities beyond the lifetime of this ERA-NET project. The RFOs network established through SEAS-ERA was commended and a voluntary continuation of joint activities was fully supported. The network continues to bring together research communities at regional level, link the SEAS-ERA vision with existing ERA policies and research strategies, strengthen and support collaboration with industries and achieve progress towards an ERA for marine science and technology via an innovative, flexible and self-sustaining mechanism.

# Third SEAS-ERA Strategic Forum Report

Grant Agreement n° 249552

Acronym: SEAS-ERA

Title: Towards Integrated Marine Research Strategy and Programmes

WP 1: Strategic Analysis

Task 1.3: Establishment of a Pan-European Strategic Forum

Task Leader: European Marine Board (MB-ESF)

Deliverable N°: D1.3.1c 3<sup>rd</sup> SEAS-ERA Strategic Forum Report

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# Third SEAS-SRA Strategic Forum

## “SEAS-ERA Legacy & Vision”

25 February 2014, Brussels

### Forum Report

#### 1. Welcome

**Niall McDonough** (EMB, WP1) opened the 3<sup>rd</sup> and last SEAS-ERA Forum by welcoming the participants and thanking David Cox and BELSPO for providing the event venue. He outlined the value of SEAS-ERA strategic fora as an opportunity for the project partners to interact with each other and with a wider stakeholder community, to present project outputs and discuss future perspectives. He also highlighted the forward-looking perspective of this last Forum and presented a brief summary of the key outputs from each work package.



**Ana-Teresa Caetano** (EC DG R&I, SEAS-ERA Project Officer) expressed her appreciation of working with the SEAS-ERA partners during the previous 4 years. She spoke of the additional challenges of completing tasks in light of very different economic conditions but emphasized that most tasks could still be achieved nonetheless. She pointed out that regional strategic research agendas (SRAs), in particular, have continued to influence various regional sea policy actions, as well as other transversal themes, such as knowledge transfer and

human capacity building. She concluded her welcome address by informing the meeting about the new marine unit within the DG R&I which will manage the marine and maritime component within the Horizon 2020 Programme.

#### 2. SEAS-ERA: An overview

**Beatriz Morales-Nin** (MINECO, project coordinator) presented the project’s key objectives: to constitute a platform for developing an integrated policy structure and to promote knowledge and expertise in marine related areas, both at a regional and pan-European level. She highlighted the partnership and trust developed between European marine research funding organizations, in addition to collaboration with BONUS and other ERA-NETs. She listed other positive outputs, including the development of best practice in applications and evaluations, regional sea SRAs, human capacity building, infrastructure identification and cooperation, knowledge transfer strategies and achieving the first steps towards joint programming.



She also listed some weaknesses of the project:

1. Substantial changes to the economic climate had made it difficult to achieve the expected goals in several countries, such as participation in joint calls;
2. Delays caused by financial cutbacks and staff reductions and political changes;
3. Uneven experience between RFOs of different countries in implementing ERA-NETs;

She concluded that a positive effort has resulted in identifying the direction of future development and gave examples of actions planned with JPI Oceans, Mediterranean ERA-NETs, Mediterranean Blue Growth and the EU Atlantic Action Plan.

### 3. Common Programme

**Jean-François Masset** (Ifremer, WP2) presented key outputs of the common programme for the Atlantic and Mediterranean Sea. The objective of the “International long term monitoring of the North Atlantic” is to align national programmes to address the long term evolution in climate change. This programme has been included in a pilot action proposed to JPI Oceans, the Galway statement on an Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance (EU, US, Canada), and a follow-up output in the Horizon 2020 programme (2014-BG8). In the Mediterranean Sea, the transect monitoring activity was suspended due to the decline in available funding but will be encouraged via a case study called MedSHIP, currently under review within the EUROFLEETS2 call.

He presented the future perspectives of the work package:

- For both regions: to elaborate international scientific programmes with the major partners for alignment of national existing programmes in the Atlantic and establish a new one for the Mediterranean;
- To establish a network of fleet managers to examine concrete solutions for sharing vessels for the international programme;
- To follow the case studies in the BG8 project and EUROFLEET call.

He highlighted that the alignment of common programmes is a step-by-step approach and they have initiated the process over the past 3 years through 4 different workshops. Their positive results have been taken account of by two BG calls (8 & 14) requesting the sharing of research infrastructures.

**Q&A** Regarding linkage with new countries in the common programming activities, Jean-François Masset said that it is necessary to start from a minimum level of collaboration in order to enter a discussion. Regarding the pilot action of JPI Oceans, he suggested a general document can be drafted to describe what could be carried out in both regional seas to go beyond the pilot action and be more consistent with a strategic approach.

