

# Preface

Dear CommOCEAN 2016 participant

On behalf of the Organizing and Scientific Committee of the second international marine science communication conference CommOCEAN 2016 (Bruges, 6-7 December 2016), I'd like to welcome you to this most inspiring event and to the wealth of abstracts covered in this volume.

This conference is not just an event, it's the successor to IMSCC-I, organized on 8-9 September 2014 in Porto by CIIMAR, Ciencia Viva and the European Marine Board Communications Panel (EMBCP). That highly successful conference – based upon an idea conceived at a Bruges meeting of EMBCP in 2012 – was more than an eye-opener, with 118 participants from 17 countries mostly from Europe. Today at CommOCEAN 2016, the participation of 200 marine researchers and communicators from almost 30 countries worldwide re-emphasizes the ever growing need to share ocean knowledge with other stakeholders (often referred to as the need for more “Ocean Literacy”), and to do that in the most innovative, creative and inclusive way. By joining forces with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO), the European Marine Board (and its communications panel EMBCP) and the local organizer VLIZ opened the door for a global marine science communication event.

For marine researchers and communicators today, science outreach is not merely a minor issue. It's a societal challenge and an important responsibility for each of them. Only by creating some ‘commotion’ and enough emotion, a marine scientist's work really becomes visible to the outside world. It is all the better if it helps to bridge the knowledge gap and by the way supports the researcher in his or her struggle for survival in this highly competitive world.

Jan Seys