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Letter from the Chair

It was a big week in Wollongong during June with the AusSeabed Steering Committee meeting face to face over two days at the Australian Hydrographic Office.

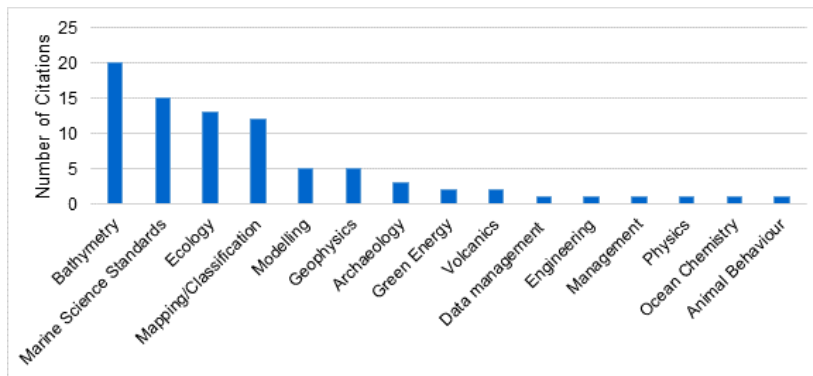
This was followed by the AusSeabed National Survey Plan workshop and culminated with World Hydrography Day on the Friday.

Shout out to Dr Justy Siwabessy, Neal Evans, Quynh Pham and Dr Alysha Johnson for their Australasian Hydrographic Society award wins!

In June, Alysha Johnson provided a citation search to the Committee highlighting the academic impact of AusSeabed since 2018. 83 citations were identified and the subject matter stretched across a number of fields as represented in the graph below.



Richard
Cullen, Chair
of the
AusSeabed
Steering
Committee



It's great to see that AusSeabed is being used widely and the Committee are looking for more on how, where and why it's being applied. To capture this information we have created the [AusSeabed Use Cases/Good News form](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=OmFbZEymUEKXX19peH0CjUO0pYglhdIBnq5JAEvUPzZUOVowMFILV0xPNFI4ME5HWFJRWjhMS1BLSi4u) (<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=OmFbZEymUEKXX19peH0CjUO0pYglhdIBnq5JAEvUPzZUOVowMFILV0xPNFI4ME5HWFJRWjhMS1BLSi4u>). Please consider submitting your use case or story of how AusSeabed has impacted your work!

Recent Showcases dealing with AI received great attendance and feedback. While it seems that everyone is dabbling in AI for conducting processing to analysis (even writing papers...) the Committee have decided to wait just a little longer before committing to an AI working group providing guidelines on its use in the spatial sciences.

As AI use matures and experience provides knowledge on the good and the bad, there will be a time in the next year or so that the AusSeabed community will be invited to participate in providing AI guidance to the AusSeabed and greater spatial science user base.

Will you be able to help at this point? We hope so.

In the meantime, welcome to the rest of the AusSeabed Newsletter.

Australasian Hydrographic Society Award winners

A massive congratulations to Justy Siwabessy, Neal Evans, Quynh Pham and Alysha Johnson for their well deserved Australasian Hydrographic Society award wins!

Justy received the Career Achievement – Hydrography award for his over 25 years of leadership in marine acoustic science. His expertise, dedication and curiosity have been highly valued and sought after in the Australian and international marine communities, including as a teacher and mentor.

Neal and Quynh received the Award of Merit - Information Management Achievement by a Group for their years of exceptional stewardship and operational management of Australian seabed data. Their nomination highlighted the generous ways that Neal and Quynh have supported community members to manage their data and share it with the broader community.

Alysha received the Award of Merit – Young Hydrographer of the Year: Achievement in Support for her excellent work as the Early Career Ocean Professional on the AusSeabed Steering Committee, notably in successfully leading the effort to obtain Ocean Best Practice Systems endorsement of the AusSeabed Community Guidelines and her encouragement of other early career professionals.



Neal Evans (left) with Justy Siwabessy and the World Hydrography Day symposium.

