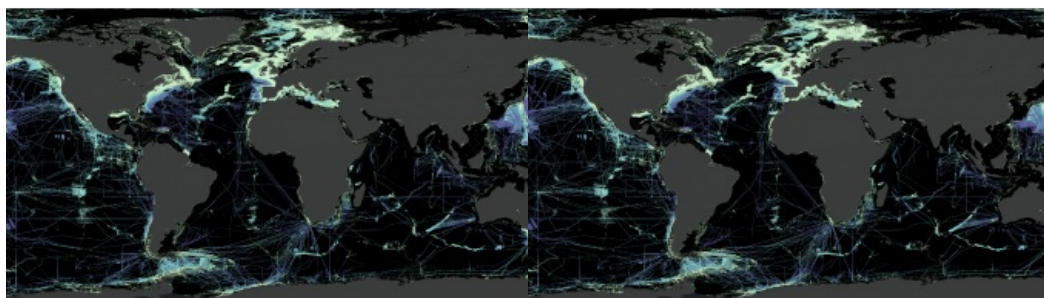


# New Partnership and Ambitious Expedition to Uncharted Polar Territory



The Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project recently entered into a memorandum of understanding with the Ocean Research Project (ORP). The parties will work together to support the global effort in pursuit of mapping the world's ocean floor, especially in polar regions, through ORP's upcoming expedition, GO-MARIE.

The [GO-MARIE](#) (Glacier-Oceans Mapping & Research Interdisciplinary Effort) programme is a 2022 expedition and also the motivation for the maiden voyage of the organization's flagship, the RV *Marie Tharp*. A 22-metre Bruce Roberts steel schooner, the vessel is custom-built to navigate uncharted polar territory. There will be a base crew of ten, with rotating ocean science experts joining legs of the voyage.

"We are delighted to partner with Ocean Research Project, and to support the launch of GO-MARIE," commented Seabed 2030 project director, Jamie McMichael-Phillips.

"Throughout her voyage, RV *Marie Tharp* will no doubt play an invaluable role in helping us get closer to mapping the gaps and solving this puzzle – especially as she ventures into complex uncharted polar and sub-polar regions."

## Mapping Activities Across the Glacial Impacted Coastal Oceans

Just under 80% of the Earth's seabed is yet to be mapped, including much of the coastline of the Greenland Ice Sheet. As the sea ice retreats, these coastal areas – which are critical spatial datasets required to improve global climate models – become accessible for bathymetric survey.

ORP's science director Nicole Trenholm is coordinating the international science mission of higher latitudes for GO-MARIE. "It is essential that we extend mapping activities across the glacial impacted coastal oceans," Nicole explains. She continues: "Data from these regions will be used to enhance the accuracy of regional climate model estimates on glacial melt due to global warming."

"In addition to supporting the Seabed 2030 mission, this expedition will take action towards the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals relating to oceanographic research."

## Mapping the Entire Ocean Floor

Seabed 2030 is a collaborative project between The Nippon Foundation and GEBCO to inspire the complete mapping of the world's ocean by 2030, and to compile all bathymetric data into the freely available GEBCO Ocean Map. GEBCO is a joint programme of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and is the only organization with a mandate to map the entire ocean floor. Seabed 2030 is a flagship programme of the [Ocean Decade](#).

[ORP](#) is a non-profit organization committed to eco-friendly ocean discovery. The organization identifies expeditions that enable small, core teams of researchers to gather critical data from remote and sensitive areas worldwide – this information will better enable the taking of decisive decisions impacting the ocean's health.

RV *Marie Tharp* will set sail in the summer for an extensive two-month mission in southern Greenland.

All data collected and shared with the Seabed 2030 Project is included in the GEBCO global grid, which is free and publicly available.



The current bathymetric map of the world's ocean floor. The coloured areas show mapped areas, whereas the black parts show the massive areas that still have to be mapped. (Courtesy: The Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project).

