

25 March 2021

**RE: EMB support to EU initiative on Ocean Observation**

Dear Commissioner Sinkevičius,

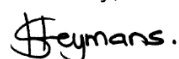
The European Marine Board (EMB) was pleased to see the EU initiative on Ocean Observations to achieve a common approach for measuring once and using data for many purposes. We were happy to respond to the consultation and contribute to the impact assessment, where we specifically highlighted the importance of Ocean observations for the understanding of the impact of climate change and a changing Ocean on human health and wellbeing, but also the importance of Ocean observations for our sustainable use of the Ocean. Ocean observations are essential for the knowledge base of the European Green Deal. As we highlighted to your predecessor, [Commissioner Karmenu Vella](#), during the [three meetings](#) we had between 2016 and 2018, without comprehensive Ocean observations we cannot understand the impact of our use of the Ocean and its resources. During the third meeting in 2018 we discussed the importance of Ocean observations in [Food from the Ocean](#), for the then proposed UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and its importance in Horizon Europe.

In 2019, through our flagship policy publication [Navigating the Future V](#), we highlighted the importance of Ocean observations for understanding the 4D ocean, for managing multiple stressors, and for understanding climate related extreme events. We also highlighted the importance of new Ocean technologies, modelling and artificial intelligence, which will only be useful for managing our Ocean with the observations to validate their predictions. These recommendations were then mapped onto the Societal Outcomes of the UN Ocean Decade in a EMB [Policy Brief](#).

Through our many [current activities](#), which include highlighting the possible impact of Marine Geohazards on the Blue Economy, the impact of Underwater Noise on marine life, and the importance of Coastal Resilience, we always work within the context of a Sustainable Blue Economy and the new Green Deal. In addition, the EMB is part of the [EU4Ocean](#) project, where we are delighted to have you as one of the EU4Ocean Ambassadors. We are also part of the team working on the [IOG Forum](#), where we highlight the importance of the Ocean Knowledge System, from Ocean observations, through to using models to address scenarios for change. In essence, support for fit-for-purpose Ocean observations, and for greater awareness of their importance in society, is pervasive through all of our activities.

Finally, I would like bring to your attention our current work highlighting the problem of [sustained funding for Ocean observation infrastructure](#). We believe that the European Union can empower the coordination efforts by proposing a framework for national and EU collaboration, to support pan-European and global Ocean observation efforts to improve the overall efficiency of national and European investments in shared Ocean observation infrastructures. Joint planning of observation activities in this framework would increase Member State cooperation, and bring them together to cope with the effects of climate change and human activities on our Ocean. This will strengthen the integrated combined capacity of the Ocean observing system to deliver the data needed to support the Green Deal and the Sustainable Blue Economy. The Policy Brief will be published in summer 2021 and we hope it will be a valuable resource as you work to develop European Ocean observations.

Sincerely,



Sheila JJ Heymans  
Executive Director