The European Atlas of the Seas powered by EMODnet

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Marine data are needed for many purposes: for acquiring a better scientific understanding of the marine environment, but also, increasingly, for decision-making as well as supporting ocean and coastal economic developments and business opportunities. Data must be of sufficient quality to meet the specific users' needs. It must also be accessible in a timely manner in appropriate formats.

And yet, despite being critical, this timely access to high-quality data proves challenging. Europe's marine data have traditionally been collected by a myriad of entities with the result that much of our data are scattered in unconnected databases and repositories. Even when data are available, often they are not compatible, making the sharing of the information and data-aggregation impossible.

To tackle those problems in 2007 the European Commission through its Directorate General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DG MARE) initiated the development of the European Marine Observation and Data network (EMODnet) in the framework of the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy and Marine Knowledge 2020 Strategy and in support of Blue Growth. Today EMODnet is comprised of more than 150 organisations which gather marine data, metadata and data products and make them more accessible for a wider range of users.

Since October 2017, the EMODnet Secretariat has taken over the management of the European Atlas of the Seas, a webmapping application for the general public, with a mission to further expand the range of services and features and improve the interface, functionality and content.

In this presentation, we will highlight the recent technical developments in the European Atlas of the Seas; how the European Atlas of the Seas aggregates OGC Web services from various source providers, thanks to a content management system. The presentation will focus on the challenges encountered in managing an operational popular mapping application.