

# Outreach

Blue Economy is the buzzword of the last year in hydrography and oceanography. It mainly refers to that part of the economy that derives its revenues from the oceans, the seas, ports and harbours all over the globe. It's the economy of tankers shipping goods such as toys, shoes and electronics from China to Europe, bananas and mangoes from South America to the United States and oil and grain basically all over the world; more than 90 percent of all goods being transported from one country to another is shipped by sea. And although the maritime industry has been in a slump for some years now, suffering from both the economic crisis and burden of investment due to new regulations, shipping is still the most sustainable part of the transport sector and shows the most growth globally. The Blue Economy also includes the quest for energy. Above, under and through the waves of those same oceans: by offshore wind farms, oil & gas and renewables like tidal energy, humanity is trying to find new sources in order to be able to uphold their usage of energy. The Blue Economy is also the economy of tourism, a cruise is no longer the prerogative of a happy few in the Western world: the sector is booming and cruise liners are sailing seas that were, not so long ago, unsafe to navigate. On the other side of the spectrum, one finds the many thousands of leisure sailing yachts going about the lakes and coastal areas, watched by millions of others celebrating their holidays on beaches. Enough said about the immense role the ocean plays in the daily life of the majority of the people living on our planet. Time to go to the role that hydrography plays. Hydrography is basically underpinning all of the abovementioned and more: providing for nautical charts enabling safe navigation for all those mega tankers, measuring the foundations of all those search efforts for energy in and at sea and making tourism possible in places where it wasn't possible before. The difficulty of hydrography nowadays is its poor marketing: while we are all convinced of our own important role, others are not; from policymakers cutting budgets for surveying to young people not knowing what hydrography is and therefore not choosing it as a career. Underlying the poor marketing is a lack of outreach. While the buzz is about Blue Economy, it is still too difficult for the industry, and the institutes and societies representing hydrography, and maybe universities and colleges also – with some exceptions – to bring forward the message of hydrography. Main reason for this lack of knowledge in the outside world is, in my opinion, the fact that hydrography as a field that keeps preaching to the converted about all the aspects of the profession – in conferences and meeting rooms all over the globe we keep talking to each other about the need to reach out to the outer world. It's now time to practice what we preach: let's take up the challenge and tell everybody about the great fun, but also about the very necessary, highly sophisticated and increasingly important products hydrography provides for.

PS I would be delighted if we could share ideas and chat about how we could reinforce the outreach on [www.hydro-international.com](http://www.hydro-international.com). Let me know what you think adding a comment below!

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