



AQUARIUS Kick Off Meeting

Marine Institute

Bernadette Ní Chonghaile



Funded by
the European Union

AQUARIUS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation under grant agreement No 101130915. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

About this document

Title	D1.1 AQUARIUS Kick Off Meeting
Work Package	WP1, Coordination and Project Management
Lead Partner	Marine Institute
Lead Author (Org)	Marine Institute
Contributing Author(s)	Bernadette Ní Chonghaile (Marine Institute)
Reviewers	Aodhán Fitzgerald, Frank Armstrong (Marine Institute)
Due Date	31.05.2024
Submission Date	29.05.2024
Version	1.0

Dissemination Level

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	PU: Public
<input type="checkbox"/>	PP: Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission)
<input type="checkbox"/>	RE: Restricted to a group specified by the consortium (including the Commission)
<input type="checkbox"/>	CO: Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission)

AQUARIUS: Aqua Research Infrastructure Services for the health and protection of our unique, oceans, seas and freshwater ecosystems is a Research and Innovation action (RIA) funded by the Horizon Europe Work programme topics addressed: HORIZON-INFRA-2023-SERV-01-01 - Research infrastructure services to enable R&I addressing main challenges and EU priorities. Start date: 01 March 2024. End date: 29 February 2028.



**Funded by
the European Union**

AQUARIUS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation under grant agreement No 101130915. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	3
Summary.....	4
List of AQUARIUS Beneficiaries	4
1. Introduction	6
2. Objectives	6
3. AQUARIUS Kick-Off Meeting Plenary Session.....	7
3.1. Meeting Open.....	7
3.2. Welcome Address	7
3.3. Launch of AQUARIUS Project	8
3.4. Work Package 1 Project Management.....	8
3.5. WP 2 Transnational Access; Introducing the AQUARIUS Infrastructure.....	9
3.6. Work Package 3 RI Call Design, Management, Evaluation and Access Platform	10
3.7. Call Platform Functionality	11
3.8. Financial Reporting.....	11
3.9. Work Package 4 RI Access Facilitation, Management & Governance.....	11
3.10. Work Package 5 RI Technical Training.....	12
3.11. Work Package 6 Data Management & Open Science Practices	13
3.12. Work Package 7 Impact: Dissemination, Exploitation And Communication	14
4. Collaborative Projects	15
4.1. POLARIN - Hannele Savelle	15
4.2. LandSeaLot - Anouk Blauw, Deltares.....	16
4.3. BlueMissionAA - Jose Moutinho (AIR Centre)	16
5. Meeting Close.....	16
Annex 1 – Meeting Agenda	17
Annex 2 - List of Participant Organisations.....	19

Summary

The AQUARIUS project Kick Off Meeting was held online via MS Teams on April 23rd and 24th 2024. The meeting was hosted by the Marine Institute (MI) as Project Coordinator. The plenary session took place on day one and individual Work Package meetings were held on day two. Ninety-nine participants in total representing the forty-one beneficiaries and four affiliated entities attended. The list of organisations represented is included in Annex 2 of this document (names have been removed for GDPR reasons). This document outlines the activities that took place during the plenary session on day one. The meeting agenda is available in Annex 1. WP leaders will provide update reports on the individual Work Packages(WP) to WP participants.

List of AQUARIUS Beneficiaries

	Name of beneficiary	Short Name	Location
1.	MARINE INSTITUTE	MI	Ireland
2.	ILMATIETEEN LAITOS	FMI	Finland
3.	AGENCIA ESTATAL CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE INVEST	CSIC	Spain
4.	HELLENIC CENTRE FOR MARINE RESEARCH	HCMR	Greece
5.	HAVFORSKNINGSINSTITUTTET	IMR	Norway
6.	GRONLANDS NATURINSTITUT	GRNI	Greenland
7.	SEASCAPE BELGIUM	SSBE	Belgium
8.	HELMHOLTZ-ZENTRUM HEREON GMBH	HERON	Germany
9.	ALFRED-WEGENER-INSTITUT HELMHOLTZ-ZENTRUM FUR POLAR- UND MEERESFORSCHUNG	AWI	Germany
10.	UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK	UL	Ireland
11.	INSTITUTUL NATIONAL DE CERCETARE-DEZVOLTA	INCDM - NIMRD	Romania
12.	MARIENE INFORMATIE SERVICE MARIS BV	MARIS	Netherlands
13.	SUOMEN YMPARISTOKESKUS	SYKE	Finland
14.	CONSIGLIO NAZIONALE DELLE RICERCHE	CNR	Italy
15.	USTAV VYZKUMU GLOBALNI ZMENY AV CR VVI	CzechGlobal	Czechia
16.	NORSK INSTITUTT FOR VANNFORSKNING	NIVA	Norway
17.	INSTITUT ROYAL DES SCIENCES NATURELLES DE B	RBINS	Belgium
18.	VLAAMS INSTITUUT VOOR DE ZEE	VILZ	Belgium
19.	EUROPEAN MARINE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE CENT	EMBRC	France
19.1.	SORBONNE UNIVERSITE (Affiliated to 19)	SU	France
19.2.	CENTRO DE CIENCIAS DO MAR DO ALGARVE (Affiliated to 19)	CCMAR	Portugal

