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JPI Oceans 'international statement' March 2017

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JPI Oceans International Statement

Introduction

This paper sets out the rationale and principles of why JPI Oceans should engage internationally, the objectives and modalities. It states the current progress, highlights specific opportunities and key players and discusses how JPIO can engage with them. It builds on the Management Board discussions on policy towards internationalisation, as well as work done elsewhere, including through the FP7 CSA Oceans project.

This paper is a specific deliverable of the CSA Oceans 2 project. It is not intended as the 'international strategy' for JPI Oceans as such. Rather it is intended to inform the publication of a statement to demonstrate why and where JPI Oceans is open to collaboration.

The supporting annexes, available on request, are intended to be 'living' documents to inform future international engagement and the prioritisation of efforts by the JPI Oceans Management Board, the Secretariat and CSA Oceans 2 consortium. Annex 1 gives a short commentary on where international cooperation can especially add value in reference to the JPI Oceans SRIA strategic priority areas. Annex 2 identifies specific countries with some recommendations of where JPI Oceans should be fostering relations (with ref to their ocean strategies where appropriate and the mechanisms to do so where they exist) and Annex 3 summarises the formal position adopted by the JPI Oceans Management Board to date.

Taken together the papers help to identify opportunities most relevant for international engagement and cooperation and priority countries. In this respect it offers specific recommendations on the next steps foreseen under task 3.4 of the CSA 2 Oceans action.

Rationale for JPI Oceans International engagement

The ambition of JPI Oceans is both to play a strategic role and to be a key facilitator of Member Countries' joint collaborative actions with parties across the world which share the JPI Oceans vision and strategic objectives (or specific parts thereof) and with whom collaborative action is considered to be mutually beneficial.

JPI Oceans seeks to support its member countries in their endeavours to address a range of societal challenges related to oceans and seas (growth, food, energy, security, climate change, health, biodiversity, pollution) whose scope varies considerably yet are interconnected by virtue of the skills, technologies and unique challenges that present in the ocean environment. Some are of global dimension requiring global solutions, whereas others can be addressed through regional cooperation or at sea basin level. All ocean related societal challenges that JPI Oceans tackles have in common that they cannot be solved purely on the national level, since they are of regional or global dimension going further beyond national capacities and resources. Thus they only can be addressed through enhanced transnational cooperation in research and innovation, including also cooperation in the cross-cutting fields of building human capacities, coordination and shared use of infrastructures and a common vision on science to policy to inform policy decisions.

Due to the interconnected nature of the marine environment, climate change and the maritime economy, an integrated, cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary approach to research and monitoring and to scaling up innovative solutions is required.

The case for greater 'alignment' of actions, which is the premise for the type of cooperation fostered by a JPI on the part of its member countries, is also valid at an international level. There is a strong rationale for involving international partners; however, the concrete objectives and the means of cooperation may vary considerably from challenge to challenge and depends on the countries involved.

Furthermore, international cooperation should build on a shared concern and common vision to address our oceans challenges, such as was expressed by the G7¹. A joint responsibility for our "Oceans Commons", requires governance action at regional and global scale over multiple timescales, as well as common actions to observe and protect the oceans, their ecosystems and biological resources (incl. biodiversity) in the longer term.

This is also recognised in the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). On September 25th 2015, countries adopted a set of goals to **end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all** as part of a [new sustainable development agenda](#). Each goal has specific targets to be achieved over the next 15 years. SDG Goal 14 Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources ¹ is directly pertinent but oceans also impact on many other goals related to food security, health, growth, climate change, good governance and partnerships.²

The rationale for cooperating should be driven by the common interest in understanding ocean processes and the functioning of marine ecosystems to ensure the sustainable management of its resources (from coastal areas to the deep ocean and remote areas) under a changing climate and enhanced human pressures to better protect and preserve our "Ocean Commons" and the good and services they provided to the humankind. This implies the need to address our seas and oceans threats, including rapid response actions such as emergencies to environmental threats and crisis, natural (e.g. oceanic response to volcanic activity) or manmade (e.g. pollution incidents), or to situations that require the mobilisation of expertise and infrastructure on a grand scale.

These principles are also recognised in the communication: 'International ocean governance: an agenda for the future of our oceans' 10 November 2016 by the European Commission and the EU's High Representative The Joint Communication builds on a widely shared understanding that the ocean governance framework needs to be strengthened, that pressures on the oceans need to be reduced and that the world's oceans must be used sustainably. It also stresses that a better understanding about the oceans is necessary to achieve these objectives.

