

## **Deliverable D4.1** **(WP4/NA3 – Task 4.1)**

***Definition of a multifaceted scheme for Regional virtual fleet trans-national cooperation, including identification of pioneering groups***

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# Objectives

- to establish a general management framework for the implementation of a virtual fleet concept
- to identify Pioneering Groups of RRVs to execute, test and further improve the general management framework for trans-national RRV cooperation

Two important keystone documents:

- ESF Marine Board Position Paper 10 (*European Ocean Research Fleets – Towards a common strategy and enhanced use*) - 2007
- EUROFLEETS Deliverable D1.3 (*Report on perspectives for regional research vessels new investment and on framework for the co-funding and cooperation on new vessels*) - 2011



# Regional Research Vessels

- A Research Vessel (RV) could be defined as “regional”:
  - *Based on size of the vessel, number of science berths and scientific equipment/facilities on board*
  - *Based on main area of activity (somewhat limited)*
  - *Based on distance and consequent costs of long transit times*
- 1/3 of the European research fleet and operated by 15 European Countries
- 2/3 of these vessels (65%) are more than 20 years old and there are currently no RRVs ageing less than 5 years
- Current and future plans for building new RRVs and refitting older ones amount to 19 vessels



# Joint fleet of research vessels

- A joint fleet of RVs could be achieved in two different ways:
  - Through **co-funding of vessels**
  - Through a “**virtual fleet**”
    - *National or trans-national access to naval facilities financed by an “authority” which organises the scientific evaluation and pays the operators*
    - *National or trans-national technical cooperation between fleet operators, as in OFEG barter system (evaluation remains on a national level)*
    - *Joint projects/programmes, where scientific and/or technological interests on a bilateral or multilateral basis are the driving forces*



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# Framework for a Regional virtual fleet transnational cooperation

- Exchange of information
- RV cruise planning tool/system
- Evaluation process for ship-time proposal
- Interoperability of equipment
- Embarked software
- Technical support
- Legal, governance, financial and logistical issues
- Grant systems



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# Exchange of information

- **Publication of information about available vessel- and equipment-time** is essential to foster potential synergies between scheduled plans at a regional level
- **European Virtual Infrastructure in Ocean Research – EVIOR:** an Integrated Information Portal built in the frame of the Networking Activity of EUROFLEETS
- **Recommendation:** to enhance exchange of information among Regional partners by using a centralised dedicated website in order to promote awareness of opportunities among users





# RV cruise planning tool/system

- **Common standards and harmonized procedures** for the management and planning of the cruises are pre-requisites
- **EUROFLEETS set of guidelines** addressing various aspects of the management procedures
- **EUROFLEETS inventory of systems** existing at European level - **cruise planning system from IMR (Norway)** chosen as most suitable to become a demonstrator for a generic cruise planning system
- **Recommendation:** to develop a common cruise scheduling system among Regional partners in order to develop appropriate common mechanisms to facilitate vessel access and equipment sharing



# Evaluation process for ship-time proposal

- EUROFLEETS was successful in accomplishing a **pan-European call and evaluation process for ship-time proposal**
- Essential pre-requisites to the success of this process:
  - *Evaluation procedure and evaluation criteria based upon the best experiences in Europe*
  - *A well defined proposal structure*
  - *A detailed Evaluation Summary Report*
  - *Separation of the procedure in two independent steps*
  - *Exact definition of the whole call and evaluation process well in advance of the whole procedure*
- **Recommendation:** to use the EUROFLEETS evaluation system as a procedure for future European Regional calls for ship-time in order to progress towards more unified European and/or international standards in the evaluation of proposals of ship-time



# Grant systems

- Investment and running costs mainly funded by national authorities & total number of days at sea funded by the EU FPs still low
- To develop an integrating framework among different scientific institutions, combining the assets of European programs with those of member states, for an effective seas and oceans strategy
- **Recommendation:** to set up a permanent European Trans National Access (TNA) system for RVs and LEXI, based on the experience from EUROFLEETS and EUROFLEETS2:
  - *A dedicated organization/agency with the task to manage the TNA calls should be established or these tasks could be executed by an existing institution*
  - *the TNA funding could come from EC common funds or through cash and/or in-kind contribution from the individual EU member states*



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# Proposals for Pioneering Groups

- Examination of shared replacement of RV “Belgica” (RBINS-MUMM) and RV “Le Suroit” (Ifremer)
- France (IFREMER) – Spain (CSIC or IEO) for the Bay of Bisquay
- Vessels from EU and non-EU countries (e.g. North Africa) in the Black Sea and Mediterranean region. **Who?**
  - *Italy: National Research Council (CNR) with RV “Urania”*
  - *Romania: National Institute of Marine Geology and Geo-ecology (GeoEcoMar) with RV “Mare Nigrum”*
  - **Others?**
- Super-integration experiment in the EUROFLEETS2 project could be supported by the Horizon 2020 (H2020) programme in the Mediterranean region to create a new way of sharing RVs in order to implement a long-term common international programme
- **Others?**



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**Thanks for your attention!**  
**Any comments?**