19.3.	CENTRO INTERDISCIPLINAR DE INVESTIGACAO MARINHA E AMBIENTAL (Affiliated to 19)	CCIMAR	Portugal
20.	MERCATOR OCEAN	MOI	France
21.	EUROPEAN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY LABORATORY	EMBL EBI	Germany
22.	SVERIGES METEOROLOGISKA OCH HYDROLOGISK	SMHI	Sweden
23.	INSTITUT DE RECHERCHE POUR LE DEVELOPPEME	IRD	France
24.	UNIVERSITE DE LIEGE	ULIEGE	Belgium
25.	ISTITUTO NAZIONALE DI GEOFISICA E VULCANOLOGIA	INGV	Italy
26.	INSTITUTO HIDROGRAFICO	IH	Portugal
27.	NORCE NORWEGIAN RESEARCH CENTRE AS	NORCE	Norway
28.	CONSORCIO PARA EL DISENO, CONSTRUCCION, EQUIPAMIENTO Y EXPLOTACION DE LA PLATAFORMA OCEANICA DE CANARIAS	Plocan	Spain
29.	SOCIB - CONSORCIO PARA EL DISENO, CONSTRUCCION, EQUIPAMIENTO Y EXPLOTACION DEL SISTEMA DE OBSERVACION COSTERO DE LAS ILLES BALEARS	SOCIB	Spain
30.	VLAAMSE INSTELLING VOOR TECHNOLOGISCH ONDERZOEK N.V.	VITO	Belgium
31.	EUROPEAN MULTIDISCIPLINARY SEAFLOORAND WATER COLUMN OBSERVATORY - EUROPEAN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE CONSORTIUM (EMSO ERIC)	EMSO ERIC	Italy
32.	INSTITUTUL NATIONAL DE CERCETARE-DEZVOLTARE PENTRU GEOLOGIE SI GEOECOLOGIE MARINA-GEOECOMAR	GEOECOMAR	Romania
33.	The Faroe Marine Research Institute	FMRI	Faroe Islands
34.	INPA (PLATRORM)	INPA	Sweden
34.1	INKODE (affiliated partner to 42 INPA) (PLATFORM)	INKODE	Italy
35.	ISTITUTO NAZIONALE DI OCEANOGRAFIA E DI GEOFISICA SPERIMENTALE	OGS	Italy
36.	Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer	IFREMER	France
37.	Marine and Freshwater Research Institute	MFRI	Iceland
38.	Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya	UPC	Spain
39.	Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research	NIOZ	Netherlands
40.	TURKIYE BILIMSEL VE TEKNOLOJIK ARASTIRMA KURUMU - TUBITAK	Tubitak	Türkiye
41.	SLU	SLU	Sweden

1. Introduction

The AQUARIUS Kick-off Meeting took place online on 23rd – 24th April 2024 hosted by the Marine Institute (Project Coordinator). The General Assembly meeting took place on April 23rd while Work Package meetings took place on the 24th April. Ninety-nine people attended the general assembly meeting (see Annex 2 for list of participant organisations).

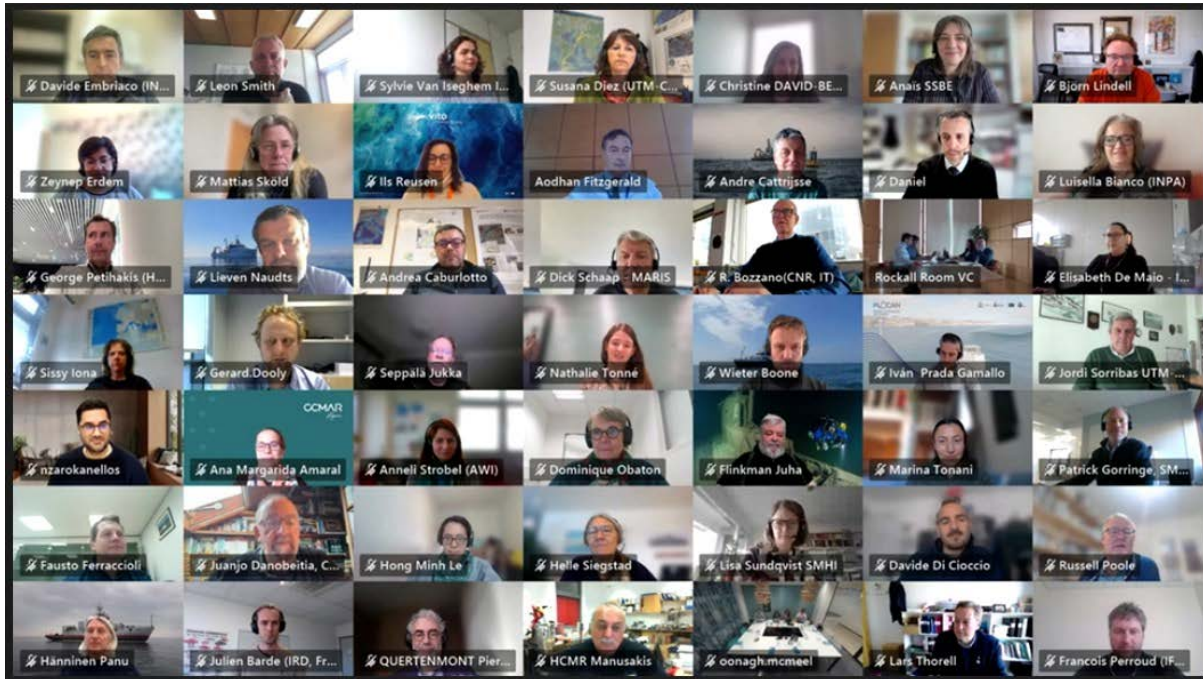


Figure 1 Photo of some of the KOM attendees

2. Objectives

The main objective of the Kick-Off Meeting is to bring all beneficiaries together for the first time and review the technical, managerial and administrative aspects of the AQUARIUS project.

In accordance with the meeting agenda (Annex 1) the objectives of the Kick-Off Meeting were to:

- Present the project objectives and structure
- Review contractual reporting and schedule
- Overview of management, financial and communication issues
- Introduce the AQUARIUS infrastructure
- Discuss all Activities and Work Packages (WP): work plan, objectives, roles and tasks for each beneficiary including deadlines
- Define actions for the next 12 months

3. AQUARIUS Kick-Off Meeting Plenary Session

3.1. Meeting Open

Aodhán Fitzgerald (MI), Project Coordinator opened the meeting and introduced the Marine Institute and the project coordination team; Bernadette Ni Chonghaile (Project Manager) and Frank Armstrong (Project Officer).

The history of the AQUARIUS project was presented including the preceding Eurofleets projects which led to this juncture.

Project objectives were outlined including the enhancement and integration of infrastructure services, the efficient single-point transnational access (TA) that can support the Mission 'Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030' as well the provision of training and data management services. Specific objectives of the Mission 'Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030' were described including the Mission Lighthouse Regions identified as the Atlantic/Arctic, Mediterranean, Black Sea/Danube and Baltic/North Sea (as presented in the image below). The focus of the Transnational Access Calls will be on the Lighthouse regions and addressing the themes of each region.

The full presentation can be viewed [here](#).

