

News story: UK Hydrographic Office to unlock the value of location-based information as part of Geospatial Commission

Location-based information or geospatial data, is an increasingly valuable tool for businesses and public-sector organisations. The government's Geospatial Commission, announced in 2017, has been established to improve the quality of key, publicly-held data and make it easier to access and use. By doing so, it is estimated the commission will unlock up to £11 billion of extra value for the UK economy each year.

As one of the 6 partner organisations on the commission (Geo6), the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) holds a broad range of UK marine geospatial data ranging from the seabed to the ocean's surface. This includes high resolution bathymetry depicting the seafloor, as well as information on the water itself like density, salinity, temperature and movement. Specialist teams also process information on maritime security, marine life, maritime limits and more. This data is vital to helping organisations make better use of the marine environment and use ocean resources in a sustainable way.

In collaboration with our Geo6 partners, the British Geological Survey, Coal Authority, HM Land Registry, Ordnance Survey and the Valuation Office, the UKHO will deliver 4 exploratory projects:

- Data discoverability – assessing and improving access to current data sets
- Linked identifiers – supporting users to bring different data together in valuable new ways
- Licencing – working towards simple, common licensing terms to increase data use
- Enhancing core data assets – using third party data to improve the quality of data and make its collection more efficient

Commenting on the announcement, John Humphrey CEO at the UK Hydrographic Office said:

Marine geospatial data is fundamental to helping us to make better use of the marine environment and ensure its protection for years

to come. It's the foundation on which to develop tourism and trade, as well as support disaster resilience and climate change mitigation.

As a marine geospatial agency, we are experts in sourcing and processing this location-based information, from seabed to surface. By leveraging our data-handling expertise, whether in hydrography and oceanography or software development and data science, we aim to help the Geospatial Commission maximise the value of this data to the UK.