### 4. Joint calls for research proposals: the SEAS-ERA experience

**David Cox** (BELSPO, WP3) presented the objectives of work package 3 on SEAS-ERA joint calls: to define the general guidelines and procedures, to launch joint calls for research proposals and to evaluate the follow-ups and outcomes. He described the procedures, research topics, participation (from 7 partners) and contribution to a virtual common pot, evaluation and decision of the joint calls. These resulted in 5 funded projects with a total budget of €4.2M. Because the funded projects last longer than SEAS-ERA, the management committee will remain active until the last project finishes. The progress of the project will be presented in the final SEAS-ERA meeting on 8 April 2014. The experience and documents from this joint call WP could benefit JPI Oceans, marine ERA-NETs and trans-Atlantic cooperation in the future.

He listed the lessons learned from the joint call:

- Participation of a sufficient number of funding partners is crucial;
- Budget of each funding partner should be sufficiently high (>2 PIs);
- Constraints of the virtual common pot;
- Importance of flexibility in funding;
- Allowing sufficient time for research to be implemented and avoid evaluation in summer;
- Funding partners should make the final decision;

- Foresee costs for managing the funded projects after the ERA-NET ends.

**Q&A** Regarding the process used for selecting the scientific topics, David Cox replied that the topics were selected from a consensus among partners and their national strategies, similar to a voting process. Dissemination of project results will be found on the SEAS-ERA website. He concluded that SEAS-ERA has established the network for funding agencies and the common agreed procedures, which means that, in principle, these agencies can launch future calls outside the context of an ERA-Net.

## 5. Marine Research Infrastructures: overview, vision and recommendations for 2014-2020

**Jean-François Masset** (Ifremer, WP4) addressed 6 issues:

### (1) Mapping of facilities

The work package has updated a comprehensive overview of European marine research infrastructures (MRI) using 6 categories. In collaboration with JPI/CSA Oceans a repository (<http://rid.eurocean.org>) has been developed with information on all facilities involved and opened to access for joint activities. The targeted users for this portal include scientists, technicians, operators, policy makers, and the public.



### (2) Open and trans-national access to MRI

The work package proposed three types of formula to have an open and trans-national access to marine research infrastructures.

### (3) MRI complementary uses for both monitoring and research

The 2010 Ostend Declaration (EurOCEAN 2010, Ostend) highlighted the need for an integrated European Ocean Observation Systems (EOOS) to provide an overarching structure to address key drivers such as societal needs, research frontiers and technology breakthrough. It is proposed that an EOOS oversight board be established to guide this process.

### (4) Set-up common procurement strategies, develop common business models

Jean-Francois Masset stressed these concepts are still under development and it will be necessary to carry out consultation at a regional and European level before proposing a business model for common procurement strategies. Examples of new investments which took place during the SEAS-ERA funding period were listed, including 11 research vessels with 4 new vessels under construction, 4 new satellites for ocean observation and 2 new satellites under construction (e.g. Sentinel 3).

### (5) From coordination to integration of distributed MRIs into networks;

A light “central office” heading up the national components of an EOOS was proposed as a key element for sustaining an efficient network.

### (6) Public-private collaboration on MRI

There were 3 recommendations: (i) improving the dissemination of information from the industrial sector (ii) designing an appropriate co-financing framework (iii) adopting the proper management framework to foster the mutual public-private process.

Regarding future perspectives for MRI beyond 2014, he highlighted three directions in the European context:

- From SEAS-ERA to JPI Oceans: the MRI preliminary analysis carried out should contribute to the JPI Oceans Strategic Research & Innovation Agenda;

- For Horizon 2020 objectives: ESFRI projects implementation, continuation of the I3 formula and MRI implication in societal challenges;
- Other opportunities and support: For example, EMODnet (DG MARE), MSFD (DG Env), Copernicus (DG Ent) and Structural Funds opportunities (DG Regio & MS/Regions).

## 6. HCB in marine and maritime science, from schemes to targeted actions - The SEAS-ERA Contribution

**Margherita Cappelletto** (CNR, WP5) presented the key outputs of the work package, highlighting that SEAS-ERA has contributed to setting the basis for a marine and maritime HCB strategy at pan-European level and that HCB is being increasingly recognized as part of national programmes. The key outputs presented were:

- Mapping and analysis of HCB schemes and initiatives to identify needs at regional and pan-EU level (Deliverable 5.2.1). In this analysis, it was highlighted that priorities and barriers, such as public-private collaboration and coordination of national research funding schemes.
- Proposal for a methodology to implement HCB calls within Common Programmes and Joint Calls (Deliverable 5.3.1);
- Seeds for a pan-European training and mobility strategy for human resources in marine and maritime science: Defined roadmap elements include mapping the landscape, set-up of an integrated platform, design of a flexible scheme to implement actions and launch of a dedicated call addressing human capital (Deliverable 5.3.2).

