

For the attention of: Dr. Vladimir Ryabinin, Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO

Subject: Placing integrated marine science at the core of Europe's contribution to the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development

20 December 2017

Dear Dr. Vladimir Ryabinin,

On 6 December 2017, the United Nations officially designated the years 2021 to 2030 as the 'Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development'. As shown in the Global Ocean Science Report published this year, Europe is a leader in scientific research and academic publications. The upcoming Ocean Decade is a huge opportunity for the global marine science community to show the value and importance of integrated marine science in the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda, across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Placing marine science at the core of European – and International - Research and Innovation Agenda has never been more timely, relevant, or of higher value to society.

The latest European Marine Board (EMB) flagship initiative, *Navigating the Future V (NFV)*, **will provide scientific advice on future seas and Ocean research to 2030 and beyond**. The experts of the EMB identified 5 key areas of marine science, during the NFV foresight planning in November 2017:

- Improve knowledge of the 4-Dimensional Ocean (a volume that changes in the time dimension) and its role in the earth and climate system, including the human component;
- Assess impacts of multiple and cumulative human stressors to the dynamic, non-linear and rapidly changing Ocean system;
- Improve understanding and predictability of extreme events through an integrated approach, including natural hazards and climate induced impacts affecting the Ocean;
- Advance capabilities in ocean technologies leading to wider developments in Information Technology and Artificial Intelligence;
- Foster sustainability science as an integrated field with marine science as a core component of natural and social sciences.

The EMB calls the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO to consider these recommendations and promote holistic and integrated approaches to develop the common Implementation Plan for the UN Decade of Ocean Science. The marine science community stands ready to take this quantum leap on a scale that is needed to understand, protect, manage and sustainably exploit our Ocean and wider natural environment.

Yours sincerely,



Prof. Dr. Jan Mees
Chair, European Marine Board