



**AUS**  
SEABED

**News**

## **AusSeabed Newsletter No. 19 October 2020**

Dear AusSeabed Community,

As many of you will know, school holidays took place across the country over September/October, bringing with it a welcome period of leave for many of us. I hope you all had a chance to take a break, in whatever capacity COVID-19 restrictions have allowed you to.

September was an exciting month for AusSeabed with the final instalment of our 2020 webinar series: *Bringing the seabed to you*. The series was a great success and I am grateful to everyone involved, whether that be through presentations, participation or support.

The AusSeabed Publication Schedule is live on the [AusSeabed website](#) as of last month, highlighting which surveys will be made accessible through the [Portal](#) up to a month in advance. The spreadsheet will be updated frequently; I encourage you all to look.

Finally, in governance news, the next Steering Committee and Executive Board meetings have been postponed until November and December. We will keep you posted.

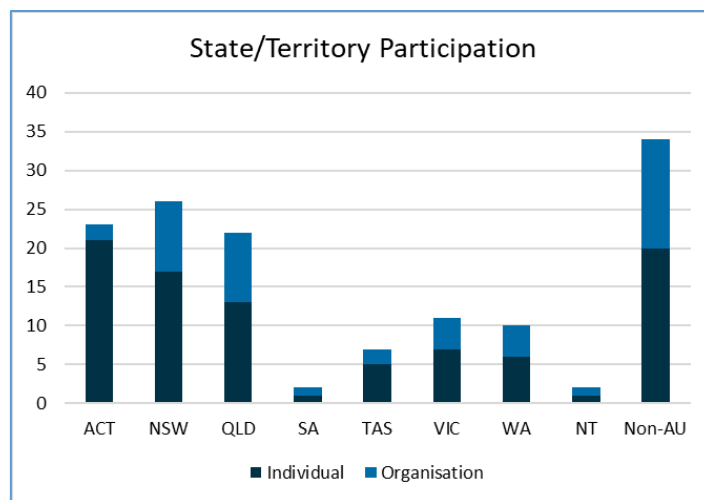
Best wishes,  
Kim Picard

## Webinar Wrap-Ups

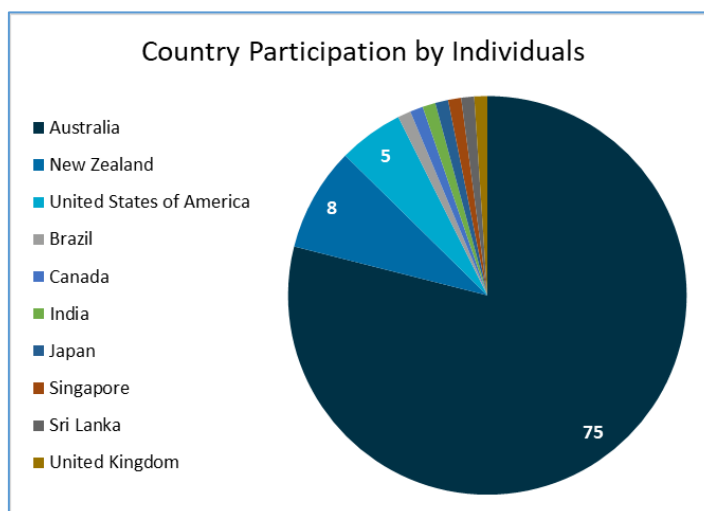
### September

The final webinar of our four part series focussed on the applications of seabed mapping across sectors. Congratulations is extended to all those involved as well as thanks to everyone that attended. Overall, we had:

