



PREP4BLUE

METHODS AND TOOLS FOR MISSION OCEAN & WATERS

Preparing the Research & Innovation Core for Mission Ocean, Seas & Waters

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Project	
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**BLUE
MISSION
BANOS**

Supporting the Mission
Ocean Lighthouse in the
Baltic and North Sea Basins

Disclaimer:

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Questions & Answers

Contents

1. What is Prep4blue?	4
2. related to contributions to the mission ocean & waters	4
2.1. What is the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters?	4
2.2. Which are the Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters objectives and targets?	4
2.3. How is the Mission structured?	5
2.4. What is in the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters for me?	5
2.5. How can I be involved in the OCEAN Mission? – Make a pledge	5
2.6. How can I contribute if I cannot make a pledge?	6
2.7. Where can I find support to make a pledge? –	6
2.8. Where can I find information on further projects of the Mission Ocean?	6
2.9. How can I keep myself informed of Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters activities?	6
3. related to public mobilization & engagement	7
3.1. What are the citizen engagement targets of Mission Ocean & Waters?	7
3.2. What are the methods for citizen engagement?	7
3.3. How should I prepare for citizen engagement?	8
3.4. How is citizen engagement implemented?	8
3.5. How do I monitor and evaluate citizen engagement?	8
3.6. What is the importance of citizen engagement in Mission Ocean and Waters?	8
3.7. What are the challenges in citizen engagement?	9
3.8. What are some examples of successful citizen engagement?	9
3.9. How can citizen engagement contribute to solving Mission Ocean and Waters related challenges?	9
3.10. How can research projects obtain funding for citizen engagement activities?	10
3.11. What should be included in a funding proposal for citizen engagement activities?	10
3.12. Are there any best practices for managing funds for citizen engagement activities?	10
3.13. What types of training are available for citizen engagement activities in Mission Ocean and Waters research projects?	11
3.14. How can I find training programs for citizen engagement?	11
3.15. What should I look for in a training program for citizen engagement?	11
3.16. How can training enhance the effectiveness of citizen engagement in Mission Ocean and Waters research projects?	12

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3.17. What training options are available for learning about citizen participation in Mission Ocean and Waters research projects? 12

3.18. Are the webinars in the PREP4BLUE Citizen Engagement Webinar Series available for viewing after they have taken place? 12

3.19. Is there a cost associated with accessing the webinars in the PREP4BLUE Citizen Engagement Webinar Series? 13

1. WHAT IS PREP4BLUE?

Funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe program, PREP4BLUE is a €4.9 million, three-year project that will set the foundations for co-creating and co-implementing the research and innovation required to achieve Mission Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030.

For more information please visit the [PREP4BLUE website](#).

2. RELATED TO CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MISSION OCEAN & WATERS

2.1. What is the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters?

With a 2030 target, the EU Mission "Restore our Ocean and Waters" aims to protect and restore the health of our ocean and waters through research and innovation, citizen engagement and blue investments. The Mission's new approach will address the ocean and waters as one and play a key role in achieving climate neutrality and restoring nature.

EU Missions are a novelty of the Horizon Europe research and innovation programme. They are a new way to bring concrete solutions to some of our greatest challenges. More information: <https://ec.europa.eu/mission-ocean>.

2.2. Which are the Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters objectives and targets?

- Protect and restore marine and freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity, in line with the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030
 - Protect a minimum of 30% of the EU's sea area and integrate ecological corridors, as part of a true Trans-European Nature Network.
 - Strictly protect at least 10% of the EU's sea area.
 - Restore at least 25,000 km of free-flowing rivers.
 - Contribute to relevant upcoming marine nature restoration targets, including degraded seabed habitats and coastal ecosystems.
- Prevent and eliminate pollution of our ocean, seas and waters, in line with the EU Action Plan Towards Zero Pollution for Air, Water and Soil
 - Reduce by at least 50% plastic litter at sea.
 - Reduce by at least 30% micro plastics released into the environment.
 - Reduce by at least 50% nutrient losses, the use and risk of chemical pesticides.
- Make the sustainable blue economy carbon-neutral and circular, in line with the proposed European Climate Law and the holistic vision enshrined in the Sustainable Blue Economy Strategy
 - Eliminate greenhouse gas emissions from maritime economic activities in the EU and sequester those emissions that cannot be avoided (net zero maritime emissions).
 - Develop zero-carbon and low-impact aquaculture, and promote circular, low-carbon multi-purpose use of marine and water space.

2.3. How is the Mission structured?



2.4. What is in the EU Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters for me?

The Mission will develop and demonstrate innovative technological, social, business and governance solutions. It will promote new forms of cooperation, allowing everyone to play an active role. The scope of the Mission goes far beyond research and innovation. It combines new forms of governance and cooperation and a new way of reaching out to citizens and getting them on board, including young people. EU countries, regions and a wide range of public and private sector stakeholders will also need to get involved, to help ensure we make real impact, together. Each of us can co-design, co-implement and co-monitor the Mission by participating in campaigns and other activities. You can find more information [here](#).

