

Fugro and IOC/UNESCO launch working group to unlock private-sector ocean data

The Ocean Decade Corporate Data Group—co-chaired by Fugro and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (IOC/UNESCO)—was officially launched last week during an online kick-off meeting. Organised in support of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, the working group is focused on creating frameworks and mechanisms to make privately owned ocean science data publicly available for the benefit of humanity.



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Joining the group as founding members are five private-sector companies representing a diverse range of industries. They include Alcatel Submarine Networks, Ava Ocean, CGG, Equinor and Ørsted. Discussions are ongoing with other industry-leading companies who are expected to join the group

at a later stage. Together with co-chairs, members will explore data sharing challenges and opportunities to develop solutions and best practices for making private-sector ocean data publicly available, including during a special session at this week's Oceanology International Americas Conference.

“We are delighted to officially launch this working group to establish ways to unlock the huge potential of industrial ocean data that is currently inaccessible to science,” said Dr. Vladimir Ryabinin, IOC/UNESCO Executive Secretary. “Such collaborations amongst science, industry and governments are transformative in enhancing ocean knowledge and information, and to developing the long-term sustainable solutions that we need to return to the clean, healthy, productive and resilient ocean. I am very grateful to the founding members of this group for engaging proactively with us in this movement and I know they will inspire many others to join.”

Fugro CEO Mark Heine concurred, stating, “It is heartening to have such high-calibre businesses answer the call to join this critical working group. As companies who actively collect and own a wide range of ocean data useful for the global science community, we have a unique opportunity to contribute to the Ocean Decade movement through data sharing, collaborative partnerships and technology innovations that will help increase our collective understanding of the ocean and restore its health.”

About Fugro

Fugro is the world's leading Geo-data specialist. Through integrated data acquisition, analysis and advice, we unlock insights from Geo-data to help clients mitigate risks during design, construction and operation of their assets. This work is accomplished on land and at sea by a team of approximately 9000 talented employees working in 59 countries. Fugro is listed on Euronext Amsterdam and in 2021, revenue amounted to EUR 1.5 billion.

As a member of the Ocean Decade Alliance, and in partnership with IOC/UNESCO, Fugro is applying their knowledge and expertise to transform the coordination of and access to global ocean science data, including Geo-data owned by the private sector. Fugro's work to support the Ocean Decade aligns with the company's purpose of 'together we create a safe and liveable world'.

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About IOC/UNESCO

The [**Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO \(IOC/UNESCO\)**](#) promotes international cooperation in marine sciences to improve management of the ocean, coasts and marine resources. The IOC enables its 150 Member States to work together by coordinating programmes in capacity development, ocean observations and services, ocean science and tsunami warning. The work of the IOC contributes to the mission of UNESCO to promote the advancement of science and its applications to develop knowledge and capacity, key to economic and social progress, the basis of peace and sustainable development.

About the Ocean Decade

Proclaimed in 2017 by the United Nations General Assembly, the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) ('the Ocean Decade') seeks to stimulate ocean science and knowledge generation to reverse the decline of the state of the ocean system and catalyse new opportunities for sustainable development of this massive marine ecosystem. The vision of the Ocean Decade is 'the science we need for the ocean we want'. The Ocean Decade provides a convening framework for scientists and stakeholders from diverse sectors to develop the scientific knowledge and the partnerships needed to accelerate and harness advances in ocean science to achieve a better understanding of the ocean system, and deliver science-based solutions to achieve the 2030 Agenda. The UN General Assembly mandated UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC/UNESCO) to coordinate the preparations and implementation of the Decade.

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About Alcatel Submarine Networks

Alcatel Submarine Networks, part of Nokia, leads the industry in terms of transmission capacity and installed base with more than 750,000 km of optical submarine systems deployed worldwide, enough to circumnavigate the globe almost 19 times. From traditional telecom applications to content and "over the top" service provider infrastructures, as well as to offshore oil and gas applications, ASN provides all elements of turnkey global undersea transmission systems, tailored to individual customer's needs. An extensive services portfolio completes its comprehensive offering for the submarine business, including project management,

installation and commissioning, along with marine and maintenance operations performed by ASN's wholly owned fleet of cable ships.

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About Ava Ocean

Ava Ocean is an ocean technology and seafood company pioneering new ways of harvesting the abundant seafood resources on the seabed, in a gentle, yet effective manner.

Ava Ocean has developed a revolutionary technology for non-invasive, precision seabed harvesting that not only preserves, but can also help to restore fragile and often overlooked ecosystems on the bottom of the sea.

The company's first fishing vessel, the Arctic Pearl, is the world's first with this technology onboard. Thanks to the harvesters' documented low impact, in December 2022 the Arctic Pearl was able to reopen the fishery of Arctic scallops in the Barents Sea after 30 years of closure. [Read more](#)