

# Report on UK's Role as a Global Leader in Ocean Science



The UK's approach to collecting data from the world's oceans will significantly improve with greater collaboration among members of the UK marine geospatial community, according to a new report launched on behalf of the community.

The recently completed 'Future of UK marine geospatial data' study found that marine geospatial stakeholders from UK government, industry and academia must

find new ways of working together to source and manage marine geospatial information. This will help drive the UK's Build Back Better plan, while ensuring the nation retains its position as a world leader in ocean science.

The report was created as a result of a call for evidence from the Geospatial Commission on how geospatial data can support economic growth and productivity across the UK. To assist with that call, the Commission requested that UKHO and [BEIS](#) (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy) work together on a Marine Geospatial Evidence Base.

The BEIS and UKHO, along with the government's Policy Lab – a hub to enable teams across Whitehall to develop impactful policy decisions – hosted workshops to give stakeholders from across the UK's diverse marine geospatial sector a forum to discuss opportunities, barriers, future users and best practices.

## Common Data Standards and Data Access

Highlighting the critical role of marine geospatial data in the future of the ocean, the report champions four principal recommendations from the UK's marine geospatial community. Firstly, it reaffirms the call for greater collaboration between and more strategic direction for the 30+ public sector organizations, along with an even larger pool of private and academic bodies collecting geospatial data in the UK. Doing so will help reduce duplication of effort and maximize the value and re-use of data.

The second recommendation is for common data standards, cutting down on individual approaches to creating and storing information and making it more useable to those who need it. To ensure data quality is maintained, organizations should agree on a framework for marine geospatial data that enables all to commit to using it. This, the report argues, will help to ensure the UK becomes a leader in global data standards and the epicentre for end users and innovators who need high-density and quality data.

More transparency and a common approach to data access is the third recommendation. Presently, data is held in multiple locations of varying visibility, and often constricted by time-consuming red tape. The Geospatial Commission will explore ways to overcome this so that members of the geospatial community can access the information they need, while respecting important values such as intellectual property rights, data fidelity and national security.

## Call for Greater Hydrosatial Data Collection Efforts

The report's final recommendation is for greater data collection efforts. The marine geospatial community would strongly benefit from a shared view of what information is being gathered, by whom, when and to what standard. This basic but essential understanding of what everyone is doing will enable the community to remove duplication and explore collaboration opportunities that make use of economies of scale, so that even more data is collected.

Commenting on the report's findings, Chris Parry, project co-chair at the UKHO, said: "Through using best practice from Policy Lab, this evidence-based report represents the first time the UK's world-leading marine geospatial community has come together to share and validate known and new challenges and opportunities.

"We hope this will be an invaluable resource to the entire community that helped to create it and that helps to promote the critical role that marine geospatial data plays in the sustainable use of our oceans; and that it will provide an actionable blueprint for addressing our collective challenges and opportunities," he added.



The report on the future of UK marine geospatial data.