2.5. How can I be involved in the OCEAN Mission? – Make a pledge

Pledging an action to the Mission Charter is the vital first step that we as European citizens, researchers, investors, businesses, and public authorities must make if we are to mobilise resources and take collective action in support of the Mission's objectives.

Pledges to the Mission Charter can take many forms, whether your pledge supports R&I goals, offers access to knowledge or data, upscales and deploys novel solutions, provides education, or engages citizens to protect our aquatic ecosystems – **all actions are welcome!**

For inspiration on the types of activities which can be pledged to the charter, check out examples from [JPI Oceans](#) and [EUROMARINE](#).

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/MissionOceanWatersCharter#page0>

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2.6. How can I contribute if I cannot make a pledge?

1. Share resources from the project website
2. Encourage your networks to pledge
3. Ask contacts to mention 'PREP4BLUE' when pledging
4. Add the 'I pledged' cover photo or badge to your social media accounts or organisation's logo (see resources above)

2.7. Where can I find support to make a pledge? –

To help you make your pledge and share the Mission Charter with others, we have put together a collection of PREP4BLUE Mission Resources for you to use. This includes

- **guidance on making your pledge,**
- **slides decks on the types of actions**
- **benefits of pledging** for you to share with your networks, and
- **badges** that you can add to your profile pictures and logos.

<https://prep4blue.eu/mission-charter/>

2.8. Where can I find information on further projects of the Mission Ocean?

As part of Mission 'Restore our Ocean and Waters by 2030', four Mission lighthouses have been established at basin scale in

- a) the Mediterranean Sea,
- b) the Baltic and North Sea,
- c) the Danube river basin and Black Sea and
- d) the Atlantic-Arctic basin.

Find more and the links to all of them here: <https://prep4blue.eu/portfolio/mission-lighthouse-csas/>

2.9. How can I keep myself informed of Mission: Restore our Ocean and Waters activities?

Visit <https://prep4blue.eu/news/>

Also, activities are posted in the following 7 social platforms:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/missionoceaneu>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ourmissionocean>
- LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/missionocean/>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/missionoceaneu/>
- TikTok: <https://www.tiktok.com/missionoceanwaters>
- Pinterest: <http://pinterest.com/missionoceanwaters/>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8Zjl1TyDAUuDO8QNld9zw>

Or join our [PREP4BLUE newsletter](#)

3. RELATED TO PUBLIC MOBILIZATION & ENGAGEMENT

3.1. What are the citizen engagement targets of Mission Ocean & Waters?

The Mission will **by 2025** have delivered the following outcomes:

- Tried and applied deliberative democracy mechanisms and social innovation practices for the co-design and co-implementation of solutions for the restoration of the aquatic environment.
- Developed and piloted frameworks and processes for participatory governance and deliberative democracy, including an EU-wide network of assemblies⁹⁹ to enable effective citizen and stakeholder involvement in the lighthouses.
- Up-scaled the European Research Area funded pilot citizen science campaign “Plastic Pirates – Go Europe” together with further Member States.
- Involved the European solidarity corps in restoration projects.
- Promoted apps allowing citizens to collect data and observations and will promote (digital) data collection and participatory research involving citizens for the monitoring and restoration of ocean and waters; the collected data will be harmonised and made publicly available through the Digital Twin Ocean, EMODnet and/or the Copernicus Marine Service.
- Provided knowledge and methodological frameworks to support the revision of the International Ocean Governance agenda.

The Mission will **by 2030** have delivered the following outcomes:

- All European citizens have the opportunity to engage in the preservation and restoration of oceans and waters through participative means, volunteering and citizen science.
- All European citizens are empowered to be actors in the preservation and restoration of oceans and waters through social innovation, awareness raising, education and training.
- Promoted EU-wide annual ocean literacy campaigns, in cooperation with the EU4Ocean Coalition to strengthen public awareness and overcome the emotional disconnect with the ocean and waters¹⁰⁰.
- Launched regular citizen science campaigns as a part of novel participatory research initiatives to increase the reach, quality and impact of scientific initiatives and boost the environmental awareness of the participants.

