



MACHC-Letter 04/2020
Joint IOCARIBE/MACHC-Letter 01/2020

June 10, 2020

Dear IOCARIBE and MACHC Member States:

With the anticipated launch of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development in 2021, we are calling you to action to ensure that the Wider Caribbean Region is the first to be fully mapped by the year 2030!

As you know, the Nippon Foundation - GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project is a collaborative project 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. The Project *“aspires to empower the world to make policy decisions, use the ocean sustainably, and undertake scientific research that is informed by a detailed understanding of the global ocean floor.”*

For the Wider Caribbean Region, this will provide a valuable product and common resource that all will benefit from using. A high-resolution bathymetric map of our region will greatly inform and improve regional marine spatial planning, disaster response, environmental management and scientific investigation activities, as identified in the [Societal Goals of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2020-2030](#). Completion of this map was also identified as a priority during the UN Decade of Ocean Science Regional Workshop for the Western Tropical Atlantic.

The IOC of UNESCO Subcommittee for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (IOCARIBE) and the MesoAmerican-Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission (MACHC) are working together to galvanize regional contributions to this important initiative. On the newly added [Seabed 2030 section](#) on the MACHC website, countries and other partners can learn how much of the region is currently mapped, how to submit data to the IHO Data Center for Digital Bathymetry (in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)) where it can be made publicly accessible, and other pertinent information. If you are unable to submit your data to the DCDB, please consider contributing it directly to GEBCO [here](#). Later this year, the website will provide improved information on areas where data is missing or sparse.

The MACHC recently established a regional coordinator for Seabed 2030, Ms. Cecilia Zuleima Cortina Guzman of Mexico, whose role is to coordinate and facilitate these national efforts and to liaise directly

with the IHO DCDB and the Seabed 2030 project. The MACHC has developed a [draft work plan for Seabed2030](#) and will work with IOCARIBE Member States to implement key elements to provide:

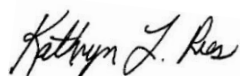
- 1) Existing data (or information on existing data) from national mapping efforts (governmental, non-governmental, industry) to the IHO DCDB.
- 2) Planned mapping efforts for 2020-2023. Polygons of these areas to be mapped would be reflected as a layer on the MACHC [Seabed 2030 web application](#). The WebApp presents several layers of information related to the most recent GEBCO bathymetry products, existing data and soon, upcoming mapping efforts with your contributions (see the enclosure).
- 3) A review of your country's crowd sourced bathymetry policy as requested by the International Hydrographic Organization's Circular Letter CL 21/2020 ([English](#) and [Spanish](#))
- 4) Any technical support and information needed in order to respond to these requests, such as tools, workflows, etc.

MACHC and IOCARIBE Member States are asked to designate a national point of contact to work with Ms. Zuleima Cortina Guzman. Please, send this information by July 8, 2020 to her at: [cecilia.cortina@gmail.com](mailto:cecilia.cortina@gmail.com), with a copy to the IOCARIBE Secretary ([C.Toro@unesco.org](mailto:C.Toro@unesco.org)) and the MACHC Chair ([Kathryn.Ries@noaa.gov](mailto:Kathryn.Ries@noaa.gov)).

The MACHC Seabed2030 Coordinator will then organize webinars in the August-September timeframe with the National Points of Contact to further explain the activities, answer questions and identify resources needed to support a response. Please do not hesitate to contact her with any questions or concerns.

We look forward to working together and becoming one of the first regions to be fully mapped to support a safe, clean ocean and sustainable blue economy for all our nations.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Ries  
MACHC Chair



Cesar Toro  
IOCARIBE of IOC UNESCO Secretary

Enclosure:

Example of Seabed 2030 MACHC Planned Surveys