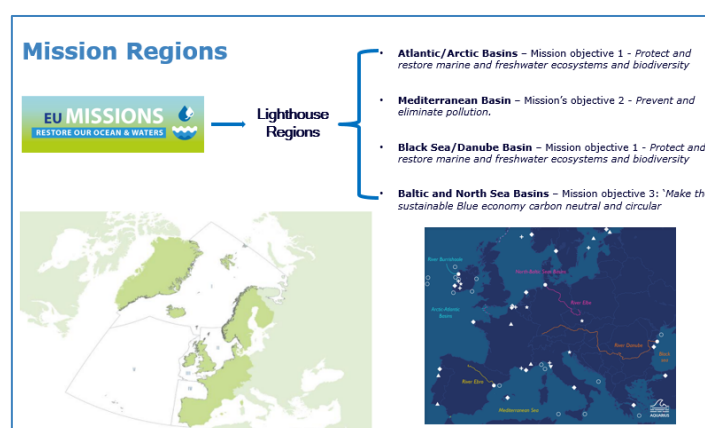


Figure 2 Lighthouse Regions and objectives

3.2. Welcome Address

The Marine Institute's CEO, Dr Rick Officer welcomed all participants to the AQUARIUS Kick-Off Meeting and conveyed what a great honour it is for the MI to be coordinating this ambitious project which is of huge European significance.

Dr Officer stated that meetings like today's mark both a beginning and an end and is a good time to take stock of where we are and what it took to get here. He acknowledged the work and collaborative effort to date, during the previous Eurofleets projects as well as the parallel work to design, apply for and secure funding for the AQUARIUS project. He congratulated in particular Aodhán as project coordinator and all the partners steering the design and application of the AQUARIUS vision.

Framed around shared European objectives and the lighthouse regions approach will ensure traction at a local level. The program is designed around a pathway to impact to ensure optimal efficiency, delivery and effectiveness which is important for the Commission as well as state and institutional investments. Dr Officer wished the project the very best of success over the coming years.

3.3. Launch of AQUARIUS Project

Pierre Quertenmont (Research Executive Agency (REA)) launched the AQUARIUS project and addressed the monitoring and reporting requirements, the cross-cutting aspects of the project and some extra resources provided by the REA. The project will be monitored in three ways; the technical report will monitor compliance with the project's Description of the Action (DoA), financial reporting will ensure compliance with the cost eligibility rules and other (non-financial) obligations will ensure compliance with cross-cutting obligations. Reporting is via the continuous reporting tool in the EC portal and periodic reports to request payments (month 24 and month 48). The periodic reports consist of; technical report and financial report. Two project reviews will also take place after the periodic reports are submitted.

Pierre highlighted that 20% maximum of Transnational Access (TA) provided can be to international researchers (outside of the EU) and that 3 months is the maximum period of access although there are practical exceptions to this if well justified. Research Infrastructures must consider equal opportunities when advertising the access. Pierre highlighted some key financial management and audit advice and briefly outlined the requirements for amendments including if TA providers wish to move from actual costs to unit costs and vice versa.

Cross-cutting aspects; Horizon Europe is an impact-driven framework programme with three key types of impact identified; Scientific, Societal and Economic/Technological Impact. The importance of communication, dissemination and exploitation in terms of impact was highlighted. Impact can be increased by informing the project officer and using available tools.

A list of useful resources was shared including; the Horizon Europe Online Manual available at this address: <https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/funding-tenders-opportunities/display/OM/Online+Manual> and the [HE Annotated Model Grant Agreement](#).

Mr Pierre Quertenmont's full presentation can be accessed [here](#).

3.4. Work Package 1 Project Management

The project work plan and work package leaders were introduced and an overview was presented of key project milestones and the management structure of the project. The milestones to be achieved in the first twelve months of the project were outlined (twelve of thirty-seven milestones to be achieved in year one). Fourteen of the thirty-nine deliverables due throughout the project are due in the first twelve months.

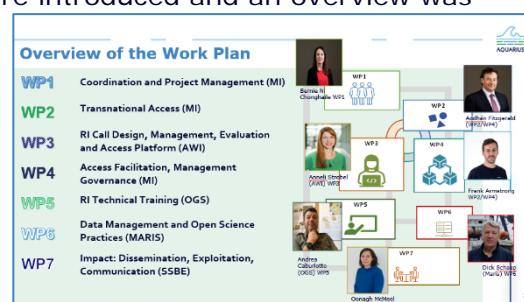


Figure 3 Project Work Plan

The five tasks in WP 1 are as follows:

- 1.1 Kick Off Meeting (MI) – this task includes a number of objectives including the production and sharing of a project handbook, Internal Document Sharing facility in place, shared contacts list and project branding. Details (link) to the project [SharePoint Online\(SPO\)](#) site were shared.
- 1.2 Project Management (MI) – involves monitoring project activity to ensure timelines, deliverables and milestones are met.

- 1.3 Aquarius Brokerage Event (MI) – to advertise and promote the Call among researchers from Marine and Freshwater communities.
- 1.4 Clustering and Networking with RI projects (CNR)
- 1.5 Project reporting (MI) - 2 x interim reports, 4 x annual technical reports, 2 x Provisional financial reports (all partners)

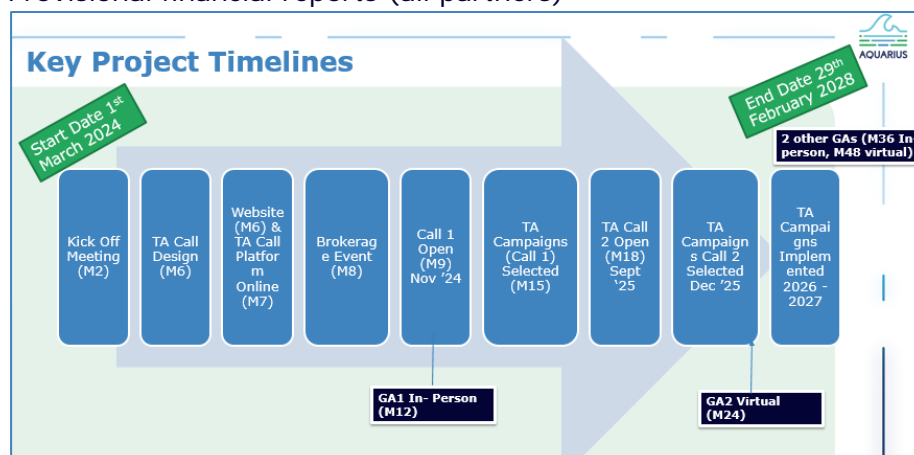


Figure 4 Key Project Timelines Year 1 - 2

The WP1 deliverables (9) and milestones (3) were described. The full WP1 presentation can be accessed [here](#).

