

Ocean Surveying - Where to Start across the deep blue Ocean?

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SUMMARY

Over recent years there has been a growing awareness by the public that our oceans and seas have not been fully surveyed. IMO SOLAS chapter V regulations require maritime states to maintain a hydrographic service capability. This has traditionally been focused on the relative shallow waters of the coasts, the continental shelf and key shipping routes and has meant that the vast majority of our international waters and oceans have remained un-explored and are yet to be systematically surveyed to a reasonable degree of accuracy, resolution and coverage. Things just might finally be changing. GEBCO recently announced their commitment to survey the oceans by 2030 and in late 2014 a tripartite group of the European Union, Canada and the USA signed the “Galway statement” that aimed to increase cooperation in relation to the Atlantic including a Work Group to develop a plan to increase the areas that are systematically surveyed. The effort could act as a model for further future missions across the globe. The north Atlantic represents a challenge that equates to a high cost so a focus has to be the reduction in cost through the automation of data collection and processing and it’s distribution to the widest group of stakeholders possible. Can these challenges be met?

This presentation provides a short perspective on the Atlantic mapping initiative. It also attempts to offer some insight to possible new technologies and developments that could impact on the oceans being surveyed.