



**European Marine Board - European Marine Board Communications Panel  
Expert Working Group**

***Marine Science Communication in Europe: a way forward***

**Terms of Reference**

***November 2019***

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## 1. Background and Rationale

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In times often regarded as the post-truth era, practicing and sharing science is more relevant than ever. This is even more pressing for the marine realm; an environment that is by definition remote, hostile and a long way from everyday routine. On the other hand, the ocean and seas play a vital role in the Earth's systems and experience an increasing pressure from blue economy activities. This contradiction has set the scene for a global 'Ocean Literacy' movement and it underpins the need for proper and impactful marine science communication and outreach.

The European Marine Board Communications Panel (EMBCP), a pan-European platform for marine science communicators, decided in 2019 to write a policy document, under the auspices and with the support of the European Marine Board (EMB). This document would sketch and analyse the state of the art in the field of marine science communication, aiming to highlight marine science communication as a growing and needed field of activity, and providing recommendations towards its future and developing best practices.

Active, intensive, and efficient communication of advances in ocean sciences will be a key enabling factor for the success of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030)<sup>1</sup>. This joint effort between EMBCP and EMB will provide valuable knowledge and a baseline on marine science communication in Europe at the onset of the Ocean Decade.

## 2. Working Group Objectives

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EMBCP and EMB propose an expert working group to produce a Future Science Brief (FSB), which will demonstrate how marine science has strived to communicate its scientific outcomes to a wider audience and to more specific target audiences. It will focus on examples of marine science communication in Europe that have had far-reaching impact, whether in quantity or quality/originality. It will provide a baseline review of how marine science communication is currently done in Europe. It will also look at lessons learnt during the process of communication and at the role of different stakeholders, as well as the relative costs and societal conditions determining what is at stake.

The final product will deliver specific recommendations on what can be done to recognise, support and improve marine science communication in Europe. The target audience for this publications are marine scientific organisation managers, research funders and centres, universities, marine science communication experts and interested scientists, European and national policy makers, and NGOs.

## 3. Deliverables

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The Working Group will deliver a Future Science Brief, addressing the above topic by May 2021.

A peer-review process with a minimum of two external reviewers will be organized by the EMB Secretariat for this publication. After approval by the members of EMBCP, and in accordance with EMB procedures, the Future Science Brief will require approval by the EMB Member Organizations prior to finalization and publication.

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<sup>1</sup> Ryabinin V., Barbière J., Haugan P., Kullenberg G., Smith N., McLean C., Troisi A., Fischer A., Aricò S., Aarup T., Pissierssens P., Visbeck M., Enevoldsen H. O. and Rigaud J. (2019) The UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. *Front. Mar. Sci.* 6:470. [doi: 10.3389/fmars.2019.00470](https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2019.00470)

The impact of the publication will be achieved via a targeted dissemination strategy (see point 4). Working Group members will be required to make suggestions on how to reach end-user contacts and to contribute to the dissemination. Promotion of the Future Science Brief may include dedicated presentations at stakeholder events. Working Group members will also be asked to notify the Secretariat of any dissemination activities or observed uptake or impact of the messages in the publication, for up to two years following publication, for future impact reporting.

#### 4. Target Audience and Expected Impact

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The Working Groups are the primary foresight and priority-setting tools of the European Marine Board. The expected outcome is that the recommendations of the resulting policy document influence future research strategies and programmes at both national and European level. Therefore, the EMB policy document target audience is in the first instance those who determine and set research agendas, including research funding organisations, programme managers and science policy advisors/developers both at the national and European level. The expected outcome is also intended to strengthen marine science communication by stimulating networking and developing common positions between experts, potentially leading to new collaborative projects. The recommendations and perspectives delivered through EMB policy documents can also influence and drive broader marine and maritime policies and initiatives, beyond the research realm, such as Ocean Literacy in Europe. This publication could also highlight the need to have recognised, structured and supported marine science communication to research organisations, funders and universities.