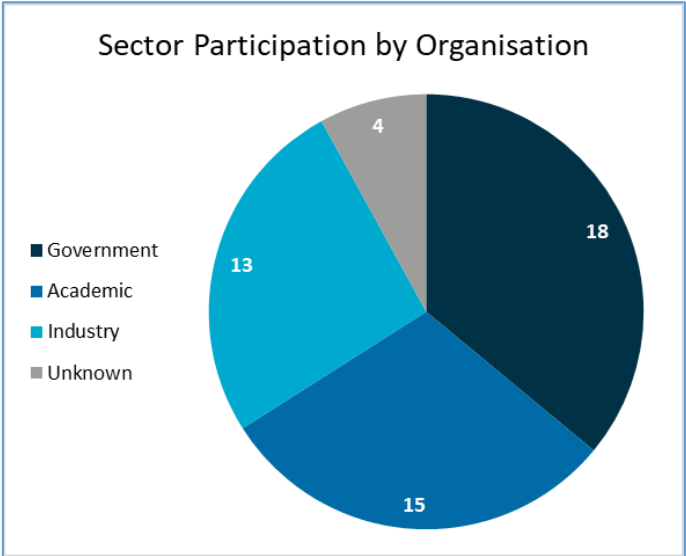
- 189 registrants, 95 participating



- 25 registrant countries, 10 participating

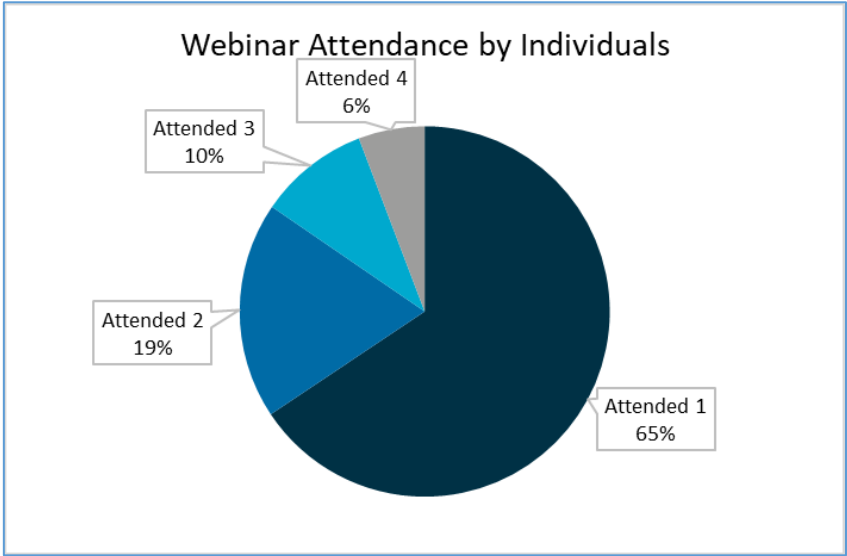


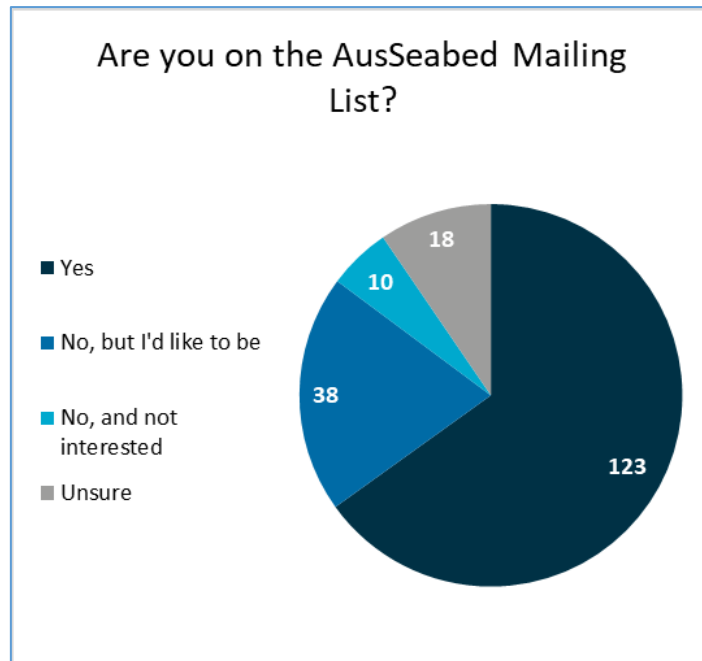
- 103 registrant organisations, 46 participating



**Series**

September brought the last of the AusSeabed Webinar Series: *Bringing the seabed to you* instalments. Overall, the series saw a total audience of 260 attendees representing 117 different organisations from 20 different countries. The webinars strengthened domestic and international networks featuring talks across private industry, academia, and government sectors from Australia, NZ and the USA.





We look forward to building on this success with future events.

Missed one of the events? We are currently working towards having all materials publicly accessible through the [AusSeabed Website](#).

### **Publication Schedule**

The AusSeabed Publication Schedule is now live on the [AusSeabed website](#). The schedule offers a list of seabed mapping surveys that are intended for publication on the [AusSeabed Marine Data Portal](#). Currently, this process is a collaboration between Geoscience Australia and CSIRO, but is intended to expand in future with more AusSeabed data collaborators.