3.5. WP 2 Transnational Access; Introducing the AQUARIUS Infrastructure

This section was introduced by Aodhán Fitzgerald and Frank Armstrong from the MI. The infrastructure operators from each 'Lighthouse region' introduced themselves and described the infrastructures they are offering in AQUARIUS beginning with the Atlantic /Arctic region. The full list of available infrastructures is displayed in the image below.

Type	Infrastructure	Provider	Base Location Lighthouse Region	Type	Infrastructure	Provider	Baltic and North Sea
1) Research Vessels	Sarmiento De Gamboa	CSIC (ES)	Atlantic & Arctic	6) Aircrafts	FUS	CzechGlobe (CZ)	Baltic and North Sea
4) Experimental Research Facility	SBR	EMBRC France	Atlantic & Arctic	2) Mobile Marine Observation Platform: Baltic Gliders	FMI (FI)	FMI (FI)	Baltic and North Sea
4) Experimental Research Facility	CCMAR	EMBRC Portugal	Atlantic & Arctic	3) Fixed Marine Facilities	Uthø	FMI (FI)	Baltic and North Sea
4) Experimental Research Facility	CIIMAR	EMBRC Portugal	Atlantic & Arctic	1) Research Vessels	Jakup Sverri	FMRI (DE)	Baltic and North Sea
1) Research Vessels	RV Sanna	GINR (GL)	Atlantic & Arctic	5) River & Basin Supersites	Elbe Supersite	HEREON (DE)	Baltic and North Sea
1) Research Vessels	Thalassa	IFREMER (FR)	Atlantic & Arctic	1) Research Vessels	G.O. Sars	IMR (NO)	Baltic and North Sea
2) Mobile Marine Observation Platform: HROV		IFREMER (FR)	Atlantic & Arctic	1) Research Vessels	Wim Wolff	NIOZ (NL)	Baltic and North Sea
1) Research Vessels	Ami Friedrikson/ RV Bjarni	MFRI (IS)	Atlantic & Arctic	2) Mobile Marine Observation Platform: NorSOOP		NIVA (NO)	Baltic and North Sea
1) Research Vessels	Celtic Explorer	MI (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	1) Research Vessels	RV Belgica	RBINS (BE)	Baltic and North Sea
2) Mobile Marine Observation Platform: SmartBay Glider		MI (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	1) Research Vessels	RV Svea	SLU (SE)	Baltic and North Sea
3) Fixed Marine Facilities	IMDOBON	MI (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	1) Research Vessels	RV Aranda	SYKE (FI)	Baltic and North Sea
3) Fixed Marine Facilities	Lehanagh Pool	MI (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	2) Mobile Marine Observation Platform: Algaline		SYKE (FI)	Baltic and North Sea
3) Fixed Marine Facilities	SmartBay Data Buoy	MI (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	4) Experimental Research Facility	MESO&CAL	SYKE (FI)	Baltic and North Sea
3) Fixed Marine Facilities	SmartBay Observatory	MI (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	6) Aircrafts	CWIS-II	Vito (BE)	Baltic and North Sea
4) Experimental Research Facility	RAS	MI (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	7) Drones	MAPEO	Vito (BE)	Baltic and North Sea
5) River & Basin Supersites	Newport Catchment	MI (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	8) Satellite Services	Terrascopie	Vito (BE)	Baltic and North Sea
3) Fixed Marine Facilities	Plocan Test Site	PLOCAN (ES)	Atlantic & Arctic	1) Research Vessels	Simon Stevin	VLIZ (BE)	Baltic and North Sea
2) Mobile Marine Observation Platform: UL_IROV		UL (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	2) Mobile Marine Observation Platform: AUJ Barabas		VLIZ (BE)	Baltic and North Sea
2) Mobile Marine Observation Platform: UL_MRE-ROV		UL (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	2) Mobile Marine Observation Platform: Glider Yoko		VLIZ (BE)	Baltic and North Sea
7) Drones	UL Drone	UL (IE)	Atlantic & Arctic	2) Mobile Marine Observation Platform: USV Adhemar		VLIZ (BE)	Baltic and North Sea

Type	Infrastructure	Provider	Black Sea	Type	Infrastructure	Provider	Base Location Lighthouse Region
1) Research Vessels	Danubius-RI (RV Istros)	GeoEcomar (RO)	Black Sea	1) Research Vessels	Gaia Blu	CNR (IT)	Mediterranean
1) Research Vessels	Mare Nigrum	GeoEcomar (RO)	Black Sea	3) Fixed Marine Facilities	CoCM	CNR (IT)	Mediterranean
5) River & Basin Supersites	Danubius-RI (Geochemistry)	GeoEcomar (RO)	Black Sea	3) Fixed Marine Facilities	SiCO	CNR (IT)	Mediterranean
5) River & Basin Supersites	Danubius-RI (Microplastics)	GeoEcomar (RO)	Black Sea	3) Fixed Marine Facilities	WIM3A	CNR (IT)	Mediterranean
5) River & Basin Supersites	Danubius-RI (Mineralogy)	GeoEcomar (RO)	Black Sea	4) Experimental Research Facility	ISC-Lab	CNR (IT)	Mediterranean
5) River & Basin Supersites	Danubius-RI (Water Chemistry)	GeoEcomar (RO)	Black Sea	4) Experimental Research Facility	IMEV	EMBRC France	Mediterranean
5) River & Basin Supersites	EMSO-EUXINUS	GeoEcomar (RO)	Black Sea	4) Experimental Research Facility	OOb	EMBRC France	Mediterranean
				1) Research Vessels	RV Aegaeo	HCMR (GR)	Mediterranean
				2) Mobile Marine Observation Platforms	Max Rover	HCMR (GR)	Mediterranean
				3) Fixed Marine Facilities	Poseidon Obs	HCMR (GR)	Mediterranean
				1) Research Vessels	L'Europe	IFREMER (FR)	Mediterranean
				3) Fixed Marine Facilities	WIS	INGV (IT)	Mediterranean
				3) Fixed Marine Facilities	E2M3A	OGS (IT)	Mediterranean
				6) Aircrafts	AIRS	OGS (IT)	Mediterranean
				1) Research Vessels	RV Socib	SOCIB (ES)	Mediterranean
				2) Mobile Marine Observation Platforms	Socib Gliders	SOCIB (ES)	Mediterranean
				1) Research Vessels	Tubitak Marmara	Tubitak Marmara (TR)	Mediterranean
				5) River & Basin Supersites	ICIEM Ebro Delta	UPC (ES)	Mediterranean

