



Women in Ocean Science – where are we in terms of gender equality?

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Ocean science is "Big Science", involving sophisticated and costly equipment, such as satellites, research vessels, remote operated vehicles and robotics, but above everything, and likely as in any other scientific discipline, progress in ocean science is based in human talent. The power of the human force varies at the regional and national scale, as well as the number of women in ocean science does.

Science in the 20th century was dominated by men, and women's contribution has not always been fairly acknowledged. Though new strategies are in place (e.g., specific funding regimes for women), barriers, whether they be personal, institutional, or cultural, still result in gender-based biases. However, until 2017, data comparing the proportion of female oceanographers were scarce and only at national level (e.g. USA), whereas at the global level we ignored the real figures. . The Global Ocean Science Report now gives some insights on the proportion of female ocean science researchers at global scale and by marine research fields. In 2013, on average, 38% of the researchers in ocean science were women, about 10% higher than the global share of female researchers. Yet, when looking more closely, the huge variability among countries, ranging from 4% (Mauritania) to 62% (Croatia), stresses the need for directed and tailored support for women in ocean science. The call for enforced gender equity policies and measures increasing the number of female researcher, is further supported by data showing that globally many fields in ocean science, in particular ocean observation and ocean technology, are still dominated by men (75% of the researchers). In addition, a decreasing percentage of females with increasing faculty rank, urges the application of new improved practices, governing the hiring process, mentoring, tenure and promotion of candidates in ocean science.