



**“Cascading the GEBCO Seabed 2030 project towards a Regional Collaboration and Coordination Approach to build a Bathymetric Map for the WIO Region”
Special Session
Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) 11th Symposium,
Mauritius**

Objectives:

- Understand the Status of Bathymetry Mapping in the WIO Region
- Identify gaps and needs in the WIO region in terms of bathymetric data
- Organize the community of stakeholders - both potential data contributors and data consumers
- Advancing the status of knowledge of the seafloor bathymetry in the Western Indian Ocean region
- Identify starting point / strategies for WIO scientific communities to contribute to the Seabed 2030 Project
- Define outreach objectives to raise awareness of Seabed 2030 and the importance of ocean mapping in WIO region

Background:

Detailed seabed maps provide important observational information about the shape of the seafloor, and are important for ocean modeling, geohazard assessment, biodiversity and habitat studies, establishment of marine protected areas and many other multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary topics. Like most of the global ocean, the Indian Ocean is poorly surveyed, and information about existing bathymetric data is scarce. The session organized here aims to identify mechanisms for collaboration to increase the bathymetry coverage of the Indian Ocean Seafloor.

Seabed 2030 is a collaborative project between The Nippon Foundation and GEBCO to inspire the complete mapping of the world’s ocean by 2030 and to compile all bathymetric data into the freely-available GEBCO bathymetric map. It is a global call to action for ocean mappers, hydrographers, scientists, industry, state departments and the public to work together to assemble existing bathymetric data and to coordinate new mapping expeditions to ‘map the gaps’ in our knowledge of the seafloor. The resulting GEBCO products will benefit researchers, governments, and the public as governments promote their own blue economies, manage resources, and confront coastal environmental issues. The Nippon



Foundation / GEBCO Training Program in Ocean Mapping at the University of New Hampshire has already made significant investment in training a new generation of ocean scientists and hydrographers from all over the world, including within the WIO Region. This session is being organized by Alumni of the Training Program who wish to spur collaborations and exchange within the scientific community in the Indian Ocean and promote the collection of new bathymetry data.

Expected outputs:

The session will provide an overview of the current status of bathymetry mapping in the WIO and the greater Indian Ocean, define the gaps, promote and assess community interests and needs for creating seafloor maps in the region, foster collaboration and identify potential sources of bathymetric data (both existing and not yet acquired) within the Indian Ocean.

- Identify a proposed structure and communication mechanisms to ensure inclusion and participation of all stakeholders that are interested in the project
- Identify needs and opportunities for the Region in terms of data, skills and collaboration towards achievement of Seabed 2030 project
- Identify leading organizations and individuals in the area to initiate a regional network of collaborators for Seabed 2030

Targeted audience:

The session is open for participation by all interested attendees of the WIOMSA Symposium. It is targeted specifically at professionals involved in coastal surveys and coastal planning and management as well as specialist and researchers that are involved in habitat mapping, physical oceanography and offshore management and exploration.

Workshop design:

The workshop will provide an introduction to the session's objectives and Seabed 2030. Exchange of ideas and experiences will help to identify the strategy for efficient future collaborations.

A report of the main decisions and results will be disseminated to the attendees.



- AGENDA -

Friday July 5th, 2019 half day
Special Session

Start time: 14.00pm

TOPICS:

- ❖ **Introduction to the session's objectives**
- ❖ **Overview of GEBCO, NF/GEBCO Training Program and Seabed 2030 Project**
- ❖ **Experience sharing from the Alumni**, building skills to open opportunities to improve results in ocean resource management,
- ❖ **Seabed 2030 Atlantic/Indian Ocean Regional Center**: Discover, decode, share the unrevealed potential of seafloor mapping for the sustainable management of the ocean resource.
- ❖ **Identifying gaps and needs in the WIO Region**
 - Mapping the seafloor in Indian Ocean from the GEBCO perspective
 - Mapping the seafloor in Indian Ocean from the WIO Region community perspective
 - What type of data exists in the region?
 - What tools and software are needed to facilitate data processing and synthesis?
 - Which sectors are involved in their collection, archiving?
 - How can the community get involved? What are their needs? What are the limitations?
 - How can communities share information about existing data?
 - What would facilitate the sharing of data?

Coffee Break: 16.00pm - 16.30-pm

TOPIC:

- ❖ **Establishing the Regional Coordination Network**
 - What needs exist in the region with respect to bathymetry data?
 - How can data access/sharing be encouraged and/or facilitated?
 - What existing organization/institution in the WIO region can coordinate with the Seabed 2030 Atlantic/Indian Regional Center at Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory/Columbia University?
 - What to expect as a member of a Regional Coordination Network?
 - What kind of support would this network require - logistics, communication, etc.
- ❖ **Open questions**

TOPIC:

- ❖ **Sum up of discussions and proposed action items**

Wrap up: 18.00 pm