



Forum for Future Ocean Floor Mapping

A GEBCO - Nippon Foundation Forum

15 – 17 June 2016

Monaco

The *Forum for Future Ocean Floor Mapping* is a three day international event bringing together ocean experts with the goal of accelerating our ability to accurately portray the shape of the world's ocean floor.

An increasing range of public and private national and international organizations require accurate and comprehensive ocean depth data and bathymetry. Knowing the depth and shape of the seafloor is a critical factor influencing coastal erosion, storm surge, tsunami propagation and inundation, global ocean circulation, distribution of benthic habitats, harvesting mineral resources, fisheries, and safe navigation. It is also a key enabler for defining national and international boundaries and for studying the future impacts of sea-level rise and climate change.

The *Forum for Future Ocean Floor Mapping* will provide a venue for representatives from groups involved with these and many other ocean related fields to exchange ideas and strategies for mapping the gaps in the world's ocean depth data. The General Bathymetric Chart of the Ocean (GEBCO), a joint project of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC), is co-hosting the Forum with the Nippon Foundation. GEBCO is the only project with an international mandate to map the global ocean floor.

The goal of GEBCO, set by Prince Albert I of Monaco in 1903, to depict the general shape of the ocean floor has now been achieved. As we look to the future, GEBCO, in partnership with stakeholders and data providers, must address the immediate need for much higher resolution seafloor mapping from the coast line to the deepest parts of the oceans.

His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco has been invited to open the Forum. Following the presentation of the GEBCO 10-year vision by Mr Shin Tani, chair of the GEBCO Guiding Committee, the Chairman of the Nippon Foundation, Mr. Yohei Sasakawa, will highlight achievements of the NF-GEBCO Capacity Building Programme and describe plans to expand the Nippon Foundation's Oceans Programme to address future challenges. The remainder of the first day of the Forum will allow senior executives of major ocean-related exploration, international regulatory, industry and academic organizations to give their views on the critical ocean issues and the need for increased mapping coordination to solve them.

Day two of the Forum will centre around four interactive expert panels. Three panels will focus on the driving needs of coastal and deep-water activities and emerging technologies for collecting and analyzing ocean depth data. The fourth panel will explore how to best leverage and coordinate efforts to achieve the broadest possible global bathymetric coverage. The final day of the Forum will provide an open workshop session to consider and integrate input and ideas from day one and two with the aim of developing a detailed roadmap for future ocean floor mapping. Further details will be published on the IHO website (http://www.iho.int/mtg_docs/com_wg/GEBCO/FOFF/index.htm).