The Joint Communication proposes ways the EU can step up and play a stronger role at global and regional level in shaping the way oceans are managed and used. It sets out detailed actions to shape international governance in three priority areas:

¹ https://www.bmbf.de/files/English_version.pdf and subsequent statements

² <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

1. Improving the international ocean governance framework;
2. Reducing human pressures on the oceans and creating the conditions for a sustainable blue economy;
3. Strengthening international ocean research and data.

JPI Oceans via its actions can also play a strategic role in ocean advocacy, raising and addressing ocean issues to the levels of the international political arena. The wider importance of science for diplomacy is also recognised in the vision proclaimed by the European Commission: 'Europe open to the world'³. This is even more relevant where 'commons' such as the seas and oceans are concerned, where political boundaries do not respect the natural forms of continuity and change. Thus, scientific research, innovation, knowledge exchange and outreach can create relationships and partnerships and can encourage nations to engage in mutually respectful dialogue and help develop concerted policies and concrete actions across national and continental barriers.

JPI Oceans has its roots in the European Union. Through JPI Oceans, its member countries build on multilateral principles to seek solutions to the world's societal challenges that relate to the oceans. A cornerstone of this approach is recognition of the value of including third country, or partner country participants in its activities.

Objectives

International cooperation can facilitate the achievement of JPI Oceans' goals and objectives. The objectives of positioning JPI Oceans within a global cooperative framework are to:

- shape global strategies and engage in policy partnerships, informing priorities for ocean research
- build alliances with international partners to cooperate in the implementation actions, and share the tasks and costs of science.
- improve the effectiveness of joint activities (access, cost and infrastructure sharing, leverage, knowledge exchange and avoiding duplication).
- provide members countries with the opportunity to seek complementarities, synergies and mutual funding opportunities through bilateral and multilateral and European cooperation schemes and instruments
- build on the valorisation and the up-taking of research results and on lessons learned.
- improve alignment of ocean research parameters and practices (shared observation platforms, data sharing, inter-comparison and inter-calibrations etc.)
- foster innovation, by using the best available knowledge, stimulating competition and broadening the markets for Europe Blue growth sectors/businesses.
- enhance ability to respond to short term or emergency situations.
- learn from other countries experiences.
- share knowledge, building capacity and resilience in developing countries.
- enhance international mobility.

³ <http://bookshop.europa.eu/en/open-innovation-open-science-open-to-the-world-pbKI0416263/>

- increase the visibility of JPI Oceans and its ability to act as a portal to European Marine science knowledge and expertise.
- provide effective links between research and knowledge on the one hand and the global policy community on the other, promoting ocean awareness and advocacy.

Principles

To complement the objectives a set of principles for international engagement is proposed:

Principles for international cooperation

- **Sustained interest-driven:** JPI Oceans should identify priorities for international cooperation based on the strategic interests of its members (as set out in the SRIA) and only take forward those actions for which the member countries can maintain the level of engagement necessary to bring the cooperation to a successful outcome.
- **Impact-driven:** JPI Oceans seeks international cooperation in those strategic research and innovation areas in which greater impact is ensured through such cooperation.
- **Reciprocal commitment:** Partner Countries own national priorities should have relevance and synergy with JPI Oceans' SRIA. Ideally they will be conducting similar or complementary work or plan to do so, or be willing to align their national research objectives in particular for creating new innovative opportunities.
- **Cost sharing:** Partner countries should cover their own costs of participating (and could also be asked to contribute to the costs of coordination)⁴.
- **Complementarity willingness and ability :** Global or regional initiatives/ networks should be active in same field as JPI Oceans and conduct similar or complementary work or plan to do so, and should be open to working with external partners and where relevant have budget or resource to finance and support joint actions.
- **Action-oriented:** JPI Oceans should strive towards launching concrete and feasible proposals for cooperation.
- **Efficient:** JPI Oceans should seek low transaction cost actions, as international cooperation is inherently expensive and time consuming.
- **Added Value:** JPI Oceans, on behalf of its member countries and the European Union, needs to build on and complement existing bilateral and multilateral cooperation initiatives which have high impact and visibility, especially where these enable channels to 'end-users' and contribute to achieve the objectives of international policies, agreements and treaties (e.g. those taken under the remit of UN).
- **Shared values;** for Responsible research and innovation should be mutually applied.
- **Shared visions;** giving direction and raising profile of oceans on the global scene.

⁴ In a case of 'capacity development' with a developing country this may not be possible, but benefits of another nature may make the enterprise still mutually beneficial. They might also look for funding support through public international programmes, etc.