Alysha Johnson (right) with Meg Catley, winner of the Education award.

World Hydrography Day

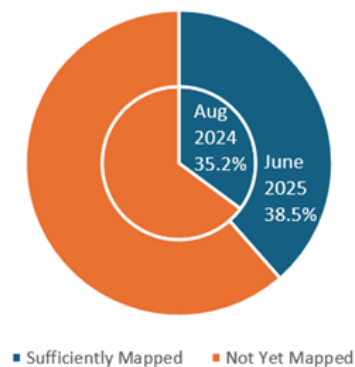
AusSeabed was well represented at the World Hydrography Day symposium, with many community members presenting on their work, from new technologies to major survey efforts, survey coordination, and experiments with using AI to process bathymetry data.

For AusSeabed as a whole, Pip Bricher, director of National Seabed Mapping at Geoscience Australia, presented on the progress AusSeabed has made in the past year.

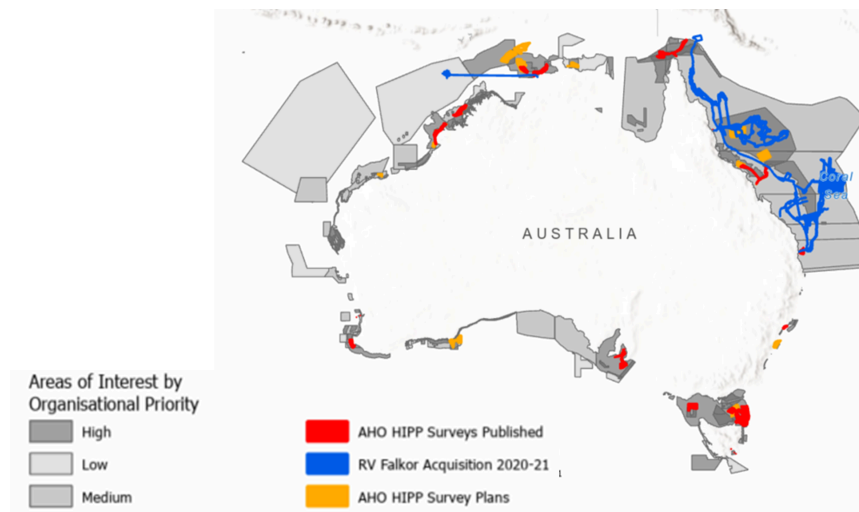
Highlights include an update to Australia's process in mapping our seabed to a resolution suitable for ocean management. As of June 2025, 38.5% of Australia's seabed has been mapped to 30m resolution in shallow waters, or 100m resolution in deep waters.

AusSeabed's Survey Coordination Tool (SCT) is increasingly helping survey agencies to focus on the most valuable areas. New analysis shows that the HydroScheme Industry Partnership Program (HIPP) has so far published data covering 48,000 km² of shallow waters, representing 5% of the high priority areas identified through the SCT. In deeper waters, the RV Falkor, in 2020, surveyed 130,000km², including 13% of the high priority areas. A reminder that you can submit your Areas of Interest, HIPP requests, and survey plans at any time through the SCT (<https://coordination.ausseabed.gov.au/login>).

Sufficiently Mapped Progress



Progress in mapping Australia's seabed, based on the coverage layer in the AusSeabed marine data portal (Geoscience Australia).



Major survey programs in Australia are using the AusSeabed Survey Coordination Tool to target their survey work for maximum impact.



Justy Siwabessy (Geoscience Australia) presenting on preliminary experiments into the use of AI to clean bathymetry data.



National Seabed Mapping Plan workshop and next steps

In June, AusSeabed and Geoscience Australia hosted a National Seabed Mapping Plan workshop. Information is needed to create the Plan.

Participants discussed the following prompts:

Q1. What does good look like for an NSMP? (i.e. what should Australia be planning to achieve?) for choosing a community goal?

Q2. Once we have an overall goal, what are the topics that an NSMP needs to address?