Margherita Cappelletto concluded her presentation with a list of future perspectives, including HCB support to thematic issues, an advisory platform and finally, to propel the setup of a HCB programme targeted at marine and maritime science.

## 7. Towards a Marine Knowledge Transfer strategy

**Dina Carrilho** (FCT, WP9) presented the outcomes of SEAS-ERA activities on knowledge transfer, including:

- a follow-up of the 14 transnational projects funded through previous Marine ERA-NET joint calls (AMPERA, MarinERA and MariFish) from 2007 to 2008, with final reports<sup>1</sup> useful to stakeholders;
- 5 marine transnational projects funded from the SEAS-ERA joint calls would benefit from this WP to promote the uptake of research results and maximize the societal impact of the funds invested.

Dina Carrilho explained that the KT strategy built on national KT practices from the SEAS-ERA partners, noting the key outputs from a workshop “Towards a Marine Knowledge Transfer Strategy” (17-18 September, Lisbon). These outputs include national KT practices, tools and recommendations. The workshop report will be available as a public deliverable. She concluded her presentation by listing 3 future perspectives:

- Promote the uptake of research outcomes;
- Provide guidance to transnational projects through KT processes;
- Offer recommendations that could be useful to other thematic areas.

**Q&A** In reply to a question on the empirical basis and evidence with which to judge the practice, Dina Carrilho cited several successful examples with room for improvement. On this issue, Niall McDonough (EMB) noted MarineTT has tested protocols to measure the success and impact of KT

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.seas-era.eu/np4/186.html>



protocols. He commented that KT implies a systematic approach to transfer knowledge from a project whereby the knowledge outputs and transferring mechanisms were identified and characterized. By implementing a KT protocol, a framework would be in place to actively transfer the knowledge.

Dina Carrilho noted that KT emphasis is recommended both at project and programme level. She suggested that funding organizations can request that projects include KT. JPI Oceans shared their experience that stakeholder involvement is most effective when planned and implemented from the outset of the project.

Regarding industrial stakeholders, Geoffery O’Sullivan (MI, Ireland) suggested a need to distinguish between policy-based research, with widespread dissemination, and commercial outputs, with specific companies interested in the results. Depending on where the market is, knowledge transfer should be handled with different levels of dissemination. Jacky Wood (NOC, UK) commented that from experience in the UK, it is best to involve policy and industry stakeholders directly in the peer review process. One of the difficulties with this approach is the reservation from the scientific community that these reviewers prioritize only applied science, and focus less on scientific excellence.

## **8. The EU Atlantic Action Plan (2014-2020): The contribution of the SEAS-ERA Atlantic partnership**

**Geoffrey O’Sullivan** (WP6, MI) presented the evolution of the Atlantic Strategic Research Agenda: from a drafted discussion document through a series of consultations to the final report. He commented on the two converging paths of the 10 SEAS-ERA Atlantic countries and, in parallel, a European Union Strategy for the Atlantic (DG MARE) focusing only on five member states (Spain, Portugal, France, Ireland and the UK). The SEAS-ERA Atlantic SRA documents (consortium statement, discussion document and final SRA) have been presented at the EC stakeholder consultations to the Atlantic Conference (Lisbon, Dec. 2013) to influence the process for the Atlantic Action Plan (2013). He highlighted the influence of SEAS-ERA on the transatlantic alliance, initiated from a dialogue among the EU, SEAS-ERA, EuroBasin and the USA in 2011 and one of the consultation workshops (Dublin, 2012).

Future perspectives from this SEAS-ERA Atlantic group are to continue the ongoing collaborations with the Baltic, Black Sea, and Mediterranean communities; the opportunity to have the SEAS-ERA Atlantic partners involved in the Atlantic Action Plan and the opportunity for SEA-ERA Atlantic partners to cooperate more widely with the USA and Canada.

The final Atlantic report published in November 2013 “Towards a Strategic Research Agenda/ Marine Research Plan for the European Atlantic Sea Basin”, aimed to contribute to various processes in parallel with defining the strategic plans. Geoffery O’Sullivan noted that the project has consolidated a network of European Atlantic Research Funding Organizations, contributed to the development of the EU Atlantic Action Plan (2014-2020) and the formation of the Atlantic Ocean Research Alliance, and produced a report identifying priority research topics relevant to the European Atlantic Sea Basin and agreed by European Atlantic RFOs.