3.2. What are the methods for citizen engagement?

There are various methods for citizen engagement. A comprehensive overview can be found in the Prep4Blue (P4B) stakeholder engagement tool and [citizen engagement guidelines](#). Frequently used methods include:

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- **Surveys:** Used to obtain information from citizens requiring minimal time commitment. Surveys can capture quantitative or qualitative data and can reach many respondents. Can be done online or in person.
- **Citizens' Assemblies:** A form of public deliberation that allows citizens to participate in decision-making processes.
- **Future Scenario Workshops:** Allows citizens to explore and discuss different future scenarios.
- **Semi-Structured Interviews:** A qualitative method of inquiry that combines a pre-determined set of open questions with the opportunity for the interviewer to explore themes or responses further.
- **Walking Interviews:** A method where participants are interviewed while walking, allowing for more natural conversation and observation.
- **Participatory Mapping:** A tool where community members create maps that represent their spatial knowledge of an area.
- Setting up a **Community of Practice** for long term citizen engagement. A community of practice is a group of people who share a common concern or passion and meet regularly in an informal setting.

3.3. How should I prepare for citizen engagement?

Thorough preparation is crucial for successful citizen engagement. Key steps in preparation include:

- **Defining the Purpose:** Understand why you are engaging citizens and what you hope to achieve.
- **Identifying Participants:** Map out the participants and ensure diversity and inclusion.
- **Building Relationships:** Engage community leaders and key stakeholders through communication and relationship-building activities.
- **Logistical Preparations:** Consider practical aspects such as location, time, and accessibility.

3.4. How is citizen engagement implemented?

Implementation involves actively engaging citizens through the methods chosen in the preparation phase. It's important to facilitate open communication, ensure that participants feel valued, and that their input is genuinely considered.

3.5. How do I monitor and evaluate citizen engagement?

Monitoring and evaluation involve assessing the effectiveness of the citizen engagement process. This includes gathering feedback, analysing the data collected, and evaluating whether the engagement met its objectives.

3.6. What is the importance of citizen engagement in Mission Ocean and Waters?

Citizen engagement is crucial in Mission Ocean and Waters as it allows for diverse perspectives and insights, which are essential in addressing complex socio-environmental-economic challenges.

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Engaging citizens in decision-making, policy production, governance, and research contributes to a more democratic and socially just process.

3.7. What are the challenges in citizen engagement?

Engaging citizens can come with several challenges including:

- **Engagement Fatigue:** Citizens may be overwhelmed with engagement requests, leading to reduced participation over time.
- **Managing Expectations:** It is important to be clear about the scope and impact of citizen participation to avoid disappointment or frustration.
- **Power Dynamics:** Be mindful of the power relations between organizers/researchers and participants, and among participants themselves.
- **Inclusivity and Diversity:** Ensuring that all voices, including marginalized groups, are heard and represented.
- **Logistical Challenges:** Coordinating schedules, locations, and resources can be challenging, especially for larger groups.

3.8. What are some examples of successful citizen engagement?

We show you here four examples of successful citizen engagement initiatives. If you know any others you would like to share with us, please send an email to prep4blue@cetmar.org.

- [Prep4Blue webinar series](#): “Preparing for Citizen Participation in Mission Ocean and Waters”.
- <https://www.merialgabsiit.ee/en/>
- World Clean-up Day <https://www.worldcleanupday.org/>
- Consensus conference – our ocean <https://tekno.dk/project/our-ocean/?lang=en>

3.9. How can citizen engagement contribute to solving Mission Ocean and Waters related challenges?

Citizen engagement can contribute to solving environmental challenges by:

- **Collecting Diverse Insights:** Citizens often bring unique perspectives and local knowledge that can be invaluable in understanding and addressing environmental issues.
- **Building Support and Ownership:** When citizens are involved in decision-making, they are more likely to support and take ownership of the solutions.
- **Promoting Sustainable Practices:** Engaging citizens in environmental initiatives can lead to more sustainable practices at the community level.
- **Innovative Problem Solving:** The collective intelligence of a diverse group of citizens can lead to innovative solutions to complex environmental challenges.

3.10. How can research projects obtain funding for citizen engagement activities?

Obtaining funding for citizen engagement activities in research projects can be achieved through various avenues:

- **Grant Applications:** Apply for grants that are specifically aimed at supporting citizen engagement in research. Many funding bodies recognize the value of citizen engagement and offer grants to support these activities.
- **Partnerships and Collaborations:** Partner with non-profit organizations, community groups, or other institutions that have a vested interest in citizen engagement. These partnerships can often lead to shared resources and funding.
- **Crowdfunding:** Use crowdfunding platforms to raise small amounts of money from a large number of people. This can be particularly effective for projects that have a strong community interest or social impact.
- **Government Programs:** Explore government programs that support citizen engagement in research. Some governments have funds allocated for community-based research projects.
- **Corporate Sponsorship:** Reach out to corporations for sponsorships, especially those whose corporate social responsibility (CSR) goals align with your project.