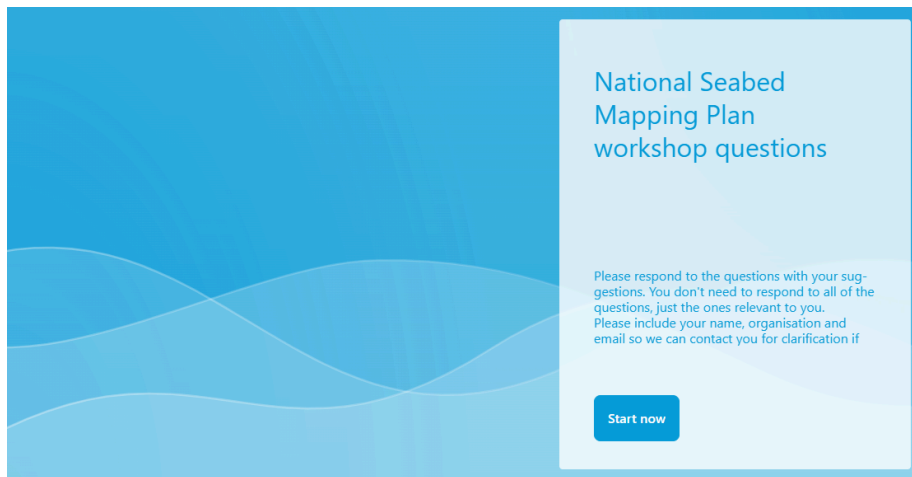
Q3. Who do we need to consult and how do we do it? How do we resolve differing opinions in the community?

Q4. When seeking funding what information would support you?

Q5. What are the risks we need to be aware of when putting this together? How do we resolve the community?

The National Seabed Mapping team at GA are working through the day's contributions and will find common themes for further exploration with the community.

If you were unable to attend the workshop and would like to have your thoughts and suggestions in planning, please use [this form](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=OmFbZEymUEKXX19peH0CjUOQpYglhdIBnq5JAEvUPzzUODdVM00xRUJTN0JHN0dGUkp) (<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=OmFbZEymUEKXX19peH0CjUOQpYglhdIBnq5JAEvUPzzUODdVM00xRUJTN0JHN0dGUkp>)



National Seabed Mapping Plan workshop questions

Please respond to the questions with your suggestions. You don't need to respond to all of the questions, just the ones relevant to you. Please include your name, organisation and email so we can contact you for clarification if

[Start now](#)

(<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=OmFbZEymUEKXX19peH0CjUO0pYgIhdiBnq5JAEvUPzZUODdVM00xRUJTN0JHN0dGUkpQQ0JXMVVKQS4u>).

AusSeabed contributes to the Ocean Decade Alliance's Seabed Mapping Initiative



The Ocean Decade Alliance met earlier this year at the UN Oceans Conference in Nice, France and issued a Call to Action to support the Decade's Seabed Mapping Initiative.

The Australian Government registered AusSeabed as the nation's commitment to the Decade's Seabed Mapping Initiative. This provides global recognition of the value of AusSeabed's work.



What new marine research capability do you require to meet your needs?

The **Marine National Facility (MNF)** (<https://www.csiro.au/en/about/facilities-collections/MNF>) is Australia's dedicated ocean research capability, funded by the Australian Government and operated by CSIRO, Australia's national science agency, on behalf of the nation.

The MNF includes:

- the 94-metre ocean-class research vessel (RV) Investigator
- a suite of advanced scientific instrumentation and equipment
- a publicly available collection of 40+ years of marine data
- world-leading expertise in vessel and voyage management, and technology development.

CSIRO is seeking your input! (<https://www.csiro.au/en/about/facilities-collections/mnf/research-vessel-equipment-data/tiag/capability-survey>)

CSIRO values your feedback. We invite ship users and end users of our research to participate in this survey about your marine research capability needs.

The **survey** (<https://www.csiro.au/en/about/facilities-collections/mnf/research-vessel-equipment-data/tiag/capability-survey>) consists of three sections:

- the capability,
- alignment with national benefit and priority research
- feasibility and risk.

