

OCEANIDS: MEETING THE NEEDS OF DEVELOPING STATES TO EXPLORE, ANALYZE AND SHARE OCEAN DATA

Wouter Rommens⁽¹⁾, Jean-Nicolas Poussart⁽²⁾, Yannick Beaudoin⁽³⁾

UNEP-GRID/Arendal, Marine Programme, Postboks 183, N-4802, Arendal, Norway

*E-mails: ⁽¹⁾wouter.rommens@grida.no, ⁽²⁾jean-nicolas.poussart@grida.no,
⁽³⁾yannick.beaudoin@grida.no*

Keywords: *public marine data, mapping, developing states, visualization, data sharing, portal, geoportal, OCEANIDS*

ABSTRACT

The global community, with developing states and small island developing states (SIDS) in particular, requires credible, science-based marine data and information for purposes that include support to scientific investigation, spatial planning and environmental and natural resource management in an overall effort to promote the sustainable use of the coastal areas and oceans. There is now a multitude of data portals and data viewers facilitating data exploration, use and sharing, but these remain most useful to the users experienced in handling and working with a variety of data formats and specialized software and tools.

UNEP/GRID-Arendal coordinates the UNEP Shelf Programme, which is the access point to a collaboration of international organizations with expertise in marine geosciences and maritime law, assisting developing states and SIDS in delineating their continental shelf as defined by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). OCEANIDS builds upon the successful development and implementation of the UNEP Shelf Programme's One Stop Data Shop, but with new technical development designed with the non-GIS expert end-user in mind. The aim with OCEANIDS is to provide an easy mechanism for users to find and examine public marine scientific datasets, and facilitate their engagement by allowing them to visualize and combine datasets as they wish, make their own maps, and even perform basic comparative analyses. Furthermore, registered users are able to easily upload their own data, enabling a range of possibilities for data visualization, analysis and sharing. The goal is to create rich interactive visualizations to solve problems without any, or limited, experience using traditional mapping tools. The OCEANIDS platform will be used during training activities on integrated marine and coastal zone management in the Sustainable Seas capacity development programme of UNEP/GRID-Arendal.

The development of OCEANIDS is motivated primarily by the following target uses:

- Mapping of benthic habitats and marine and coastal ecosystems to support marine spatial planning;
- Providing developing states with qualitative evaluations of non-renewable marine resources;
- Prospectively mapping for deployment of marine renewable energy systems with jurisdictions of developing states;
- Assessing the state of the deep sea environment inside and outside areas of national jurisdiction;
- Using data compilations to support proper valuation of deep sea ecosystems facing the impacts of human activities

By facilitating access to marine scientific data held by international institutions, researchers and the public, and by building the capacities of national experts, UNEP/GRID-Arendal, in

conjunction with other major capacity and data providing agencies, seeks to 1) ensure that developing states have the abilities and information necessary to make their own, independent marine management decisions and 2) that the vast volumes of available marine scientific data are used to their full potential by all stakeholders.

GRID-Arendal is hereby seeking to inform current data partners and potential new partners of the development plans for OCEANIDS and invites all holders of relevant data to contribute their basic inventories and metadata. Access to the data inventories of partners will be accomplished using Open Geospatial Consortium protocols

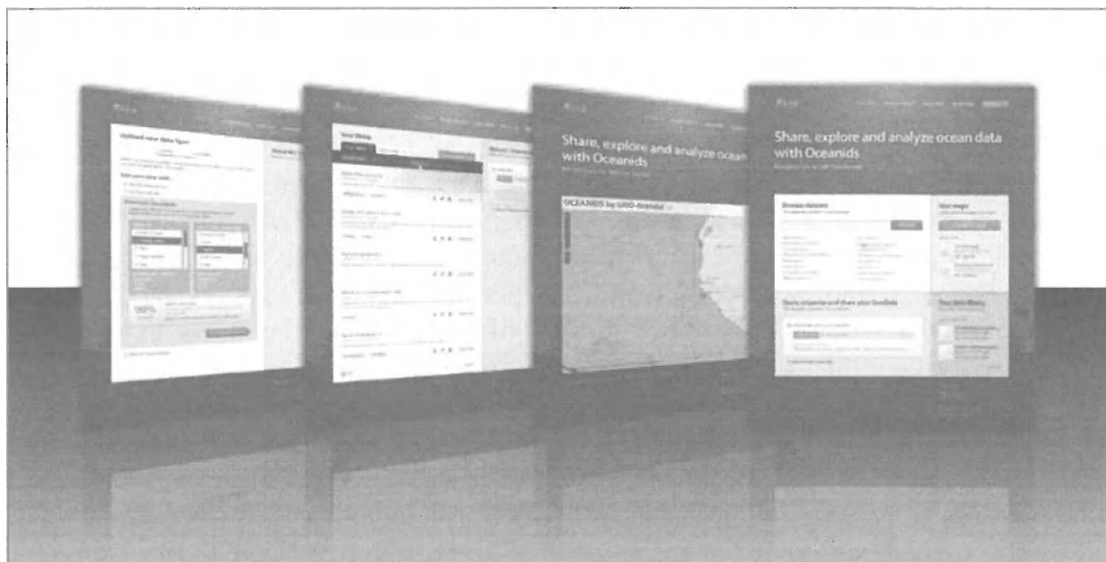


Figure 1. Some example views of the OCEANIDS system