Modalities

JPI Oceans anticipates a wide range of tools being used to meet its objectives and there is scope for international partnership in all of these, where an added-value can be identified. From the outset, when developing new actions, the MB should consider proactively whether to involve international partners.

Identified Modalities may include:

- The participation of partner representatives as invited guests to the Management Board meetings, which allows for dialogue on alignment and identification of mutual strategic priorities.
- Joint calls.
- Existing tools and support mechanisms; for example the Horizon 2020 programme has well established procedures for the engagement of third countries, including in the ERANET cofund mechanism.
- Participation in joint actions: identification and invitation of relevant international funding partners (and or international experts) to JPI Oceans working groups, workshops and meetings for the development of joint actions.
- Participation in the bilateral or multilateral funding initiatives or programmes of its member countries through twinning or other kinds of interaction with low transaction costs.
- Launch of an “international pilot action”.
- Participation of JPI Oceans representatives in international and regional groups (e.g. Galway implementation group, transatlantic seabed mapping, BlueMed) and panels.
- Involvement of international experts for peer review.
- Assessment and publication of research strategies from non-EU countries on the JPI Oceans website (and vice-versa).
- Participation in international European Commission led initiatives or activities⁵ where it fits the JPI Oceans purpose
- Participation in international approaches or activities led by/jointly with other JPIs.
- Specific actions e.g. in emergency response panels, voluntary variable geometry, infrastructure and data sharing, mobility actions, research networks.
- Engagement in briefings and related opportunities to advocate for financial support for oceans research on the global stage.

The use of the above listed instruments to international cooperation may in itself be insufficient if the process is not complemented by a sound political commitment to increase cooperation on common challenges, so it is preferable that the international cooperation is guided by or embedded in clear political commitment from the parties involved.

JPI Oceans should, when possible and appropriate, participate in relevant international fora/projects through representatives from the MB and Secretariat. But representatives can only present the positions which are agreed by the Management Board. Such representation may not necessarily reflect the positions of individual JPI Oceans member countries.

⁵ See also 'Roadmaps for international cooperation COM (2014) 567 final.

Hence JPI Oceans actions must be sensitive to existing EU level and Member Countries bilateral and multilateral relationships, though may seek to build on these if appropriate. For instance to build relations with intergovernmental organisations where there is already a degree of overlapping membership with JPI Oceans members (e.g. IOC-UNESCO) or to build on research and innovation links which a third country has with one or more JPI Oceans members which JPI Oceans could leverage.

Equally, JPI Oceans should make itself available to its member countries to facilitate international cooperation, where such cooperation reflects the desire of a sufficient number of member countries under the variable geometry principle.

JPI Oceans international engagement - State of play

From its earliest days JPI Oceans was being asked to engage in dialogue and foster cooperation with non-European countries. Invitations to participate in multilateral fora (e.g. transatlantic cooperation via the Galway process, the Blue Med initiative and cooperation with ASEAN countries) as well as requests for bilateral engagement have been put forward and to some extent pursued. Third countries have also expressed interest in becoming members of JPI Oceans and requests are received from the Commission and others for JPI Oceans to participate in international actions. The JPI Oceans Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda, launched in May 2015, recognised that JPI Oceans can provide an interface between European and international activities at global and regional levels, and also that internationalisation should be embedded in the development of its joint actions; however, JPI Oceans should be selective when choosing international partners.

In 2015 the Management Board agreed to invite representatives of selected international partners to attend (some) of its meetings as 'guests'. The first such meeting, was in autumn 2015 at which the Brussels based S&T representatives of Canada and New Zealand were present and there was video link participation to the international office of NOAA, USA. Further dialogue with each has continued on a bilateral basis.

Participation of experts from non-EU countries in the Strategic Advisory Board StAB was also anticipated, and international experts have participated in the peer review of funding proposals (micro-plastics).

In 2015 the G7 Heads of State' statement acknowledges the role that JPI Oceans might play in providing a European focus and encouraged the opening of actions to other countries.

At the level of the actions there is wider international participation of funding agencies in the MARTERA ERANET Cofund (South Africa, Belarus, Argentina) and there has been an engagement of international experts in several of the expert working groups developing JPI actions. See also Annexes 1 and 2.