Figure 5 AQUARIUS Infrastructures

Videos of the infrastructure operators' presentations can be accessed at the following links:

[Atlantic/Arctic Infrastructures \(mp4 video file\)](#)

[Baltic and North Sea Infrastructures \(mp4 video file\)](#)

[Black Sea Infrastructures \(mp4 video file\)](#)

[Mediterranean Infrastructures \(mp4 video file\)](#)

3.6. Work Package 3 RI Call Design, Management, Evaluation and Access Platform

Anneli Strobel (AWI) is WP 3 leader and presented the tasks, task leaders and main objectives of each task within the WP. The WP3 deliverables (7) and milestones (8) were presented. Timing of the Transnational Access (TA) Calls was outlined with the first call expected to open on November 11th 2024 and the second in September 2025.

There are six tasks in WP3:

T3.1 – TA Call Priority Analysis (SYKE)

T3.2 – TA Call Design and Development (CNR)

T3.3 - Integration of access procedures and call implementation (AWI)

T3.4 – Access Platform Customisation and Development (INPA/INKODE)

T3.5 – Scientific and Logistic evaluation (AWI)

T3.6 – Follow up implementation (AWI)

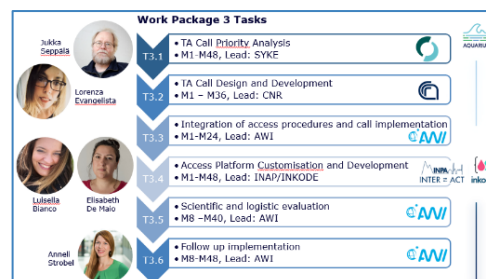


Figure 6 WP3 Tasks and Task Leaders



Input was requested from all partners in establishing the AQUARIUS Scientific Evaluation Panel (SEP) consisting of scientific experts from inside and outside the consortium, with expertise spanning major scientific disciplines and geographic areas covered within AQUARIUS. The SEP will be responsible for evaluating the proposals, proposing external experts for proposal evaluation and proposal ranking and recommendations. The QR code can be used to nominate experts for the panel. The Call Access Platform will be used to submit proposals and the evaluation process was outlined.

Work Package 3 presentation can be accessed [here](#)

3.7. Call Platform Functionality

Elisabeth de Maio (INKODE) introduced the Call Platform system currently in development which will handle the Transnational Access(TA) applications from call opening to proposal submission and reporting, covering the whole chain of access provision. The system's workflow, call life cycle and application life cycle and the various users were outlined. TA administrators, applicants, infrastructure managers and scientific evaluators will have access to the platform and manage the entire workflow via the platform.

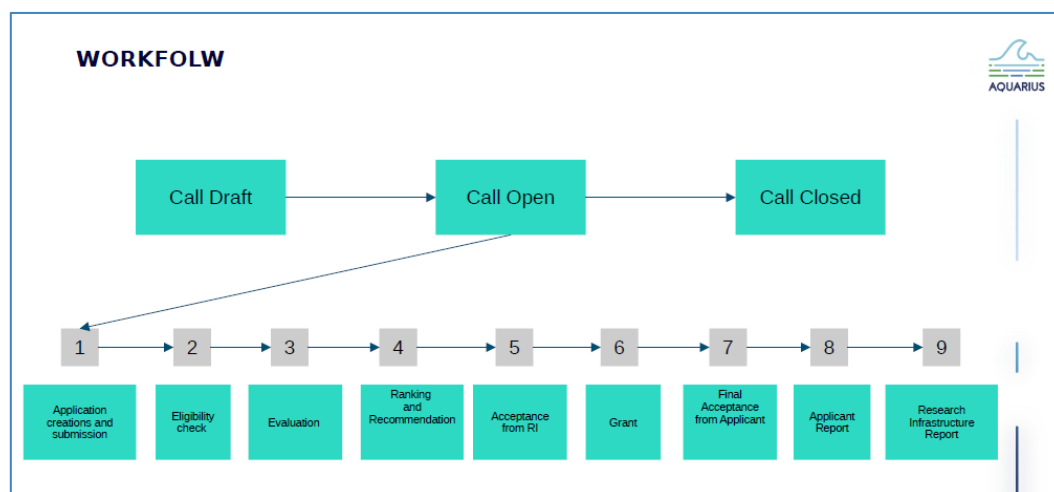


Figure 7 Call Platform Workflow

The Call Platform Functionality Presentation is available [here](#).

3.8. Financial Reporting

Pauline from the Marine Institute's Research Co-ordination & Support Office presented an outline of financial reporting within the AQUARIUS project and in Horizon Europe. Eligible costs and the cost categories applicable to AQUARIUS were described. The method used to calculate Personnel costs in Horizon Europe was outlined as was the importance of keeping timesheets even for personnel working full-time on the project. Partners' responsibilities in terms of financial and technical reporting was also highlighted.

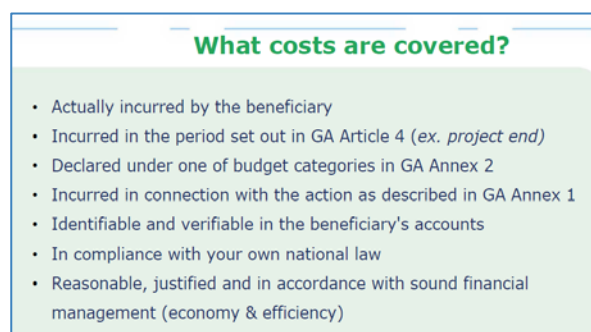


Figure 8 Eligible Costs

The financial reporting presentation can be viewed [here](#).

3.9. Work Package 4 RI Access Facilitation, Management & Governance

The main objective of this work package is the Facilitation & Implementation of Multi-platform, Multi-infrastructure integrated Transnational Access Projects. It includes the following tasks:

T4.1 Online Infrastructures Catalogue Created (MI with all infrastructure operators) Information on all available infrastructures will be accessible online, categorised per region, type, etc. Users can select the infrastructure to view further information - specifications, area of operation, capability, availability etc.