The information gathered through this survey will help inform the development of a Capability Enhancement Plan for the MNF to ensure we continue to support researcher and national priority research needs now and into the future.

This survey will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

Capability proposals can be made at any time and submissions will be compiled at regular intervals for review by the Technology and Innovation Advisory Group.

Multibeam Course 87, Hobart, Tasmania



Lecture during Multibeam Course 85 in Finland

Multibeam sonar training course is coming back Australia for the first time since 2018. Co-hosted by CSIRO and Acoustic Imaging, the course will be run at the Marine Laboratories in Hobart Tasmania.

This six-day 36-lecture course is designed to provide a theoretical and practical background in marine swath survey technology and techniques for hydrographic surveys, continental shelf boundary delimitation, offshore engineering, harbour dredging, fisheries habitat, route survey and scientific research. The Multibeam Sonar training course has, since 1994, been presented 85 times all over the world, to thousands of hydrographers, ocean mappers, and marine scientists.

You can find all the details via the website <https://mbcourse.com/event/mbc87-hobart-australia/> (<https://mbcourse.com/event/mbc87-hobart-australia/>).

IBSC Recognised S-5B Hydrographic Surveyor and S- 8B Nautical Cartographer Program 2025 Enrolments.



Enrolments are now open for the IIC Technologies 2025-26 IBSC-recognised S-5B Hydrographic Surveying and S-8B Marine Geospatial Programs.,

The S-5B Hydrographic Surveying Program will start in Aug 2025. This course comprises 15 weeks of online self-paced and instructor led Theory that can be completed over a 31-week period, followed by a 7-week practical in Mount Maunganui, New Zealand commencing May 2026. We also anticipate practical deliveries in Europe if student numbers allow. The delivery of this program is designed to allow maximum flexibility for students and employers, reduced costs and minimum time away from your home or workplace. We are pleased to announce that the practical in Mount Maunganui will be supported by Discovery Marine Limited, Ocean Infinity, Seismic Asia Pacific, Acoustic Imaging and QPS.

The S-8B Marine Geospatial (Nautical Cartography) program will be delivered as a 22-week Global Delivery commencing Sep 2025. Students will have a 30-week period to complete the remote learning. This is then followed by a 4-week instructor supported practical. This program provides students with the necessary theoretical and practical knowledge and skills required to undertake Nautical Chart production.

For more information please get in touch at takhoulaw@iictechnologies.com (<mailto:takhoulaw@iictechnologies.com>) or hydrographicssurveyor@iicacademy.com (<mailto:hydrographicssurveyor@iicacademy.com>).

Further details on the programs can also be found at: <http://www.iicacademy.com/> (<https://www.iicacademy.com/>).

Publications

No data has been published since the list in the last newsletter, however there are a number of datasets in the pipeline about to be published.

A separate publications list will be sent to the community once these are live.

AusSeabed Working Group updates

LiDAR

The LiDAR Working Group needs your help. Since the departure of the LiDAR Working Group Chair, Daniel Kruimel, to the US, Iain Parnum has provided leadership.

In July 2025, we identified that the Intergovernmental Committee on Surveying and Mapping (ICSM) are reviewing the Australian Airborne LiDAR Specification, so we have decided to pause work until version 2 of the ICSM specification is published.

This will allow time to review version 2, align terminology and assess common airborne LiDAR practices. We will also consider collaborating with the ICSM to produce one publication to ensure common reference material.

While the guidelines are paused, the review and discussions with the ICSM will need advocates. If you feel you are able to assist our overworked members, please email ausseabed@ga.gov.au (<mailto:ausseabed@ga.gov.au>).

QAX

The QAX WG is still paused while the approach to market for QAX technical support is ongoing..

Indigenous Engagement

The Indigenous Engagement Working Group ran a small workshop in June and discussed sea country partnerships, data collection and use case collection to feed into AusSeabed community guidance.

To join an AusSeabed working group please email ausseabed@ga.gov.au (<mailto:ausseabed@ga.gov.au?subject=AusSeabed%20Working%20Group>)

Reading Corner