## **9. The SEAS-ERA Mediterranean SRA: Towards coordinated marine research in the Mediterranean Sea for new knowledge, environmental protection, and blue growth**

On behalf of the partners Kostas Nittis (HCMR) and Evi Afendaki (GSRT), **Margherita Cappelletto** (CNR, WP7) presented the key outputs of WP7, including a developed Strategic Research Agenda, an identified Common Programme, participation in the joint call for three funded projects, complete mapping of Mediterranean Marine Research Infrastructures, and a review of Human Capacity Building mechanisms.

Regarding future perspectives, at regional level, the SEAS-ERA Mediterranean partners will carry on disseminating the SRA to broader stakeholders and there will be a continuous effort to implement the SRA through national programmes. At European level, SRA elements will be included in a possible Art185 initiative, JPI Oceans initiative, or Horizon 2020 calls for the Mediterranean Sea. She highlighted that the Mediterranean component of SEAS-ERA has contributed to a more coherent view of future marine science challenges in the area and the SRA has provided an opportunity for more coordinated and effective research investments.

## 10. The value of the SEAS-ERA Black Sea SRA in support of coordinated marine research for sustainability in the Black Sea region

**Çolpan Polat-Beken** (TÜBİTAK, WP8) outlined the key outputs of each work package task, including a strategic analysis that leads to a research agenda, a draft marine research programme, recommendations for the use and sharing of MRI in the Black Sea region, and a report reviewing regional HCB schemes with a gap analysis.

For future perspectives, the Black Sea SEAS-ERA partners suggest:

- A regional cooperation platform, necessary to establish and implement a cooperative marine research plan in the Black Sea (e.g. a new regional ERA-NET);
- Research topics identified during the analysis will be of interest for other regions and will provide links to collaborate with other partners at European or international level;
- To support prioritized theme (e.g. MRI or HCB) for a focused cooperation;
- Partner profiles need to be improved in future cooperation, such as broadening the area of representation.

She concluded her presentation by highlighting that the Black Sea SRA has been welcomed by the scientific community as a good reference document, particularly for those Black Sea countries which do not have national marine research agendas.



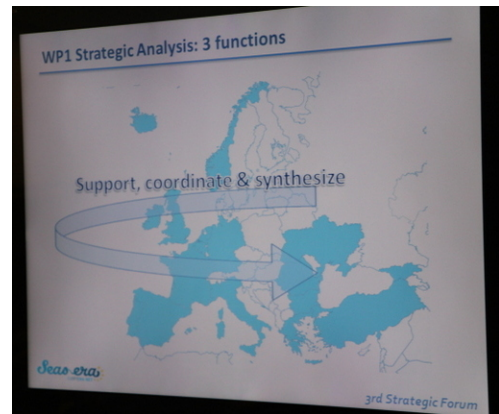
Kaisa Kononan (BONUS) drew attention to the latest BONUS publication (BONUS review 2012-2013) which summarizes the results of their first call on ecosystem approach and management. The publication demonstrates the operation of the science-policy interface in the Baltic Sea region.

## 11. SEAS-ERA strategic analysis: A pan-European perspective

**Niall McDonough** (WP1, EMB) explained that WP1 on strategic analysis was designed to support other work packages by coordinating and synthesizing various activities and publications. There were three components of this work:

- (1) An analysis of existing research strategies at both subnational and national level which underpin marine science as a supporting document for other work packages - a challenging task as marine science components were often incorporated into other research strategies across broader thematic domains;
- (2) Support the development of the SEAS-ERA regional strategic research agendas, including a non-contractual deliverable: a template for the regional SRAs;

- (3) Organization of the SEAS-ERA Pan-European Strategic Fora and a final synthesis report on the commonalities and differences of the three SRAs of the SEAS-ERA regional sea basins. The analyses were carried out by theme as a concise document to highlight research priorities being identified across the sea basins.



In terms of future perspectives:

- Making a coordinated assessment of national strategies, policies and plans which underpin marine research is very challenging because of different situations in each country. However, it is very useful to have information on marine research programming and investment at the national level. This will also contribute to regional planning;
- A long-term and sustained information-base could be valuable but requires support;
- *Marine* research is an exceptionally broad field. A commonly agreed classification of marine research topics/ themes could assist in European coordination efforts;
- Interacting with other synergistic ERA-Nets and JPIs is crucial.



George Kordzakhia (NEA, Georgia) commented that issues presented at today's forum were very important to the Black Sea community to develop strategies at national level.