Figure 9 Mock-up of Online Infrastructures Catalogue

T4.2 Transnational Access Logistics Evaluation (MI with RBINS, EMSO, GEOECOMAR, UL) An initial logistical evaluation of all proposals will take place before the scientific evaluations, an in-depth logistical evaluation will then take place in conjunction with the infrastructure operator on all proposals recommended for scheduling by the Scientific Evaluation Panel.

T4.3 Create and Maintain Online Schedule of TA Projects (MI with AWI, SSBE) All TA projects will be added to an online schedule and details of each project will be published online. The published schedule will allow for the promotion of training, remote/opportunistic sample collection as well as management of ongoing and planned research. The task will feed into Task 3.1.3 Evaluation and Scientific impact report of implemented projects against call priorities and Task 3.4 Follow up implementation and will also play a vital role in Task 6.2 Data Management for data to be collected and processed during and after the TA campaigns

T4.4 Transnational Access Administration (MI with AWI) This task will include managing TA contracts, Budget management and monitoring, providing support to TA Principle Investigators and Infrastructure Operators during planning and implementation phases and post project and tracking and compiling TA statistics.

There are three deliverables and six milestones to be submitted/achieved in WP4.

The WP4 presentation can be viewed [here](#).

3.10. Work Package 5 RI Technical Training

Work Package 5 was presented by work package leader Andrea Caburlotto (OGS) who outlined the objectives, tasks and deliverables. The main objective of this work package is to guarantee that customized and highly effective training and scientific and technical support will be provided for users of the research infrastructures. There are seven tasks in this WP;

T5.1 Training Needs Analysis & Ad hoc Training for RI Users (OGS) - a survey will be conducted among infrastructure operators to identify training gaps and requirements in order to use infrastructure. If training is required for multiple infrastructures an integrated course/courses will be arranged.

T5.2 Training on use of the AQUARIUS Access Platform(OGS) – training will be provided to users on how to access and best use of the Access Platform

T5.3 AQUARIUS Technical Training Hub – Marine Training Material Repository (OGS) - an online repository of available and newly developed training materials will be established.

T5.4 Floating University & Internship Open Calls (OGS) – two floating universities are planned in the Mediterranean on the RV Gaia Blu and in the Baltic Sea on the RV Svea. Two summer school courses will be offered by PLOCAN and spare berths on vessels will be offered for access and exchange programs.

T5.5 Data Management and Data stewardship training (HCMR) – this task will inform and educate researchers on European marine data infrastructures, FAIR standards, services and tools to use for processing, documenting, and ingesting their newly collected marine data and resulting data products.

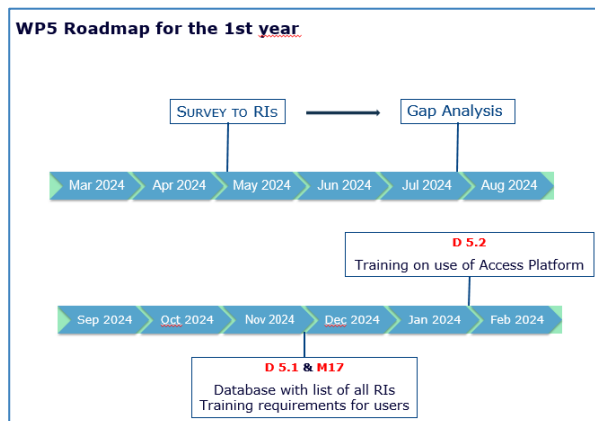


Figure 10 WP5 Roadmap for Year 1

T5.6 Virtual Access and Analytics Training (CNR) Prepare and educate the AQUARIUS researchers in the EOSC strategy and web-based open science practices, the Blue-Cloud Virtual Research Environment and its analytical applications.

T5.7 Training Monitoring and Assessment (OGS) Training provided will be monitored and evaluated to assess successful completion of training and the level of effectiveness (to feed into further improvements)

There are nine deliverables and two milestones to be submitted/achieved in WP5.

The WP5 Presentation can be viewed [here](#).

3.11. Work Package 6 Data Management & Open Science Practices

Dick Schaap (Maris) presented the main objectives of WP6;

- Optimise open and FAIR access to new data, data products, and scientific knowledge to ensure a maximum return of investment from granted TA projects.
- Ensure TA project researchers benefit from Copernicus, GEOSS, EMODnet and the European Digital Twin of the Ocean (DTO) initiatives, while making their TA project results (new data, data products, and scientific knowledge) available for these initiatives
- Plan, develop and operate a federated data management and analytical system for supporting the implementation of an Open Data Strategy; this system will give FAIR access to new data, data products, and scientific knowledge, derived from the TA projects, through a common **AQUARIUS Dataflow Dashboard (ADD)**.

The tasks in WP6 are as follows:

- **T6.1 Analysis of data gaps** (IFREMER) Analysing knowledge targets of the Mission 'Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030', the European Partnership 'A climate neutral, sustainable and productive Blue Economy', the 'Marine Strategy Framework Directive' and the 'Green Deal'. Reviewing existing and known data availability for European waters in RIs, EMODnet, Copernicus, and beyond, for supporting research into the knowledge targets, identifying data gaps that might be included as targets in the TA project Calls.

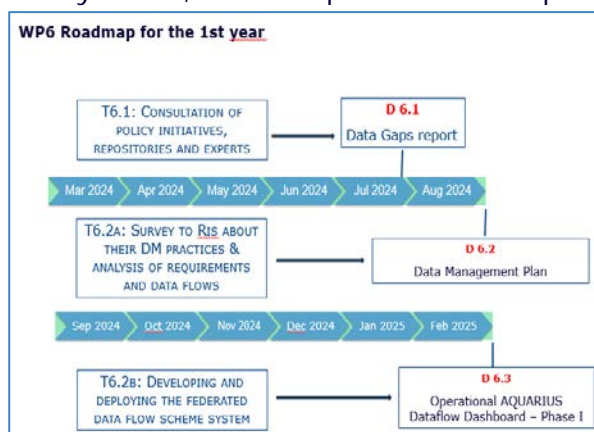


Figure 11 WP6 Roadmap for Year 1

- **T6.2 FAIR Data Management of data to be collected and processed during and after TA projects** (MARIS) This task will consist of three sub-tasks – the first will involve formulating a federated and FAIR Data Management flow scheme followed by developing and deploying the federated data flow scheme system and thirdly implementing the Data Management approach for the actual TA projects.
- **T6.3 Applying open science by analysing and valorising collected TA project data in a web-based research environment** (MARIS) Registering TA project scientific teams in the Blue-Cloud Virtual Research Environment (VRE); Facilitating and coaching TA project scientific teams by Blue-Cloud experts to make use of analytical services, data repositories, and work with V Labs at the Blue-Cloud VRE. Blue-Cloud experts collaborating with TA project scientific teams for documenting and publishing resulting data products and publications in EOSC and the upgraded EVIOR platform.