#### 5. Working Group Composition

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##### **Working Group Chair**

The lead Chair is selected to represent the Working Group and take responsibility for its deliverables. At the EMBCP Autumn meeting in Berlin (6-7 November 2019), the members selected **Jan Seys**, head of the Science Communication department of the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ, Belgium) as Chair of the Working Group. The Chair of EMBCP, Lucy Cox, head of Communications at the National Oceanographic Centre (NOC, UK) will act as a co-chair and replace the Chair when needed.

##### ***Roles and responsibilities of the WG Chair***

The WG Chair is responsible for ensuring the quality and robustness of the Working Group outputs and its timely delivery according to the WG Terms of Reference and as agreed by the WG members. The WG Chair provides leadership and motivation and drives the WG activities with the support of a dedicated European Marine Board Science Officer who acts in the capacity of WG facilitator.

The WG Chairs (lead Chair primarily and co-Chair when the lead Chair is not available):

- Chair WG meetings,
- Coordinate the contributions to the document draft according to the objectives defined,
- Maintain an overview of the content and quality of the various inputs and requests additional expertise if necessary,
- Ensure timely delivery of the WG document, and
- Enhance the document's strategic impact by promoting WG activities and the output.

The meeting Chairs are crucial to effectively moderate discussions and deliver meeting outputs.

### **Working Group Members**

The core Working Group will be drawn *inter alia* from the EMBCP members who wish to participate and are willing to commit time and effort to deliver the WG output.

The EMBCP represents an unique network of experienced communication professionals: communication directors (officers), public relations officers, outreach or education experts, press/ media officers, (science) communicators, marine scientists who have embraced a marine science communications career, active scientists with *ad hoc* communications duties, or other experts addressing a wide scope of communications related activities who are working for research performing organizations, universities or research funding organizations. EMBCP members are appointed by the delegates representing members of the European Marine Board. Members should be from / affiliated to EMB Member Organizations and membership is based on one member per organization.

### **Roles and responsibilities of WG Members**

WG Members are responsible for ensuring the quality of their inputs and their timely delivery according to the WG Terms of Reference.

WG Members:

- Prepare for and attend the WG meetings,
- Submit written contributions in a timely manner,
- Guide and adhere to the high-level strategic objectives of the publication,
- Promote the resulting brief at national level and European levels, and
- Feedback information on dissemination activities and opportunities, impact and uptake to the EMB Secretariat.

### **Engaging the wider community**

During the course of the WG, members may invite a selection of stakeholders or observers from the wider community including science, industry, policy makers and funders, to participate in WG meetings or provide input to the document. Conducting an online survey is planned by the Working Group to gather relevant stakeholders' best practices and knowledge on marine science from non-specialised public.

### **EMB Facilitation of the Working Group**

The EMB Executive Director is the *ex officio* WG manager. She nominates one or two Secretariat officers to support and facilitate the Working Group.

The EMB Secretariat will support this activity with the Chair and co-Chair. A dedicated EMB Science Officer will act in the capacity of facilitator and other EMB Secretariat staff may be involved depending on the specific topic for each Working Group activity.

For this WG the facilitator is: Ángel Muñoz Piniella, EMB Science Officer

### **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) policy for EMB WGs**

Personal data for EMB working group members and those involved in other EMB core activities is used for internal communication with the activity as well as external communication of the EMB activity via publications, the EMB website and EMB social media outlets.

For any new EMB activities, consent is sought at the kick-off of the activity to cover all relevant use and storage of personal data. It is anticipated that the subjects would also be added to the EMB mailing list, and thus their data would continue to be stored and used beyond the end of the activity, unless consent is later withdrawn. A template consent form can be found in Annex 1. This data will be kept in our database for future roles, unless requested otherwise.

Reviewers are also contacted within the context of EMB activities. The template email they receive already clearly outlines their right to act that their input remains anonymous, in which case the reviewer would simply be listed as “Anonymous”. The reviewer will be informed of how and where their personal data will be stored. The consent of the reviewer will also be specifically sought for their personal data to be used outside of any activities directly relating to their role as reviewer, using the template text included in this document.