## 12. Panel discussion: The vision after SEAS-ERA

The panel was composed of Kathrine Angell-Hansen (JPI Oceans), Nina Hedlund (RCN, Norway), Beatriz Morales-Nin (MINECO, Spain), Sigi Gruber (Head of Marine Resources Unit, EC DG R&I), Pier Francesco Moretti (CNR, Italy), and chaired by Niall McDonough (EMB). During their introduction, it was highlighted that:



- The outcome of SEAS-ERA can still be optimized to contribute to the JPI Oceans Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda. The dialogue between SEAS-ERA and JPI Oceans has been excellent throughout;
- Due to economic constraints, the need to prioritize future activities becomes greater;
- Coordination, coherence and cooperation are the three keywords from SEAS-ERA;

## What's the future of SEAS-ERA RFOs network?

The first discussion point focused on the future of the research funding network established from the SEAS-ERA project. As there will be no external follow up funding, what would be the next step, and if it were to continue, would it be of a pan-European or regional format?

**Geoffrey O'Sullivan** (MI, Ireland) stressed that the pan-European network has been beneficial to managers of national research programmes. He would like to see the SEAS-ERA pan-European network continue but with a lighter and more flexible format, which is driven by research funding organizations that would meet regularly based on mutual interests without the constraints of being part of an EU project. JPI Oceans, for example, could provide a platform for such an exchange. Partners could also take initiatives to host future meetings in rotation. Regional collaboration is equally important as specific projects will draw RFOs at the regional level, such as the Baltic and Black Sea. **Nina Hedlund** agreed and suggested that JPI Oceans could serve as a contact/meeting point and research topics raised could be agreed by the RFOs for joint calls. **Pier Francesco Moretti** reminded the participants that the SEAS-ERA consortium is a selection of RFOs, and not a comprehensive list of RFOs in Europe. However, this partnership could identify priorities and outline how activities could be implemented at a broader scale.

**Kathrine Angell-Hansen** welcomed the idea of engaging in a dialogue with national RFOs subject to a mandate from the JPI Management Board. She also stressed the other role of JPI Oceans, which is to align the research landscape and scope for best practice to ensure that countries with weaker economies could also participate in competitive calls.

**Sigi Gruber** emphasized the sustainability of the project as a criterion of the Commission and that SEAS-ERA should ensure that its work continues in order to leverage national and regional policies.



**Vangelis Papathanassiou's** (HCMR, Greece) commented on (i) the role of SEAS-ERA vis-à-vis with JPI Oceans and (ii) expressed the opinion that the strategic direction should progress from a national focus to regional and then European. From her experience of 4 different marine ERA-NETs, **Nina Hedlund** commented that it is time to carry on these networking efforts and for the RFOs to implement calls, rather than delegating entirely to JPI Oceans. **Kathrine Angell-Hansen**

emphasized the necessity of collaborating with the funding agencies to maintain the knowledge of ERA-NETs and the capacity of RFOs to implement activities. Regarding the SEAS-ERA SRAs, she updated participants on the large-scale consultation processes of JPI Oceans. **Pier Francesco Moretti** commented that, in order to address regional issues, it is important to find an inclusive solution between cooperation and competition, and not just rely on winners of the ERA-NETs calls.

**Dennis Lisbjerg** (COFASP ERA-NET & DTU Aqua Denmark) noted that some of the SEAS-ERA activities, such as infrastructure and capacity building in aquaculture and fisheries area, will continue under COFASP<sup>2</sup> ERA-NET (2013-2016) in the next few years.

**Niall McDonough** commented that the ERA-NETs provide the mechanism for an ultimate vision-- European Research Area (ERA), which aims to optimize trans-national cooperation and competition. Throughout the SEAS-ERA projects, priorities at all levels have been developed via the strategic research agendas. Moreover, the SEAS-ERA project is a practical collaboration between RFOs to implement further mechanisms, such as joint calls. The vision for such collaboration is to improve the

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cofasp.eu/>

efficiency of implementation and hence there is a scope for discussing the pragmatic continuation of this network.

**Dominique Durand** (International Research Institute of Stavanger, Norway) appreciated that the network has reached a maturation and conscience to continue joint activities without the support of the Commission. Regarding pan-European and regional relations, he commented that pan-European visions should be supported and facilitated through regional approaches. From the regional aspect, focus can be placed on priorities, engagements with SMEs and industries, allowing possibilities to engage national competencies.



**Sigi Gruber** addressed the need to include industries and SME representatives and to engage in constructive dialogue with technology platforms to achieve positive socio-economic impacts.

**Wojciech Wawrzynski** (ICES, Denmark) noted that the FP7 MARCOM+ experience has brought together networks from marine and maritime sciences and initiated a dialogue among research networks. From this experience, he commented on the lack of brokerage events with technology platforms.