3.11. What should be included in a funding proposal for citizen engagement activities?

When writing a funding proposal it is important to include citizen engagement activities on it, to ensure co-design from the beginning. So, it must be present in the following sections of the proposal:

- **Executive Summary:** A brief overview of the project and why citizen engagement is essential.
- **Objectives and Goals:** Clearly outline what you hope to achieve through citizen engagement.
- **Methodology:** Describe the methods of citizen engagement you will use and justify why they are appropriate for your research project. Carefully study the details of a specific call and build your application around it.
- **Budget:** Provide a detailed budget that breaks down the costs associated with citizen engagement activities.
- **Impact and Benefits:** Explain the potential impact and benefits of citizen engagement on your research project and the wider community.
- **Evaluation and Reporting:** Describe how you will evaluate the success of the citizen engagement activities and how you will report back to the funding body.
- **Timeline:** Provide a timeline for the citizen engagement activities.

3.12. Are there any best practices for managing funds for citizen engagement activities?

Yes, best practices for managing funds for citizen engagement activities include:

- **Transparency:** Be transparent about how funds are being used and keep detailed records of all expenses.

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- **Stakeholder Involvement:** Involve stakeholders, including citizens, in decision-making processes regarding the use of funds.
- **Regular Monitoring:** Regularly monitor the budget to ensure that funds are being used efficiently and effectively.
- **Compliance:** Ensure compliance with the funding body's requirements and regulations.
- **Evaluation and Feedback:** Continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the citizen engagement activities and be open to feedback, adapting as necessary.

3.13. What types of training are available for citizen engagement activities in Mission Ocean and Waters research projects?

Training for citizen engagement activities in research projects can include:

- **Workshops and Seminars:** These can be used to train participants in specific methods of citizen engagement, such as how to conduct surveys or facilitate focus groups. Prep4Blue has developed citizen engagement webinar series, which can be accessible [here](#).
- **Online Courses:** There are many online platforms that offer courses in citizen engagement and related fields.
- **Certification Programs:** Some organizations offer certification programs in citizen engagement, which can provide formal recognition of expertise in this area.
- **Peer Learning:** Engaging with other professionals who have experience in citizen engagement can be an invaluable form of training.
- **Customized Training Programs:** Some organizations offer training programs that are customized to the specific needs of a research project or team.

3.14. How can I find training programs for citizen engagement?

You can find training programs for citizen engagement through:

- **Academic Institutions:** Many universities and colleges offer courses and workshops in citizen engagement.
- **Professional Organizations:** Organizations such as the International Association for Public Participation offer training and resources.
- **Online Learning Platforms:** Websites like Coursera, Udemy, and LinkedIn Learning offer courses in citizen engagement. See question 16 regarding PREP4BLUE Citizen Engagement Webinar Series.
- **Networking and Professional Groups:** Joining professional groups and networks can also be a good way to find out about training opportunities.
- **Prep4Blue has developed a [citizen engagement webinar series](#).**

3.15. What should I look for in a training program for citizen engagement?

When selecting a training program for citizen engagement, consider the following:

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- **Relevance:** Ensure that the content of the training program is relevant to your research project and the methods of citizen engagement you will be using.
- **Expertise of Trainers:** Look for programs that are led by experienced professionals with a track record in citizen engagement.
- **Practical Application:** Opt for programs that include practical exercises and real-world examples.
- **Feedback and Reviews:** Check for feedback and reviews from previous participants to gauge the quality of the program.
- **Certification or Accreditation:** If formal recognition of your training is important, look for programs that offer certification or are accredited by a recognized body.

3.16. How can training enhance the effectiveness of citizen engagement in Mission Ocean and Waters research projects?

Training can enhance the effectiveness of citizen engagement in research projects by:

- **Building Skills:** Training builds the skills needed to effectively engage citizens, such as communication, facilitation, and data analysis.
- **Improving Understanding:** It helps in understanding the principles and best practices of citizen engagement.
- **Increasing Confidence:** Training can increase the confidence of researchers in engaging with citizens.
- **Ensuring Ethical Engagement:** Training in ethics ensures that citizen engagement is conducted in a respectful and responsible manner.
- **Enhancing Outcomes:** Ultimately, well-trained individuals are likely to achieve better outcomes in citizen engagement activities.

3.17. What training options are available for learning about citizen participation in Mission Ocean and Waters research projects?

The [PREP4BLUE Citizen Engagement Webinar Series](#) offers training options that focus on citizen participation in marine and freshwater initiatives. The series includes webinars that cover various aspects of citizen participation, social inclusion, and citizen science.

3.18. Are the webinars in the PREP4BLUE Citizen Engagement Webinar Series available for viewing after they have taken place?

Yes, recordings of the webinars in the PREP4BLUE Citizen Engagement Webinar Series are available on the PREP4BLUE website and [YouTube](#).

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3.19. Is there a cost associated with accessing the webinars in the PREP4BLUE Citizen Engagement Webinar Series?

No, the webinars in the PREP4BLUE Citizen Engagement Webinar Series are free to attend and the recordings are available for free on the PREP4BLUE website and [YouTube](#).