

11 December 2024

RE: Marine Science to support the EU Maritime Affairs and Fisheries

Dear Commissioner Costas Kadis,

With this letter we members of the [European Marine Board](#) (EMB) wants to congratulate you in your appointment as EU Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans. We also want to make you aware of the work of the EMB that can help you in addressing the mission that President von der Leyen has entrusted you with.

The EMB is the leading European think-tank in marine science policy, a unique strategic pan-European Forum for seas and Ocean research and technology. We represent the 38 foremost marine research organisations in Europe, supported by the knowledge of more than 10,000 marine scientists, engineers and technologists. The European Marine Board published their flagship foresight document, [Navigating the Future VI](#), in October 2024, and this document will provide the newest marine scientific advice to help you achieve a secure, prosperous and democratic Europe.

Navigating the Future VI (NFVI) provides robust, independent scientific knowledge on the critical role the Ocean plays in the wider Earth system. It emphasises the importance of a multidisciplinary approach and appropriate governance to protect the Ocean and ensure that the Ocean continues to be healthy. It also provides research and policy recommendations to ensure the Ocean continues to provide the services society require, and can support us in addressing the climate, fresh water and biodiversity crises. These recommendations include the need for specific research on the impact of multiple stressors on the Ocean and its inhabitants; sustained Ocean observations; open, accessible and digitised data, and their integration into Digital Twins of the Ocean; and harmonised governance, standards, policies and monitoring across the land-coastal-Ocean interface.

The European Marine Board also lead the [Vigo Declaration](#), which was signed by all the European marine science networks and endorsed by the European marine science community at the EuroCEAN 2023 Conference (10-11 October 2023, Vigo, Spain). The Vigo Declaration underscores the **urgent need for integrated land-sea policies, sustained and coordinated Ocean observation, and committed citizen engagement** to address the pressing issues of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. By adopting these recommendations, the EU will lead the way in promoting social and economic justice, ensuring global equity and sustainability, and achieving the goals of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. Implementing these strategies will not only align with the EU Mission to “Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030” but also strengthen the resilience of Europe's coastal communities, and the leadership of EU in global Ocean governance. Your support and action on these recommendations will be crucial in securing a sustainable and prosperous future for our shared Ocean and the communities that depend on it.

We would also like to reiterate the role that the EU can have on joint planning and collaboration for Ocean observation activities. We encourage the European Commission to take action towards the implementation of the [EU initiative on Ocean Observations](#) to achieve a common approach for measuring once and using data many times. The EU should recognise and support the essential role of coordinated Ocean Observation to deliver marine knowledge, and an open, accessible, and fit for purpose European Digital Twin of the Ocean. This recognition and support would be fundamental for the European Oceans Pact to ensure coherence across all policy areas linked to the Ocean.

We would therefore request that the European Commission prioritises and works towards the recommendations highlighted in the Vigo Declaration and the European Marine Board's foresight document [Navigating the Future VI](#).

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these topics with you in a meeting with the heads of EMB Member National Ocean research institutes, to explore how the European Marine Board, as the voice of marine science in Europe, can support you in the coming years to ensure the success of the European Oceans Pact.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Fiona Grant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr Fiona Grant
Chair of the European Marine Board