**Kathrine Angell-Hansen** commented that end users, both from industry and policy makers, are important to JPI Oceans and meeting with technology platforms has been part of the JPI Oceans consultation process. She referred to their pilot action on microplastics as an example and explained their practices and learning process that will lead to a call by collaborating with the funding agencies.

**Geoffrey O'Sullivan** (MI, Ireland) noted that ERA-NETs and JPis need to take account of the EU Action Plans for sea basins, signed up by the Member States. He urged a strong linkage between activities among DG R&I, DG MARE and DG REGIO.

**Gilles Lericolais** (Ifremer, France) commented that it is important to see how all these national strategies fit together, noting that RFOs are usually implementing the strategies decided by national ministries. He highlighted the importance of having the joint programming initiative after the ERA-NETs to point to specific areas where national ideas can fit together and progress.

**Richard Bates** (European Commission, DG MARE) stressed that the objectives for the Atlantic Action Plan are focused on growth of the maritime economy and job creation, with a triangle linking research to industry and innovation. The research strategy developed for the Atlantic Region does not exclude participation from other Member States outside the 5 Member States for the Atlantic Action Plan.

**Kathrine Angell-Hansen** stressed the pan-European character of the JPI Oceans. The variable geometry principle with the possibility to join pilot actions from non-members is important, allowing participation from those countries which are interested.

#### **What tools/ activities for a successful RFO network?**

**Niall McDonough** invited perspectives on what tools or activities (for example, joint calls, common programmes, MRIs or HCBs) a voluntary RFO network should focus on.

**Nina Hedlund** expressed her wish that SEAS-ERA partners should agree to a future voluntary meeting to evaluate future progress and share views.

**Dennis Lisbjerg** (COFASP ERA-NET) referred to the experience of COFASP, that instead of a competitive funding mechanism, partners can make in-kind contributions.

**Kathrine Angell-Hansen** stressed that the capacities and experiences learnt from the RFOs and the ERA-NETs would be very important for moving forward. She also expressed the opinion that we need to think outside the box for linking issues such as PhD training and job security.

**Sigi Gruber** highlighted the Horizon 2020 Marie Skłodowska-Curie actions which provide potential for European marine institutes to pair with major universities with a marine and maritime industry.

**Pier Francesco Moretti** reminded participants that the function of RFOs is to give money and invest in research. Therefore, it is important to involve actors at various levels (e.g. Ministries) and expertise (e.g. socio-economic).

**Kathrine Angell-Hansen** commended DG MARE on its regional Action Plans. From a scientific point of view, she commented that the EU should maintain the strength of Europe and be cooperative in its development.

**Niall McDonough** highlighted the potential value of providing a networking fund for scientists to attend networking workshops and meetings, noting that this could be a valuable tool.

**Sigi Gruber** referred to an instrument from the external action service, which provides assistance for EU neighboring countries. Within Horizon 2020, there are also different support actions from other funding systems. She further stressed the importance of informing regional and national policy makers on research priorities, which is to be incorporated into the national plan before submitting to the Commission for funding.

**Kathrine Angell-Hansen** congratulated the SEAS-ERA for the work achieved, which would be very useful to JPI Oceans. She acknowledged the efforts contributed by both the marine and maritime communities, for example, through ERA-NETS, EMB, MARCOM+, and ICES.

Summarizing the Forum, **Niall McDonough** noted several key take-home messages:

- There is strong support to sustain this network, with agreement among the partners to meet periodically using their own budgets and with logistical support from JPI Oceans or partners taking the initiative in rotation for hosting future meetings;
- Continuation of research funding agencies networks at (i) regional level to bring together research communities and (ii) European level with a lighter format;
- Link the SEAS-ERA vision with ERA policy and existing research strategies in order to align national interests with regional and pan-European ones;
- Strengthen collaboration with industrial stakeholders, e.g. via technology platforms;
- An innovative, flexible and self-sustaining RFOs mechanism to support coordination and achieve the goal of ERA.



The 3<sup>rd</sup> Pan-European SEAS-ERA Forum provided an opportunity for dialogue between the European research funding organizations (RFOs) and stakeholders. The discussion has brought the project further in committing to an innovative, flexible and self-sustaining mechanism to support coordination in marine and maritime science.