JPI Oceans has also noted the experiences of other JPIs in opening up membership to international partners.⁶

⁶ <https://www.era-learn.eu/joint-activities/internationalisation-activities-related-to-extending-cooperation-to-third-non-eu-countries>

Relevant International Processes, Partners and networks

Relevant political processes (non-exclusive) include G7/G20, COP, taking forward the UN sustainable development goals (esp. 13 and 14), the IPCC Special Report on Climate change and the oceans and the cryosphere, Biodiversity conventions and many more. There are numerous bilateral and multilateral networks, initiatives and organisations who also have an international remit or dimension. This implies a political commitment to devote efforts to maintain awareness and to look for efficient synergies and complementarities at the level of the Management Board and the Secretariat. Note must also be taken that Member Countries engage directly in the Intergovernmental processes and bilaterally.

For example:

- Intergovernmental structures: GEO/GEOOS (Blue Planet), IOC-UNESCO, IMO, ISA, IPCC, regional conventions.
- The networks within the research performing community, for strategic approaches, horizon scanning and agenda setting in formulating priority areas for research e.g. Future Earth, EMB, Technology platforms.
- Policy makers and their advisory bodies – European Commission DG MARE, DG Clima, ICES, SCARfish, IMO, ISA.
- Researcher funders – directly and via funding networks such as the ERANETS, ERANET Cofunds and other European instruments (e.g. BONUS 185, Blue Med, Transatlantic) and with the European Commission (eg via Galway process).
- International research funding mechanisms such as the Belmont Forum.
- Institutions/networks who are active practitioners in marine science/monitoring, infrastructure owners, data gatherers – EuroGOOS members, Euromarine, EMB, ICES members, CIESM, EFARO members, POGO members.
- Engagement with specific funded projects with an international dimension (such as via the Steering board for AORA and for the Bilat 4 project (with USA)).

The JPI Oceans secretariat engages with other organisations and networks to explore if there are opportunities to work jointly, to share platforms or to build on their activities, and brings these to the attention of the Management Board.

Recommendations

The following actions are most likely to be fruitful in the short term:

Strategic engagement

Continued engagement with the guest countries to the MB (USA, Canada, New Zealand) to align interests and progress specific joint actions.

Management Board to consider if further countries should be offered 'guest status'

Continue engagement with specific Commission international initiatives and H2020 (and other projects) where there are mutual interests and to avoid duplications e.g. JPI Oceans present on high level boards for AORAC, engagement with BILAT 4 and in the international activities undertaken with all the JPIs.

Embed the international dimension at the level of actions as they are developed. E.g. inviting international funders (and/or their experts) to scoping meetings.

Engage with the Belmont Forum (Future Earth) and with JPI Climate in relation to the proposed oceans initiative.

Engage with non-JPI member countries via Board level engagement with BONUS 185 and the BlueMed initiative.

Recalling the costs involved of international cooperation, continue engaging MB members to advocate and represent JPI Oceans if already engaging in ongoing meetings outside Europe.

Ensure effective Secretariat to Secretariat relationships with key international networks, including seeking guest or observer status or representation where this is an efficient mechanism for strategic interaction.

Review JPI Oceans website and other publicity materials to enhance information available on actions and ensure more receptive to international engagement.

Recommendations in relation to CSA task 3.4

CSA task 3.4 proposal envisaged the one JPI Oceans dedicated workshop per annum (outside Europe and as a side event to other suitable events) would be identified and facilitated which will focus on enhancing the international dimension of JPI Oceans.

During 2016 the opportunity was taken for Management Board alternate Uli Wolf to visit India, representing JPI Oceans in a session of the EU-India STI Cooperation Days at CSIR-NIO, Goa, India. Interactions with Japan have also taken place.

In discussions on December 2016 with USA (NOAA) it was suggested that some members of JPI Oceans Management Board could come to NOAA, during 2017, to allow more in-depth discussions with some of their key programmes and scientists on potential engagement with JPI Oceans. This could be the focus of the 2017 dedicated workshop. Representatives from other agencies such as NSF, NASA, etc. would also be invited. This could be in the context of any activities that could support the Galway Statement.

For 2017 and for 2018 it is suggested that rather than have dedicate JPI Oceans events in one or two countries the opportunity might be taken to pursue wider international interest in participating in the JPI Oceans actions currently under discussion, namely Bioeconomy ERANET COFUND and the joint action with JPI Climate (EJP) though 'bilateral' targeted discussions with potential interested funders in a number of countries.

In addition suitable international events will be identified (particularly multi country) and options for dedicated JPI Oceans' activity to promote awareness of actions will be evaluated.

For annexes please see separate document JPI Oceans 'international statement' March 2017, supporting Annexes (dissemination level PP).