

# Invitation



Who do we invite to the next edition of Oceans? That intriguing question was posed during the Future of OCEANS Panel Discussion at Oceans '16 MTS/IEEE, held from 19 to 23 September in Monterey, California. The Panel Discussion, moderated by Dr Rick Spinrad, chief scientist at NOAA, was the second one, the first one being held last year during Oceans '15 in Washington, DC. The discussion circled around future needs, trends and likely accomplishments in ocean science, technology and engineering. It was not just looking for the actual answer to the question, who do we send an invite to for next years edition of our conference, but looking at it in a broader sense as well: who do we need to tie up and partner with, who are going to be colleagues of the ocean scientists in the years to come. The participants in the discussion were drawn from different corners of the ocean

community – academia, government and private sector, global partnerships and investments. A lively discussion between the delegates and the panelists first of all tried to ascertain why the invitation needs to be sent out in the first place: it was quite clear that a lot of the people in the room felt that new technology was so encompassing, and developing at such a fast pace that the ocean community needs to find partnerships to implement these technological possibilities as soon as possible to solve the problem of not being able to understand the ocean more quickly on a bigger scale. Therefore, transfer of technology from land to sea, because boundaries between the two are disappearing, is necessary as is making use of the Internet of Things and crowdsourcing. These both need to be high on the agenda, as do visualisation and video imagery.

Taking the discussion further, these trends will result in invitations to a bunch a professionals that are never present at an Oceans conference, and to be honest, nor at any other conference in oceanography or hydrography. Groups that were mentioned were, of course, programmers, computer scientists and other IT professionals ( 'if we can gather a terabyte of data, we need the guy that knows how to handle that terabyte'), filmmakers (to talk about visualisation so as to show the outside world what the ocean community finds), kids and amateurs (aren't they the best ones to show us how intuitive crowdsourcing should work?), biologists and environmentalists (if they are not already involved) and Google (what would Google do?).

Let's see if the invites are indeed sent; it will be a very refreshing and highly educational experience to hear what all these invited guests come up with. It might give new energy to the ocean community and indeed speed up developments to reach that goal even faster: map the ocean in all possible ways for the betterment of our planet.

This is already this year's last issue of *Hydro International*. 2016 is almost over and will surely not go into history as one of the best years for hydrography and adjacent fields. It's good to start a fresh new year and see 2017 as a blank new page that offers new opportunities!

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