

Sea-Search: a pan-European network for marine and oceanographic data and information management

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Four years ago the EURONODIM network was established as a European cooperative network of 16 national oceanographic data centres and marine information centres from 14 European coastal states and EC. Each partner is specialised in managing and giving access to extensive resources of oceanographic and marine data and information and is providing data management services and support to a wide range of institutes and research projects, both nationally and internationally. EURONODIM operates a Sea-Search network of partner websites and a joint European website (www.sea-search.net), that is developed into the key resource or 'portal site' for oceanographic data and information in Europe. It hosts an array of catalogues, overviews and links and acts as central gateway to ocean and marine information and data resources of EURONODIM partners, of national institutes in the EURONODIM partner countries and other related organizations in Europe.

Major catalogues in Sea-Search are:

EDMED – European Directory on Marine Environmental Datasets

ROSCOP – Research Cruises

EDMERP – European Directory on Marine Environmental Research Projects

The Sea-Search activities are continued as part of the 5th framework of the European Commission, whereby the following new challenges are targeted:

Horizontally by adopting a pan-European dimension

National oceanographic and marine data centres of Eastern European countries around the Baltic Sea and Black Sea, i.c. Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey and Denmark are joining as well as additional Mediterranean countries, i.c. Israel, Malta, Cyprus, Croatia, and Morocco. They will adopt the mechanisms and meta-databases of Sea-Search and will compile and submit their national entries for EDMED, ROSCOP and EDMERP directories, thus giving overviews of their national data holdings and marine research activities.

Vertically by extending the Sea-Search services and products and innovating the technological internet basis of the network with:

Common Data Index metadatabase for data sets held at partners

Pilots for online Data Access

Upgrading and innovating of present EDMED, ROSCOP and EDMERP mechanisms

Trial with high-bandwidth communication between the partner sites

The objectives of Sea-Search are:

To deliver a major contribution to the European Network for marine research infrastructures, through the further development and upgrading of the present Sea-Search network of ocean and marine data centres in Europe into a pan-European network for ocean and marine data & information management

To improve the exchange, availability and accessibility of ocean and marine data and information within Europe and including non-EC countries riparian to all seas bordering Europe;

To expand the online EDMED, EDMERP and ROSCOP metadatabases with input of research institutes in Eastern European countries around the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea and other Mediterranean countries; To foster exchange of experiences between the present Sea-Search partners and the new partners concerning data and information management practices;

To extend the online Sea-Search services and products with a Common Data Index metadatabase to datasets, held at partners and pilots for online Data Access and to innovate the technological basis of the network infrastructure by adopting XML, GIS (OGC) and high-bandwidth communication.