## List of Annexes:

**Annex 1: Forum Programme**

**Annex 2: Participants list**

**Annex 3: List of acronyms**





Annex 1: Forum Programme

**3<sup>RD</sup> SEAS-ERA STRATEGIC FORUM**

**SEAS-ERA Legacy & Vision**

	09h30	ARRIVAL AND COFFEE & TEA	
	10h00	BEGINNING OF THE FORUM	
		<b>Welcome</b>	Niall McDonough (EMB) & Ana-Teresa Caetano (EC DG R&I) <b>15'</b>
		<b>SEAS-ERA: An overview</b>	Beatriz Morales-Nin (MINECO, Spain) <b>15'</b>
Thematic issues		<b>Common Programme</b>	Jean-François Masset (Ifremer, France) <b>15'</b>
		<b>Joint Calls for research proposals: the SEAS-ERA experience</b>	David Cox (BELSPO, Belgium) <b>15'</b>
		<b>11h00-11h30 COFFEE &amp; TEA BREAK</b>	<b>30'</b>
		<b>Marine Research Infrastructures: overview, vision and recommendations for 2014-2020</b>	Jean-François Masset (IFREMER, France) <b>15'</b>
		<b>HCB in marine and maritime science, from schemes to targeted actions- The SEAS-ERA Contribution</b>	Margherita Cappelletto (CNR, Italy) <b>15'</b>
		<b>Towards a Marine Knowledge Transfer strategy</b>	Dina Carrilho (FCT, Portugal) <b>15'</b>
	<b>12h30- 13h30 LUNCH</b>	<b>60'</b>	
Regional Implementation		<b>The EU Atlantic Action Plan (2014-2020): The contribution of the SEAS-ERA Atlantic partnership</b>	Geoffrey O'Sullivan (MI, Ireland) <b>15'</b>
		<b>The SEAS-ERA Mediterranean SRA: Towards coordinated marine research in the Mediterranean Sea for new knowledge, environmental protection, and blue growth</b>	Margherita Cappelletto (CNR, Italy) <b>15'</b>
		<b>The value of SEAS-ERA BS SRA in support of coordinated marine research for sustainability in the Black Sea region</b>	Çolpan Polat-Beken (TÜBİTAK, Turkey) <b>15'</b>
		<b>SEAS-ERA strategic Analysis: A pan-European perspective</b>	Niall McDonough (EMB) <b>15'</b>
	<b>14h45-15h15 COFFEE &amp; TEA BREAK</b>	<b>30'</b>	
		<b>Panel discussion: The Vision after SEAS-ERA</b>	Beatriz Morales-Nin, Sigi Gruber, Nina Hedlund, Pier Francesco Moretti, Kathrine Angell-Hansen, Niall McDonough (moderator)
	<b>16h30</b>	<b>END OF FORUM</b>	

## Annex 2: Participants list

### Participants List

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
1	Angell-Hansen, Kathrine	JPI Oceans, Belgium	ka@rcn.no
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## Annex 3: List of acronyms

### Article 185 Initiatives

Article 185 TFEU (ex Article 169 TEC) foresees the participation of the EU in the joint implementation of (parts of) research and development national programmes.  
[http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/art185/about-185\\_en.html](http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/art185/about-185_en.html)

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### BONUS EEIG

BONUS builds on the ERA-NET and BONUS+ programmes and has engaged over 100 research institutes and universities in nine Baltic Sea countries. The BONUS Secretariat was established as an European Economic Interest Grouping in 2007 to act as the legal management organization of BONUS.

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### CSA

#### Coordination and Support Action

A project type in the 7<sup>th</sup> Framework programme (FP7) for DG RTD. These are actions that cover not the research itself, but the coordination and networking of projects, programmes and policies.  
[http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/understanding/fp7inbrief/funding-schemes\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp7/understanding/fp7inbrief/funding-schemes_en.html)

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### DG ENV

Directorate General for the Environment, European Commission

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### DG MARE

Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, European Commission

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### DG REGIO

Directorate General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission

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### DG R&I

Directorate General for Research & Innovation, European Commission

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### ERA

European Research Area

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### ERA-NET

#### European Research Area network Scheme

The objectives of ERA-NET scheme (FP6) was to set up the cooperation and coordination of research activities carried out at national or regional level in the Member States and Associated States  
[http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp6/index\\_en.cfm?p=9\\_eranet](http://ec.europa.eu/research/fp6/index_en.cfm?p=9_eranet)

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### EurOcean

#### European Centre for Information on Marine Science and Technology

<http://www.eurocean.org/>

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### EUSA

#### European Union Strategic for the Atlantic

[http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/seabasins/atlantic\\_ocean/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/maritimeaffairs/policy/seabasins/atlantic_ocean/index_en.htm)

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### GES

#### Good Environmental Status

Core objective of the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive which aims to achieve good environmental status in all EU marine waters by 2020. See **MSFD**  
<http://ec.europa.eu/environment/water/marine/ges.htm>

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### HCB

#### Human Capacity Building

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### I3

Integrated Infrastructure Initiative  
EC funding scheme within the 'Capacities' sub-programme of FP7  
<http://cordis.europa.eu/infrastructures/i3.htm>

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### ICES

#### International Council for the Exploration of the Sea

<http://www.ices.dk/>

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**JPI****Joint Programme Initiative**

The overall aim of the Joint Programming process is to pool national research efforts in order to make better use of Europe's precious public R&D resources and to tackle common European challenges more effectively in a few key areas.