There are nine deliverables and 3 milestones to be submitted/achieved in WP6.

The full WP6 presentation is accessible [here](#).

3.12. Work Package 7 Impact: Dissemination, Exploitation And Communication

Dr Oonagh McMeel (SSBE) presented an outline of WP7. The tasks in WP7 are as follows;

Task 7.1: Designing an impact driven Communications & Dissemination Plan (SSBE). The C&D plan will include the aims and objectives of the Plan, target groups and stakeholder engagement strategy, key messages, timelines and tools to be used. (social media, website etc)

Task 7.2 Promoting project outreach, engagement & dissemination of results (SSBE). This task has three sub-

tasks concerned with; a) Communication & outreach toolkit and materials, b) outreach &

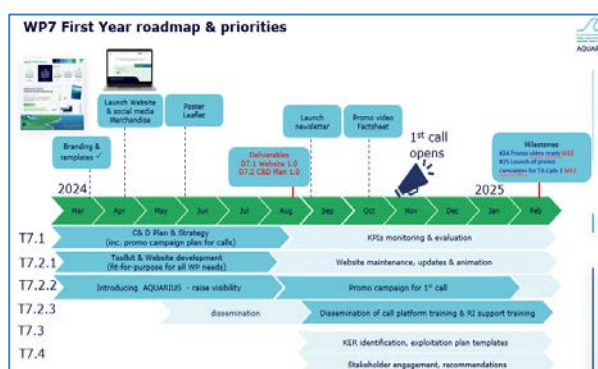


Figure 12 WP7 Roadmap for Year 1

engagement campaigns to promote Transnational calls and c) dissemination of results from both the AQUARIUS project and successful TNA projects.

Task 7.3: Activating pathways towards exploitation of results (MARIS) This task will involve producing exploitation plans for the project's key exploitable results (KER) directly from the project and from TNA projects if applicable.

Task 7.4 Ensuring legacy through strategic foresight (SSBE) activity in this task will produce a strategic vision for the European (Marine) Research Infrastructures of the future to better optimize & coordinate across all relevant RI and deliver a policy brief to support policy-makers & funders toward further integration of RI.

There are seven deliverables and ten milestones to be achieved in WP7.

The full WP7 presentation is available [here](#).

4. Collaborative Projects

This section of the plenary session involved presentations from projects similar to AQUARIUS with opportunities for collaboration.

4.1. POLARIN - Hannele Savelle

POLARIN stands for **POLAR RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK** and is a Horizon Europe funded project under HORIZON-INFRA-2023-SERV-01-01:

Research infrastructure services to enable R&I addressing main challenges and EU priorities within the topic: For RI services for sustainable Arctic/polar regions. The project is coordinated by AWI, has 50 partners and a budget of €14.6million and a duration of five years. The specific aim of POLARIN is to provide efficient and customised RI services to address the scientific challenges of the polar regions, including access to a wide portfolio of complementary and interdisciplinary top level RIs (64 Research infrastructure will be made available in both poles). The project also incorporates data services and products and training activities.

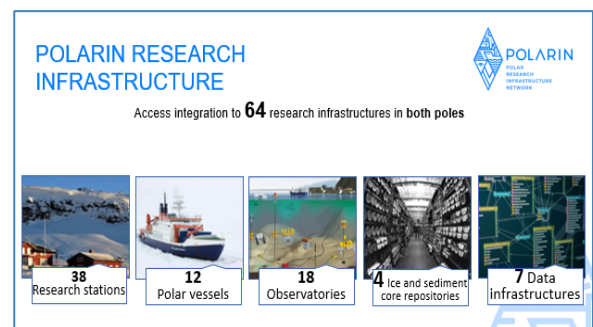


Figure 13 POLARIN Infrastructure

The POLARIN presentation can be viewed [here](#).

4.2. LandSeaLot - Anouk Blauw, Deltares

LandSeaLot - Land-Sea interface: Let's observe together! is a Horizon Europe Funded Project under the Call; HORIZON-CL6-2023-GOVERNANCE-01-11: Reducing observation gaps in the land-sea interface area. LandSeaLot's main objective is to bring together interdisciplinary capabilities to study the Land Sea Interface (LSI) and to link together the best existing scientific expertise in various domains to co-design a strategy on how to observe the LSI. The implementation plan, and overall structure of the work plan was described.

The LandSeaLot presentation is available [here](#).

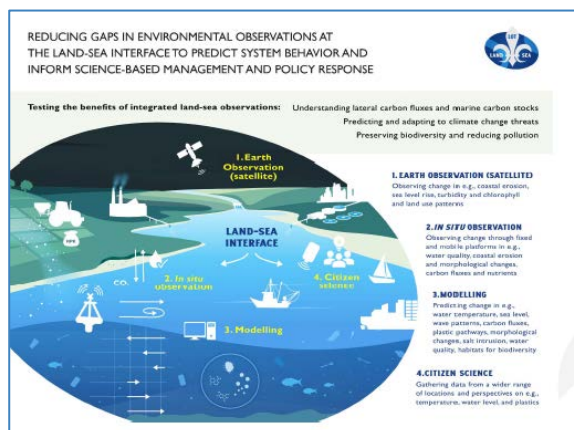


Figure 14 LandSeaLot concept

4.3. BlueMissionAA - Jose Moutinho (AIR Centre)

Due to connection issues, Aodhán presented the BlueMissionAA presentation. BlueMissionAA is a Coordination and Support Action (CSA) and coordinates the implementation of the Mission Ocean & Waters in the Atlantic & Arctic Basins. It focuses on preservation and restoration of marine and coastal ecosystems and biodiversity. Ongoing activities include:

- Multi-sectoral cooperation with key stakeholders and citizens
- Monitoring and reporting platform (WaveLinks)
- Catalogue of solutions (= unit of replication)
- Ecological Restoration Innovation Ecosystem



Figure 15 BlueMissionAA

BlueMissionAA is coordinated by Jose Luiz Moutinho of the Atlantic International Research (AIR) Centre. The presentation also introduced the OKEANO project, another CSA which will provide coordination and support for a wider understanding of the opportunities, and need for sustainable management of the Atlantic Ocean, through a large-scale basin effort.

