The European Atlas of the Seas: an ocean literacy tool powered by EMODnet for wider society

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The European Atlas of the Seas (www.european-atlas-of-the-seas.eu) is a user-friendly online map-based Ocean Literacy tool available in 24 languages developed at the initiative of the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) of the European Commission and powered by the European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet) Secretariat. It makes it possible for people across Europe to explore a wide range of marine topics, such as the environment, marine life, nature conservation, sea surface temperature trends, sea level rise, marine litter, fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, energy, transport, and much more!

With a catalogue of more than 275 interactive map layers that is constantly updated and enriched and the possibility to create custom maps that can be printed, shared and embedded in websites and blogs, the Atlas is an easy and attractive way for everyone to connect to our blue planet and better understand how the ocean influences us and how we influence the ocean. Thematic predefined maps that combine selected map layers make it possible for users to learn about ocean observation and marine data as well as important pillars of the European Green Deal, in particular biodiversity, food from the ocean, clean energy and climate change. The recently developed 'My Maps' tool now also enables users to create their own working space in the Atlas.

EMODnet provides more than 50% of the map layers in the Atlas. Other data providers include, for example, the Copernicus Marine Service, the European Environmental Agency (EEA), Eurostat and the Joint Research Center (JRC).

The Atlas can be used in schools in multiple ways. The Teachers Corner (http://learn.european-atlas-of-the-seas.eu) provides ready to use map-based exercises in English, French and Portuguese for students of different age groups as well as fun activities such as a Treasure Hunt, two virtual boat races and a Geocaching Game!

Keywords
Atlas; Maps; Marine Data; Open Data; Ocean Literacy; Education; Communication And Outreach