One of the initiatives, **JPI Oceans** is on Healthy and Productive Seas and Oceans.

[http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/joint-programming-initiatives\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/research/era/joint-programming-initiatives_en.html)

<http://www.jpi-oceans.eu>

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**KT****Knowledge Transfer**

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**MRI****Marine Research Infrastructure**

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**MSFD****Marine Strategy Framework Directive**

Environmental pillar of the EU integrated maritime policy.

[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/marine/eu-coast-and-marine-policy/marine-strategy-framework-directive/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/marine/eu-coast-and-marine-policy/marine-strategy-framework-directive/index_en.htm)

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**RFO****Research Funding Organization**

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**RPO****Research Performing Organization**

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**SMEs****Small and Medium Enterprises**

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**SRA****Strategic Research Agenda**

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**SRIA****Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda of JPI Oceans**

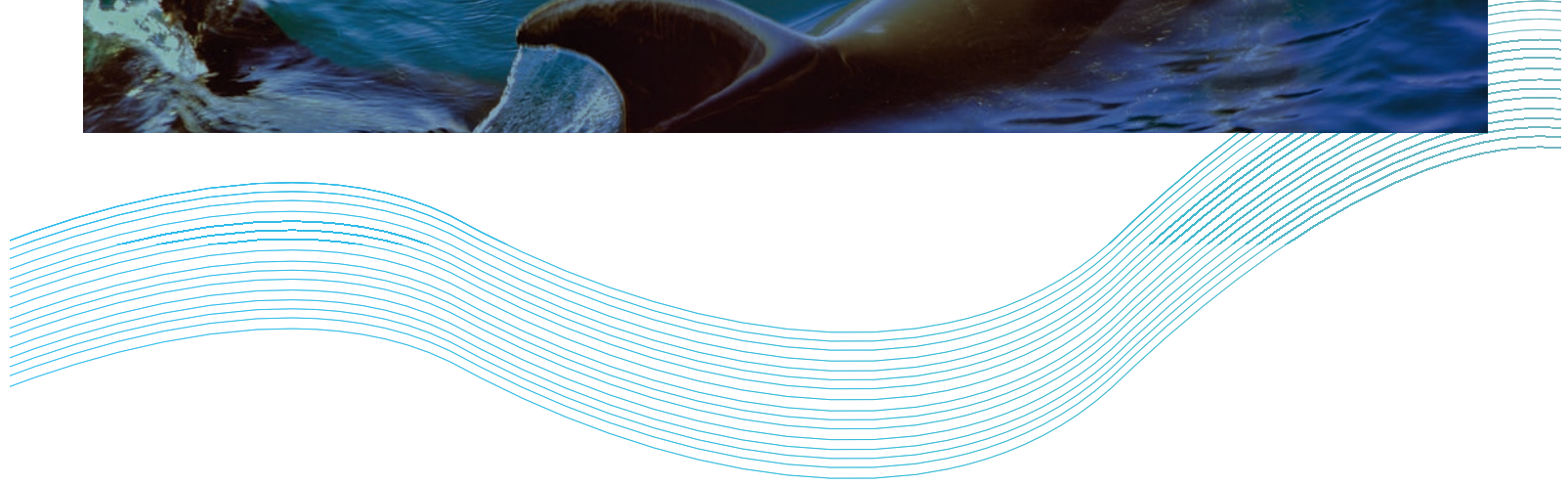
[http://www.jpi-oceans.eu/prognett-jpi-oceans/Policy\\_strategy/1253971286454](http://www.jpi-oceans.eu/prognett-jpi-oceans/Policy_strategy/1253971286454)

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**StAB****Strategic Advisory Board of JPI Oceans**

[http://www.jpi-oceans.eu/prognett-jpi-oceans/Strategic\\_Advisory\\_Board/1253980838312](http://www.jpi-oceans.eu/prognett-jpi-oceans/Strategic_Advisory_Board/1253980838312)

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Towards integrated European marine  
research strategy and programmes

# Seas era

EUFP7ERA-NET

<http://www.seas-era.eu>

Project Beneficiaries



Project Third Parties

