



News Release

EUROPEAN SPACE AGENCY (ESA) AND WOC SIGN AGREEMENT FOR COOPERATION ON OCEAN INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT

World Ocean Council and ESA to Collaborate in Advancing Space-Based Systems and Data to Support the Ocean Sustainable Development

10 March 2021

Last month, the (then) Director General of the European Space Agency (ESA) Jan Wörner and the World Ocean Council (WOC) President and CEO Paul Holthus signed a Memorandum of Collaboration (MoC) for a partnership to advance support for ocean-related industry through space-based systems and data.

ESA aims to establish a dialogue with the maritime sector to better understand the requirements of businesses involved in the blue economy. The Agency is seeking to promote the application of existing space solutions to support the sustainable use of the ocean, and is proposing mechanisms to engage maritime players in ESA activities as representatives of the sector, for example through studies, demonstrations and tests of space applications or technologies for the maritime sector.

“This Memorandum of Collaboration is an excellent starting point for reinforcing the role, competence and presence of ESA in the global ocean community,” said former ESA **Director General** Jan Wörner. “Representing ESA’s support for the sustainable use of the ocean, particularly in the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, it contributes to the realisation of space-driven solutions and reinforces ESA’s commitment to addressing the needs of the maritime sector.”

Through the MoC, ESA and WOC express their intention to identify ‘model users’ who could be available for consultation and knowledge exchange with ESA. Understanding the needs of the maritime sector will help the Agency plan its future programmes and activities, with the result being that ESA better addresses the ocean community. The ultimate aim is to promote topics of common interest and information on respective programmes and activities for their mutual interest.

ESA recently set up the Blue Worlds Task Force to increase awareness of how space assets – including space technology, systems and data – can support the blue economy and address a variety of challenges faced by the maritime sector. The MoC, which focuses on cooperation with the European Branch of the World Ocean Council, will be beneficial to both

organisations, allowing exchange of expertise between the two and building up on or contributing to the exchanges held in the Task Force between representatives of ESA Member States and ESA experts.

UPCOMING WOC EVENT

Global Blue Finance Summit (BlueFIN '21) – Dates to be determined

Recent and Upcoming WOC Outreach and Engagement

8-9 March, Online event

Middle East Transport and Logistics Summit 2021 (Speaker)

15 March, Online event

Seafood and Fisheries Emerging Technologies (SAFET) webinar: “ Fishing vessels as platforms of opportunity” (Keynote Speaker)

World Ocean Council (WOC) – The Global Blue Economy Business Organization

The WOC is the international, cross-sectoral alliance for private sector leadership, collaboration and action on ocean sustainability, stewardship and science. Companies from a range of industries worldwide are distinguishing themselves as leaders in “Corporate Ocean Responsibility”, including: shipping, oil and gas, tourism, fisheries, aquaculture, mining, renewable energy, ocean technology and investment.

WOC Members are listed [here](#), a part of the WOC Network of 35,000+ ocean industry stakeholders around the world. The WOC is a registered not-for-profit organization in the US, UK and France.

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