The EMB [privacy policy contains](#) information about our compliance with GDPR (data protection law). In this document you can find how to send us a request to let you access your data that we have collected, request us to delete your data, correct any inaccuracies or restrict our processing of your data. You have the right to lodge a complaint about the way we handle your data with [Belgian Data Protection Authority](#) or you can contact us at [info@marineboard.eu](mailto:info@marineboard.eu) for more information or concerns.

## 6. Mode of Operation

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The establishment of a Working Group is for a limited duration and the group will be disbanded by the EMBCP and the EMB when it has fulfilled its mandate. EMB Working Groups are facilitated by the EMB Secretariat but they are not financially supported by the EMB (unless an extraordinary contribution is secured by one or more EMB Member Organizations).

The work programme for the Working Group will consist of:

- Several meetings (in-person or online);
- Writing assignments;
- Regular email interactions;
- Facilitation of the WG by the European Marine Board Secretariat;
- External peer review;
- Coordination of the report writing to publication standards by the WG Chair; and
- Final editing of the report in preparation of the publication by the EMB Secretariat and the WG Chair and co-Chair.

Support from the European Marine Board:

- The EMB will arrange meetings and provide organizational support for WG meetings;
- Travel costs for WG participants are not covered by the EMB secretariat, but normally covered by the EMB Member Organization they represent or by the participant’s own institution (if these are different);
- The EMB will cover the costs of publication and dissemination (to relevant stakeholders) of the final document;
- Members of the EMB Secretariat will attend each meeting, write and disseminate meeting minutes, and will maintain regular dialogue with the WG Chair and co-Chair to ensure timely delivery of the document.

## 7. Indicative Timetable

The planning for a publication would include the preparation and testing of the survey (November 2019 - February 2020), conducting and communicating the survey (March - July 2020), its analysis (August - September 2020), writing the paper (January - November 2020), layout & publication (December 2020 – May 2021). Publication of the final document is foreseen in May 2021 (Ocean Decade kick-off Berlin).

Tasks (2019-2020-2021)	2019		2020												2021						
	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J
Selection of Chair and WG members	■																				
Planning and testing survey		■	■	■																	
Conducting and communicating survey					■	■	■	■	■												
Analysis survey										■	■										
Drafting of content (with remote meetings between Chair, members and EMB secretariat)		■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■								
EMBCP meetings					■									■							
Deadline final text and illustrations													■								
External review and revisions														■	■						
Approval by WG members															■	■					
Design and Remote Approval by EMB delegates																■	■	■	■		
Publication and press release, followed by dissemination and uptake/impact tracking																			■	■	■

### **Annex 1: Consent form for Core Activities**

EMB holds personal data for anyone involved in core EMB activities, including Working Groups.

The following personal data may be held by the EMB Secretariat:

- Name
- Title
- Job title
- Areas of expertise and research interests
- Previously held roles
- Institute
- Country
- Institutional email address
- Institutional postal address
- Institutional telephone number
- Photographs
- Video

This information is stored in a secure spreadsheet and folder locations, and only EMB Secretariat staff have access to this.

EMB may:

- Contact you regarding the EMB activity that you are directly involved with
- Contact you regarding other EMB activities
- Add you to the EMB stakeholder mailing list
- Make your name, institution and country publically available on the EMB website, in EMB communications, e.g. presentations regarding the activity you are involved in, and in EMB publications
- Take your photograph during EMB activities and use these pictures in publications, on the EMB website and on EMB social media outlets
- Take video footage during EMB activities and use these pictures in publications, on the EMB website and on EMB social media outlets

The data held may be reviewed and revised by the subject, and consent for any or all of the above may be withdrawn at any time.

Please tick this box to confirm that you understand the above, and that you give EMB permission to obtain, use and store your personal data as outlined above.

Name:

Date: