



## AusSeabed Newsletter No. 6

August 2019

July was an extremely busy month for AusSeabed, including the biannual Steering Committee meeting, the Seabed Mapping symposium at AMSA19, and the annual AusSeabed workshop and AGM. It was wonderful to see so many users of seabed mapping data come together for such productive and informative meetings, showing the strength of the AusSeabed community.

### Updates and other news

#### *Program themes*

##### *Data Hub*

Following the 'Effective Seabed Mapping Workflow' workshop held at Geoscience Australia in June (workshop notes available [here](#)), Tyanne Faulkes (NOAA), Giuseppe Masetti (Centre for Coastal and Ocean Mapping; CCOM), and staff from GA and FrontierSI spent a productive three weeks commencing the co-development of a multibeam QA/QC open tool and workflow. These products are designed for use by any seabed mapping community, including AusSeabed and NOAA. Kim Picard joined Giuseppe in presenting the initial results from this work at AMSA 2019 conference and also the CCOM annual site review in New Hampshire, where representatives from NOAA, CCOM, Canadian Hydrographic Office, US Corp of Engineers, and the US National Geospatial Agency were present.

##### *Outreach, Education, and Training (OET)*

We would like to extend our thanks to all contributors to the OET program theme over the past year, including some recent new recruits. The team now comprises: Ralph Talbot-Smith (program theme leader, Department of Transport WA (DoT WA)), Kim Picard (GA), Georgy Falster (GA), Tim Ingleton (NSW OEH), Stuart Edwards (CSIRO), James Daniell (JCU), Hugh Parker (Fugro), Neil Hewitt (Precision Hydro), and David Donohue & Liz Johnstone (iXBlue). Over the coming weeks, this team will work together to develop a plan and schedule for future work.

Much of the work of the past month related to the **Australian Marine Sciences Association conference (AMSA19) – Seabed Mapping Symposium and annual AusSeabed workshop and AGM**. You can find a summary of these events in the 'Meeting Reports' section below.

## Hydrographic Surveys – Graduate program

AusSeabed recently created a listing of graduate surveyors, which contains a number of surveying and upcoming graduates who have completed two weeks of work experience as hydrographic surveyors with DoT WA. This list has already yielded positive results at AMSA19 with one graduate snapped up to become a hydrographic surveyor, and many requests for the list of candidates.

## Outreach champions

The OET team set up ‘outreach champions’ in each state and territory who will organise at least one presentation each to academia, industry, and government prior to AMSA 2020. A comprehensive list of these presentations is currently being compiled. Please contact Ralph ([ralph.talbot-smith@transport.wa.gov.au](mailto:ralph.talbot-smith@transport.wa.gov.au)) if you would like to assist or have any contacts who may be interested.

## Tools, Standards, and Guidelines (TSG)

The TSG working group have continued work on the survey planning tool. The tool is designed to 1) share upcoming surveys through the AusSeabed website, 2) plan specifications for surveys based on cumulative knowledge and recommendations, and 3) submit survey requests to the Hydroscheme Industry Partnership Program (HIPP) meeting the requirements of the HIPP Review Panel requirements. A beta release of the survey planning tool was tested by end users at the annual AusSeabed Workshop with proposed changes being implemented now prior to public release next month.

The [national bathymetry priorities map](#) is also currently being updated, however, priorities for the state of QLD are still outstanding.

## ESRI Story Map – James Cook and Cape York

A slightly different use of modern seabed data: here is a fascinating [ESRI Story Map](#) highlighting the skill of Australia’s earliest cartographers. In 1770—during James Cook’s exploration of Australia’s east coast—the HMS *Endeavour* ran aground on a coral reef offshore of southern Cape York. Lieutenant Cook called this reef ‘The Labyrinth’, but today it is known as the Great Barrier Reef.

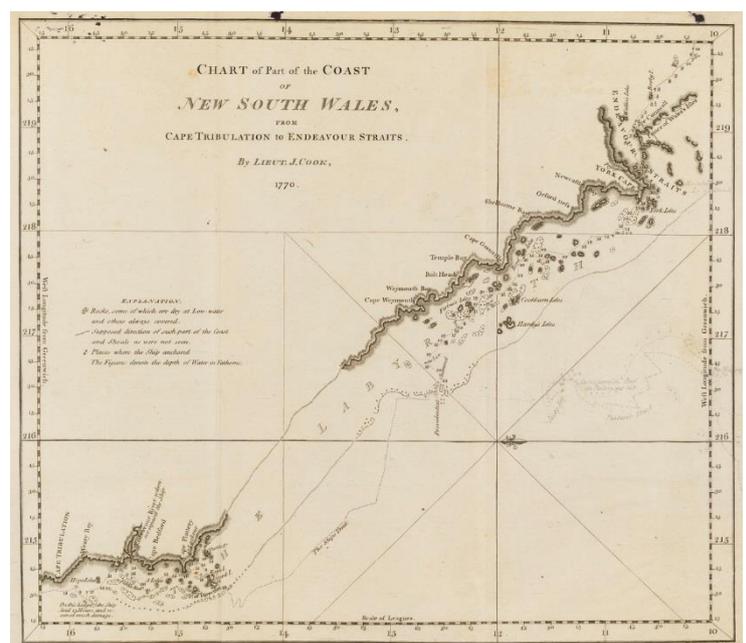


Image credit: State Library of New South Wales

Robin Beaman has georeferenced James Cook's 'Chart of Part of the Coast of New South Wales', and compared it with the 3D depth model for the same area. The close match is remarkable, especially considering that the coast was charted under sail! See Rob's blog post [here](#).

## Meeting reports

### *AusSeabed Steering Committee Meeting (10 July 2019)*

The recent AusSeabed Steering Committee meeting was hosted by the DoT WA. All members of the committee were either present or represented through proxies. Outcomes of the meeting included a few changes to the Steering Committee terms of reference, endorsement of a business case to establish an executive board for AusSeabed, review of the Strategic Plan 2019-30 and 2019/20 annual report, and the development of the 2019/20 work plan. All items discussed at the meeting were presented for comments during the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Outcomes of both meetings will be made available shortly on the AusSeabed website

### *AMSA Seabed Mapping Symposium (11 July, 2019)*

Members of AusSeabed convened the Seabed Mapping Symposium during AMSA 2019, with 15 oral papers presented from across the sectors. These talks covered topics from habitat mapping to high-precision hydrography for ports, and mapping for alternative energy. Sixty to eighty people attended the symposium.



*Presenters at the AMSA Seabed Mapping Symposium*

### *AusSeabed workshop and AGM (12 July 2019)*

On July 12, DoT WA and the WA Port Authority in Fremantle hosted the annual AusSeabed workshop, which was attended by over 40 participants, including many first time participants (e.g. port officers, industry consultants and WA Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions) in the AusSeabed initiative. We would like to extend a big thank you to our hosts—

and especially Jay Illingworth—for providing the facilities and support to make the workshop a success.



*Participants in the annual AusSeabed workshop*

The workshop started with the AusSeabed Annual General Meeting (AGM), which included endorsement of the AusSeabed Strategic Plan for 2019-2030, presentation of the first annual report, and the formation of an executive board led by GA that will initially be composed of Commonwealth Agencies (GA, AHO, CSIRO, AAD and AIMS). The executive board will both ensure financial support and maintain endurance of the AusSeabed program.

The AGM was followed by hands-on trials of the AusSeabed portal and the planning and request tool, as well as a presentation on crowd-sourced bathymetry from Dr Robin Beaman (JCU), and a HIPP update by LCDR Wendy Stewart (AHO). The hands on activities led to recommendations that are now being incorporated in next year work plan and the presentations have now been kindly made available on the AusSeabed [Presentations & Publications](#) page.

The workshop finished with a review of the work plan for 2019/20, which will be finalised in August 2019. Meeting minutes and final documents will be published on the [AusSeabed website](#) by September.

## Upcoming meetings

### ***OceanObs'19—An Ocean of Opportunity (Honolulu, Hawaii)***

The [OceanObs'19 Decadal meeting](#) will take place **16-20 September 2019** in Honolulu, Hawaii, where members of the global seabed mapping community will join forces with experts from the OceanObs community and other marine environmental disciplines. Seabed mapping experts attending the meeting aim to underscore the importance of bathymetry as a baseline dataset, and to show the key role pan-disciplinary collaboration plays in furthering understanding of Earth system processes.

The seabed mapping community—including several members of the AusSeabed community and international players—are working together to maximise the impact and outcomes of the seabed mapping community during the conference. This includes participation to break-out sessions, booth set up for GEBCO-Nippon Foundation Seabed 2030 project also highlighting national and regional contacts, poster sessions, etc. If interested (or indeed keen on a holiday in Hawaii), please [register](#) and/or have a look at the newly released [program](#). For more information contact Kim at [AusSeabed@ga.gov.au](mailto:AusSeabed@ga.gov.au).

### ***Forum for Operational Oceanography (Melbourne)***

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Forum for Operational Oceanography will be held on the **15-16 October**, at the **Pullman Albert Park, Melbourne**. The meeting will have the following two major themes:

- Opportunities for operational oceanography to drive the development of Australian marine industries
- Risks to Australian marine industries and the role of operational oceanography in helping to manage them

Abstract submission for FOO 2019 has already closed, but even if you did not submit an abstract it would be wonderful to have an AusSeabed presence at the meeting, given the importance of accurate and precise seabed information in oceanographic models. You can see the full program (with talks) [here](#), and the FOO 2019 website [here](#).

### ***GEBCO annual meeting and symposia (New Hampshire, 5-9 November)***

This meeting is a week of meetings that is open to all and includes meetings of the GEBCO Guiding Committee and sub-committees (SCRUM, TSCUM, and SCUFN). It also includes a symposium—‘Map the Gaps’—that will be held mid-week. Further information and registration details can be found [here](#).

### ***American Geophysical Union (AGU) Fall Meeting (San Francisco, 10-15 December)***

Abstract submissions for AGU 2019 have now closed. The seafloor mapping session ‘Beyond Hydrography: Seafloor Mapping as Critical Data for Understanding Our Oceans’ received 34 abstract submissions. These are now being reviewed, and assignment to poster or talk will be determined once the AGU organising committee provides the convener with the final ratio in early September. See website [here](#) for further information on the meeting.

## **Share your work with the AusSeabed community**

Finally, a reminder as always that anyone with an interest in AusSeabed can sign up to the newsletter mailing list on our [website](#), where you can also check out past issues. And please send any items for the next letter to [AusSeabedNews@ga.gov.au](mailto:AusSeabedNews@ga.gov.au).