### **Arafura Survey**

In November 2020, a Marine Biodiversity Hub team will embark on a two-week voyage to survey seafloor habitats and biodiversity in shelf waters of the Arafura Marine Park, North Marine Parks Network. The survey will be undertaken on-board RV Solander as a collaborative project funded through the National Environmental Science Program (NESP) with researchers and technicians from Geoscience Australia and the Australian Institute of Marine Science.

Existing bathymetry data and video observations for the Arafura Sea region has documented the existence of reef habitat within a submarine canyon in the north of the park and a patch reef in the southern part of the park. These habitats are recognised as key conservation values of the park but they remain to be fully described and quantified from a biodiversity, habitat, and ecological perspective. Survey areas will be targeted for high-resolution, continuous coverage mapping of bathymetry and acoustic backscatter, collection of towed-video and BRUV imagery of epibenthic and demersal communities, and sediment grabs.

The survey will apply a set of standard operating protocols as set out in the [NESP Marine Biodiversity Hub Field Manuals](#) as the standard and consistent approach to survey-based inventory and monitoring. The data collected during this survey will contribute to ongoing monitoring within the North Marine Park network as part of the current 10-year management plan (2018-2028).

Check out the [Upcoming Survey Register](#) on the AusSeabed Marine Data Portal.

### **Standard Ocean Mapping Protocol (SOMP) Symposium**

Day one of the SOMP Symposium, run by the United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Interagency Working Group (Ocean and Coastal Mapping), took place on the 7<sup>th</sup> October, from 2am AEST. Of the 14 speakers, AusSeabed Steering Committee Secretary, Aero Leplastrier, was the only international panellist, delivering a presentation on the [Australian Multibeam Guidelines](#), published in July this year. Aero's presentation introduced the Guidelines and how they were developed collaboratively, in consultation with the community. The Guidelines offer a useful resource to the United States as they begin development of their own Standard Ocean Mapping Protocols.

### **New Falkor Survey**

Schmidt Ocean Institute recently offered up to 47 additional mapping days on the Falkor. Under the leadership of Dr Rob Beaman, this includes use of the ROV SuBastian until October 30<sup>th</sup>. The trip is planned to involve a hybrid science team (on board and virtual) and will see three voyage legs starting in Brisbane, Cairns and Cape York. There will be opportunity to survey the 'Swain slide', a large underwater landslide

discovered in 2017, attempt dives at key locations and sample along the Great Barrier Reef.

Check out the [Upcoming Survey Register](#) on the [AusSeabed Marine Data Portal](#).

### **Two-part seabed geomorphology classification scheme (v.2)**

We are pleased to announce the release of “[Two-part seabed geomorphology classification scheme \(v.2\); Part 1: morphology features glossary](#)”. This report is the result of an ongoing collaboration between representatives from Geoscience Australia, and the three largest seabed mapping programmes in Europe: MAREANO (Norway), INFOMAR (Ireland) and MAREMAP (UK).

This revised scheme (Dove et al., 2020) modifies and extends the Dove et al. (2016) two-part approach, and provides a list of seabed morphology feature terms and definitions that are primarily drawn from the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) guide for undersea feature names. The IHO terms have been modified and augmented with additional features to ensure the final catalogue and glossary encompasses the full diversity of morphologies observed at the seabed. In addition, the report provides sketches of typical morphologies for each feature type, and an easy lookup feature comparison figure.

Part 2 of the scheme is forthcoming, and will provide a robust framework for classifying these seabed Morphology features (Part 1) into more interpretative Geomorphic (Part 2) categories to assist in the creation of more consistent seabed maps.

### **Upcoming Events**

Australian Marine Sciences Association (AMSA) 2021

- Monday 2 November 2020: Early Bird Registration Closes (2020 Registration Fees)
- Thursday 25 February 2021: Early Bird Registration Closes (2021 Registration Fees)
- Friday 26 February 2021: Standard Registration Opens
- Monday 21 June 2021: Online Registration Closes

- Sunday, 27 June 2021: AMSA Conference 2021 Opens
- Friday, 2 July 2021: AMSA Conference 2021 Closes

[Click here](#) for more information.

Global Oceans 2020: Singapore – U.S. Gulf Coast

5<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> October

On-Demand

[Click here](#) for more information.

Offshore Energy Exhibition & Conference

27<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> October

Virtual (Amsterdam, Netherlands)

[Click here](#) for more information.

International Conference on Biology and Geology of Coral Reefs

3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> December

Sydney, Australia

[Click here](#) for more information.

5<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Marine Biodiversity

13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> December

Virtual (Auckland, New Zealand)

[Click here](#) for more information.