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European Operational Oceanography for the Ocean we want – addressing the UN Ocean Decade Challenges

Book of Abstracts

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OCEAN LITERACY and EU blue schools network as tools for integration of OCEAN ISSUES into schools curricula

Authors

Vera Noon[1], Athanasios Mogias[2], Panayota Koulouri[3], Olga Mashkina[1], Marion Besancon[4], camille schmidt[5], Carolyn Scheurle[6], Franco Borgogno[7], Mark Mifsud[8], Johann Galdies[9], Francesca Alvisi[10] and Evy Copejans[11]

1 ACTeon environment research & consultancy, France
2 DUTH, Department of Primary Education, Democritus University of Thrace, Greece
3 Institute of Marine Biology, Biotechnology & Aquaculture, Hellenic Centre for Marine Research, Greece
4 Office français de la biodiversité, france
5 Parc national des Calanques, France
6 Institut de la Mer de Villefranche, IMEV Sorbonne Université – CNRS, France
7 European Research Institute, Italy
8 Oceanography Malta Research Group, Department of Geosciences, Faculty of Science, University of Malta, Malta
9 Centre for Environmental Education & Research, Faculty of Education, University of Malta, Malta
10 CNR-ISMAR, Institute of Marine Sciences, National Research Council, Italy
11 European Marine Science Educators Association, Belgium

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Ocean literacy, eu blue schools network, UN sustainable development goals

Abstract

Ocean of changes (OoCH) is an ongoing project, coordinated by the CORE (Climate and Originated in the USA, ocean literacy has now become a wide spread concept in Europe thanks to several EU funded projects, initiatives and the EU4Ocean Coalition. One of its communities – Network of EU Blue Schools is actively working on bringing the ocean into the classroom curriculum by developing blue projects with pupils and local communities. To test this approach in the Mediterranean Sea region we have developed a three-year project funded by Erasmus+ (2020-2023) entitled “Supporting the development of socially-inclusive Blue Challenges in schools in the Mediterranean Sea basin”. Its main objective is

to support the development of educational activities related to the sea in schools in the Mediterranean basin, by testing and evaluating different tools integrating marine themes into the curricula. The project brings together scientists, schools, teachers and pupils from four Mediterranean countries: France, Greece, Italy and Malta.

Throughout the project, pilot schools developed and implemented 18 blue projects (following the requirements of the Network of EU Blue Schools) and participated in several trainings organised by partners. To analyse the impact and effectiveness of this approach, the project also focused on monitoring and evaluation of these pilot projects (including a framework, a web-based interactive platform, teachers'/pupils' surveys). This study presents the results of the surveys with teachers (from 12 primary and 10 secondary schools of 4 countries), which allowed to evaluate the performance of the blue projects developed and implemented in different subjects of the schools' curricula (e.g. geography, life sciences, mathematics etc.), while producing different outputs (e.g. campaigns, tools, art work, posters, videos etc.). One method of evaluation was a 5-points Likert scale to investigate: **(a)** to what extend did the blue challenge achieve the principles of the project (e.g., co-building, inclusivity, interactivity, sustainability), **(b)** the processes determined (e.g., election of ambassadors and reporters, multidisciplinary approach, monitoring), **(c)** the achievements that took place (e.g. collaboration with other teachers, stakeholders), **(d)** the impact on the pupils' behaviour, attitudes, etc. **(e)** the challenges faced (e.g., Covid-19 limitations, time and bureaucracy constraints, financial), **(f)** the elements that worked well (e.g. originality).

In addition, approximately 200 pupils (~9-19 years old) of both primary and secondary schools from all countries (~including 14, mostly coastal, cities) participated in another survey in order to evaluate the performance of the blue challenges and BlueS_Med project in general from their point of view. Initially, they indicated their favourite school subject (e.g., sports, mathematics, arts), sources of information about nature and the marine environment (e.g. teachers, internet, TV) as well as the subject that has given them most of the information on the sea (e.g. biology). They have also made statements concerning attitudes, awareness, behaviour, emotions, activism.

This study also highlights the results from the national and Mediterranean multiplier events, which brings together key stakeholders from the marine sectors and educational ecosystems to share best experiences and results, get inspiration and to develop a roadmap for Blue Schools to integrate ocean education in the curriculum in the Mediterranean Sea region.

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