

→ **ENCORA FOLLOW-UP: A EUROPEAN MARINE AND MARITIME FORUM AND A STAKEHOLDERS PLATFORM FOR THE EUROPEAN MARITIME POLICY**

The ENCORA Coordination Action will end this month, but this does not imply that the network structures and networking activities established by ENCORA will disappear. There will be changes, however. We have to apply for other funding sources and we will have to accept that these sources may not cover all the existing activities. We also can take advantage of the ENCORA experience, to increase the effectiveness of the network structures and activities.

One of the things we have learned is that the ENCORA network was not well structured for dialoguing on science policy matters with research programming institutions at European and national levels. In response to a recent FP7 call, a consortium of coastal, marine and maritime research networks has submitted a proposal ("MARCOM+", lead-partner ICES) for a European Marine Science Partnership, with the aim to further dialogue between research communities, civil society, industry and policy makers. This initiative will provide a framework for integrating the European marine and maritime science community, in which the ENCORA national and thematic networks will be invited to take part.

Another thing we have learned is that the exchange of knowledge and experience between science, policy and practice requires a better balance between these parties, i.e. a greater involvement of policy and practice. This is the intention of both the Venice Platform initiative and the Aberdeen+/MARCOM+ initiative, which together aim at establishing a European cooperation structure including major networks representing coastal, marine and maritime stakeholders. Its objective is twofold: transferring knowledge and experience among different networks and creating a communication channel with European institutions.

The Commission strongly supports these objectives and has encouraged the Venice Platform initiative to organise an "all embracing" stakeholders forum. The Venice Platform should therefore extend to all major coastal, marine and maritime stakeholders and provide a mechanism to support the Commission in the further development and implementation of the European Maritime Policy. DG MARE has invited the Venice Platform initiators to organise a workshop at the forthcoming Maritime Days for the elaboration of this stakeholders forum, together with the MARCOM+ consortium and other "network of networks" organisations.

The Maritime Days will be held in Rome on 19 and 20 May. We already encourage you to note down these dates in your agenda. You will soon receive more information on the programme of the Maritime Days and on the workshops for setting up the stakeholders forum.

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→ **ENCORA MEMBERS ABOUT ENCORA**

Most ENCORA members have received an inquiry a few months ago about their satisfaction with the national and international coastal networks and about the services they would like to see continued in the future. We have received 265 completed questionnaires, providing probably a fairly representative picture of the need for networking at national and European levels. Most of the respondents belong to the categories science, technology, education and consultancy; a smaller but non negligible group (25%) of respondents has assigned itself in other categories (national/local government and other stakeholders), sometimes in combination with one of the former categories. The different European regions (Northern, Western, Mediterranean and Eastern) were almost equally represented.

While quite some respondents indicated that their personal involvement in ENCORA had been low (32% - 48% at the national and international levels), only a few respondents (not more than 10%) expressed a dissatisfaction with the networking services. The majority of the responses were positive to very positive (65% for the national networking and 55% for the international networking).

An even higher proportion of the respondents pleaded for maintenance of the ENCORA networking services, especially the international services. The Contact Database received the highest score of more than 90%, followed by Coastal Wiki, Enews and YPEP at more than 80%. You can find the full results of the inquiry on the [Portal](#).



→ **YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO MAINTAINING THE NETWORKING SERVICES IS ESSENTIAL**

The results of the inquiry clearly show that the benefits of sharing knowledge and experience are acknowledged within the European community of coastal professionals. We therefore strive for further extending and improving the networking services, notwithstanding the termination of EU funding. Several organisations have offered to continue their support to some of these services. VLIZ will continue hosting the Contact Database and the Coastal Wiki, Deltares will continue to spend efforts on managing the Coastal Wiki content and EUCC will continue the Enews and the coastal event list.

User contributions are essential to update the Contact Database with

contact data and to improve and supplement the Coastal Wiki with fresh knowledge and experience. We therefore call on you to continue contributing to these services and to encourage your colleagues to do the same.

Several suggestions have been made at the Littoral parallel sessions in Venice on increasing the attractiveness and the reward for contributing to the networking services. For instance, the suggestion to use the Coastal Wiki in advanced education and training projects, by asking students and trainees to perform a critical analysis of Coastal Wiki articles and to propose updates and improvements.

Please [contact us](#) if you have additional suggestions or if you are willing to become part of a European “think tank” on sharing knowledge and experience among coastal and marine professionals.



THE MARINE BIODIVERSITY WIKI, A NEW COASTAL WIKI OFFSPRING

Under the banner of MarBEF (Marine Biodiversity and Ecosystem Functioning) a [Marine Biodiversity Wiki](#) has been launched. The marine biodiversity wiki is a database for creating, browsing, and searching through information on marine biodiversity. The Marine Biodiversity Wiki links in depth with the Coastal Wiki; Coastal Wiki articles can be accessed through the Marine Biodiversity Wiki and vice versa.

While many wikis are open to alteration by the general public, the Marine Biodiversity Wiki will require user authentication to edit pages, as is the case for the Coastal Wiki. Edits by approved contributors, however, can be made in real-time and appear instantly online.

We are putting out a call for projects, organisations and individuals who are specialists in different areas of marine biodiversity to consider creating a page for this marine biodiversity wiki. We have a small budget where we can provide a contribution (€500) towards the cost of putting an article together. We invite you to take a look at the table of contents on the right column of the wiki home page and see if there is any topic for which you would like to contribute an article. The red links are devoid of any information while the blue links may have full articles or may just contain a simple definition. If we have left out an area which you feel should be included, please let us know. You may drop a mail at roisin@ecoserve.ie , also for joining the wiki author community.

We would appreciate if you inform your colleagues about the Marine Biodiversity Wiki and if you encourage them to contribute!



The ENCORA objective is to facilitate and create new opportunities for sharing knowledge and experience on coastal issues in Europe. This electronic newsletter will inform you frequently about the activities and achievements of the network. Every issue will contain a section with news about your national network or ICZM related topics in your country.

This electronic newsletter may be forwarded freely to others working in the ICZM fields. If you would like to receive the ENCORA Newsletter directly, please contact your national coordinator or subscribe to www.encora.org. News-items for publication can be send to encore@rikz.rws.minvenw.nl.