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Crowdsourced Bathymetry

By Hannah Mashburn

Last month, I attended a global workshop for the Crowdsourced Bathymetry Working Group in Quebec City, Canada. It was my first introduction to the initiative and a great opportunity to meet Hypack partners and customers from outside of the United States. The Crowdsourced Bathymetry working group was assembled by the IHO to support the GEBCO (General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans) Seabed 2030 Initiative, which aims to have the entire ocean mapped by 2030. The fundamental purpose of having the ocean mapped in its entirety is to make this data freely and publicly available to support responsible resource development and proper management of our marine resources. Although this is an incredibly lofty goal, the GEBCO foundation believes that their mission is fully achievable through public contributions of data, data collected by government agencies, and data collected by private industry partners.

The initiative is still figuring out what the best standard operating procedures are for data contributions but there are four global data centers, each that handle data assembly and coordinate data contributions. In North America, users can send their data to CCOM (Center for Coastal and Ocean Mapping) at UNH or LDEO (Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory) at Columbia University. There are three data centers in Europe and one in Indonesia. Additionally, users can submit data to the NOAA run NCEI (National Center for Environmental Information) in Boulder, Colorado which will act as the main data hub after data has passed through the regional data centers. At this moment in time, users may submit data in ANY format- raw or processed, and from ANY hydrographic system. The working groups are hard at work to develop standardized procedures but want to encourage contributors to share their data at any stage of their data collection process.

Across the world, our private industry partners are acting as leaders in the GEBCO 2030 initiative. Fugro is contributing all data from their global transit ships to provide the initiative with deep ocean data. Teams are providing cruise lines and shipping barges with data loggers so that they may record their transit data for eventual contribution. Outfitters in Australia are providing fishing boats and recreational tourists data loggers so that they may collect data for the initiative over one of Australia's most precious resources: The Great Barrier Reef. My idea for a Hypack contribution is a simple export option for users to submit either raw or processed data once formats are standardized. But I would like to hear from you! What are your thoughts on the initiative? How do you think Hypack could contribute?

If you have answers to my above questions or are interested in learning more about ways to participate in GEBCO 2030, education opportunities, or available grants, email me at Hannah@hypack.com!