

OceanObs'09

21–25 September 2009, Venice, Italy

The decade since the OceanObs'99 played a major role in consolidating the plans for a comprehensive ocean observing system able to deliver systematic global information about the physical environment of the oceans. For the first time in history, the world's oceans are being observed routinely and systematically by means of satellite and in situ techniques. It is now critically important to establish an international framework that will sustain the present system, evolve it to respond to increasing needs, and help it realise the full extent of its benefits across all stakeholders. It is equally important to present a clear vision extending the present observing system to include comprehensive and routine observations, information and services on the biogeochemical state of the ocean and the status of marine ecosystems. We, the conveners of this OceanObs'09 conference <<http://oceanobs09.net/>>, ask for your active participation in preparations of the meeting and building the community consensus on the way forward for ocean observations.

The World Climate Research Programme (WCRP), the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), and the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) have called for the OceanObs'09 conference, charging the organisers to address the issues raised above and to help lay out a path for sustaining the benefits of ocean information and services in the coming decade. To accomplish those goals, the conference will be different from OceanObs'99.

OceanObs'09 will celebrate the benefits of the existing initial ocean observing system and highlight its potential, developing a consensus plan for sustaining and evolving systematic and routine global ocean observations in the coming decade. Equally important, OceanObs'09 will outline a framework to develop ocean information and service systems over the coming decade, with benefits for the scientific community, and to support sound decisions in other areas of societal benefit including agriculture, adaptation to climate change, hazard warnings, health, and other economic sectors. The conference will define the observing system required for the development of these information and service systems.

The conference will be structured around three pillars of community input <<http://oceanobs09.net/structure/>>. The core input solicited are Community White Papers [more information can be found at <http://oceanobs09.net/structure/community_wp.php>] on various elements of the observing in situ or satellite observing system, data system, and services. These are asked to be group contributions,

refreshing existing plans in light of new information and technology, or describing contributions to the sustained global ocean observing system from new communities with a plan for a globally-deployed network, infrastructure, or service.

Additional Contributions which describe new developments in observing hardware, or regional observing efforts, infrastructures or services that contribute to the global system, are also invited, with first drafts due in March 2009 [more information can be found at > <<http://oceanobs09.net/structure/posters.php>>]. These will be presented as posters at the conference.

During the conference itself plenary talks will be given by invited lead authors, representing community consensus on key topics as laid out in integrating Plenary Papers [more information is at > <<http://oceanobs09.net/structure/plenary.php>>] which draw on the Community White Papers and Additional Contributions. These plenary presentations will follow the themes in the agenda of the conference <<http://oceanobs09.net/agenda/>>.

Your contribution to the conference

A conference program committee has worked hard to provide a first Draft Conference Agenda, with concise descriptions of the planned sessions [download or consult on the web > <<http://oceanobs09.net/agenda/>>].

We invite your suggestions on the Draft Agenda by 15 November 2008 at < <http://oceanobs09.net/contribute/suggest.php>>, for examples of themes for additional invited plenary talks.

We are immediately soliciting short proposals for Community White Papers by 15 November 2008, with the first drafts of the Community White Papers due in March 2009. Community White Papers will identify their contribution to the themes and topics addressed by the Plenary Papers. Examples of the Community White Papers we hope to attract can be found on the conference web site [see > <http://oceanobs09.net/structure/cwp_example.php>], but we are open to others we have surely overlooked. These will be reviewed, published after the conference as an outcome of the meeting, and presented as posters at the conference.

The Community White Paper proposals (title, lead and contributing authors, and a maximum 1-page description of the content and meeting contribution of the white paper) should be contributed via the

oceanobs09.net web page [more on how to contribute these > <http://oceanobs09.net/contribute/cwp_proposal.php>]. Community White Papers should bring a contribution to at least one of the themes in the draft agenda and should represent a consensus view of a specific group within the community. These short proposals will be reviewed by the conference Program Committee shortly after the 15 November 2008 deadline, and lead authors will be contacted with feedback.

The first draft versions due by the end of March 2009 will be reviewed by the Program Committee as well as put out for open review on the conference web site. At the same time, these drafts will serve the invited lead authors of the Plenary Papers and their contributing authors as input for their integrating papers and talks. The first draft of the Plenary Papers will be due at the end of May 2009 and will also be put out for open review. Meeting drafts of the Community White Papers and Plenary Papers will be due shortly before the conference. Final revised versions of the Community White Papers and the Plenary Papers, once input from the conference itself has been incorporated, will be due in early 2010 and will be published in the conference proceedings. A timeline for the preparations of the conference can be found on the meeting web page <<http://oceanobs09.net/structure/timeline.php>>.

At the same time, the conveners are soliciting nominations for Plenary Paper lead authors, who will be expected to work with a group of contributing authors [to nominate an author, go to > <<http://oceanobs09.net/contribute/suggest.php>>].

To be successful as anticipated, the conference depends very much on your help and input and we hope sincerely for your support and contributions.

On behalf of the conference organisers <<http://oceanobs09.net/org/>> and sponsors <<http://oceanobs09.net/sponsors/>>,

Ed Harrison and Detlef Stammer