

13 December 2024

RE: Marine Science to protect our natural world and boost the circular economy

Dear Commissioner Jessika Roswall,

With this letter, the [European Marine Board](#) (EMB) wants to congratulate you on your appointment as EU Commissioner for Environment, Water Resilience and a Competitive Circular Economy. We also want to make you aware of the work of the EMB that can help you in addressing the mission with which President von der Leyen has entrusted you.

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. Our flagship foresight document, [Navigating the Future VI \(NFVI\)](#), published in October 2024, provides the newest marine scientific advice to help us all to achieve a secure, prosperous and democratic Europe.

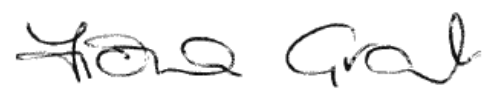
NFVI provides robust, independent scientific knowledge on the critical role the Ocean plays in the wider Earth system. It emphasises the importance of a multidisciplinary approach and harmonised ocean-coastal-land management approaches to ensure the Ocean continues to provide the services society requires, and that it can support us in addressing the climate, freshwater and biodiversity crises. NFVI specific recommendations include harmonising monitoring and reporting methods between freshwater and marine systems with the aim of simplification, including all contaminants and discharge pathways in risk assessments and EU Directives, and, assessing the impact of human activities on ecosystems using cost-benefit analysis of their conservation or restoration. The Ocean is a vital component to strengthen water security in Europe, and the European marine science community is willing to contribute to the European Water Resilience Strategy that President von der Leyen has asked you to lead.

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 on promoting social and economic justice, ensure global equity and sustainability, and achieve 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 the 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 therefore request that the European Commission prioritises and works towards the recommendations highlighted in the Vigo Declaration and re-iterated in the European Marine Board's foresight document Navigating the Future VI.

We would also like to highlight the role that the European Marine Board plays, as the voice of marine science in Europe, in providing advice on the enforcement and implementation of existing legislation related to environment, biodiversity and zero-pollution, and the delivery of international commitments from the EU and its Member States. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these topics in the coming months, and to explore how the European Marine Board can support you in addressing the Mission that President von der Leyen has entrusted to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fiona Grant". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'F' and a distinct 'G'.

Dr Fiona Grant
Chair of the European Marine Board