The full BlueMissionAA presentation is accessible [here](#).

5. Meeting Close

The General Assembly ratified three new members of the AQUARIUS Executive Board:

- **Sissy Iona (HCMR) Greece** - Task Leader 5.5 Data Management and Data Stewardship Training
- **Jukka Seppälä (SYKE) Finland** – Task Leader 3.1 TA Call Priority Analysis Requirements
- **Lorenza Evangelista/Giuseppe Magnifico (CNR) Italy** – Task Leader 1.4 Clustering and Networking with RI Projects and Task 3.2 TA Call Design and Development and Task 5.6 Virtual Access and Analytics Training

The Executive Board now consists of all WP leaders and the above Task leaders.

The next **General Assembly** will be held in-person in Helsinki, Finland in February 2025 and hosted by Finnish Environment Institute (SYKE).

Brokerage event: a brokerage event or events are planned to promote the AQUARIUS TA Portfolio to the Marine & Freshwater communities before the first call opens. Suggestions were requested from the GA of upcoming events at which the AQUARIUS brokerage event(s) could be organised as a side-event. It was also conveyed that AQUARIUS and the upcoming calls should be promoted within partners' organisations.

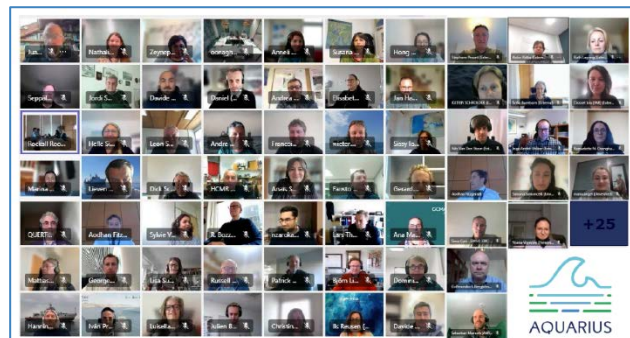


Figure 16 Photo of KOM Attendees

Aodhán closed the meeting, thanked everyone in attendance and wished the project well over the coming four years.

Annex 1 – Meeting Agenda

Time	Topic	Presenter
9:40 – 9:50	Meeting Room Open	
9:50 – 10:10	Meeting Open, Introduction to MI & Project Coordination Team, Project's Aims & Objectives	Aodhán Fitzgerald, Project Coordinator
10:10 – 10:20	Welcome Address	Dr Rick Officer, CEO, Marine Institute
10:20 – 10:30	Launch of AQUARIUS Project, European Research Executive Agency	Pierre Quertenmont, Research Executive Agency
Work Package Presentations		
10:30 – 10:45	Work Package 1 Project Management	Bernie Ní Chonghaile
10:45 – 11:15	Work Package 2 Transnational Access; Introducing the AQUARIUS Infrastructure	Aodhán Fitzgerald (MI)/All Infrastructure Providers
11:15 – 11:30	Coffee	
11:30 -12:15	Work Package 2 Transnational Access; Introducing the AQUARIUS Infrastructure	Frank Armstrong (MI)/All Infrastructure Providers
12:15 – 12:30	Work Package 3 RI Call Design, Management, Evaluation and Access Platform	Dr Anneli Strobel(AWI)
12:30 – 12:45	Work Package 3 Call Platform Functionality	Elisabeth De Maio (INKODE)
12:45 – 13:00	Financial Reporting	Pauline Ní Fhlatharta (MI)
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch	
14:00 – 14:15	Work Package 4 RI Access Facilitation, Management & Governance	Aodhan Fitzgerald & Bernie Ni Chonghaile(MI)
14:15 – 14:30	Work Package 5 RI Technical Training	Dr Andrea Caburlotto (OGS)
14:30 – 14:45	Work Package 6 Data Management & Open Science Practices	Dick Schaap (MARIS)

14:45– 15:00	Work Package 7 Impact: Dissemination, Exploitation And Communication, Brokerage	Dr Oonagh McMeel (SSBE)
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee	
Collaborative Projects		
15:45 – 16:00	POLARIN	Hannele Savelle, Polarin
16:00 – 16:15	LandSeaLot	Anouk Blauw, Deltares
16:15 – 16:25	BlueMissionAA	Jose Moutinho (BlueMissionAA Coordinator)
16:25 – 16:35	Q&A, Nominations to Executive Board, Next GA, Brokerage Events & Meeting Close	Aodhán Fitzgerald, MI

Annex 2 - List of Participant Organisations

(names have been removed for GDPR reasons)

Name	Organisation
	MI
	INCDM
	CCMAR
	SSBE
	VLIZ
	OGS
	NIVA
	AWI
	Deltares
	MI
	SYKE
	ULIEGE
	NORCE
	MI
	SLU
	CIIMAR
	IFREMER
	FMI
	GeoEcoMar
	EMBRC
	INGV
	MARIS
	IFREMER
	OGS
	INKODE
	Tubitak
	OGS
	SYKE
	IFREMER
	MI
	HCMR
	UL
	INKODE
	HAFRO
	Polarin
	SYKE
	GINR
	RBINS
	VITO
	IMR
	PLOCAN

	CzechGlobe
	UTM CSIC
	UTM CSIC
	UTM-CSIC
	SSBE
	IRD
	CNR
	SYKE
	SLU
	Mercator Ocean
	VLIZ
	FMRI
	HCMR
	RBINS
	SMHI
	CNR
	INPA
	INCDM
	NIOZ
	SSBE
	Mercator Ocean
	SLU
	CSIC
	SSBE
	EMBRC
	MI
	SOCIB
	RBINS
	SYKE
	IFREMER
	SSBE
	SMHI
	MI
	SSBE
	REA
	CNR
	MI
	RBINS
	CNR
	EMSO ERIC
	AWI
	SYKE
	RBINS
	EMSO ERIC

	INGV
	HCMR
	SLU
	EMBL
	UTM CSIC
	IFREMER
	AWI
	ULIEGE
	EMSO ERIC
	OGS
	IH
	VLIZ
	Hereon
	NIOZ