

Maintaining strength in ocean science requires greater collaboration, coordination, and integration

November 6 2013

A new expert panel report, by the Council of Canadian Academies, on ocean science capacity in Canada has found that, with no single organization responsible for managing ocean research in Canada, scientists face challenges in coordinating activities and pooling resources.

The [expert panel](#) report, *Ocean Science in Canada: Meeting the Challenge, Seizing the Opportunity*, is an evidence-based assessment of the current state of ocean science in Canada and addresses issues such as human capacity, infrastructure, funding, and scientific collaboration.

The Expert Panel found that Canada has a history of strength in ocean science and there are many opportunities to reaffirm leadership and further Canada's role as a steward of the global ocean. This can best be achieved by considering the findings outlined below:

- Canada ranks among the top countries in output and impact of ocean science papers, but this position is at risk.
- Canada has several world-class systems for ocean observation and monitoring; however, challenges exist in achieving geographical coverage and integration of data management.
- Canada has a substantial but aging research fleet, leading to higher costs and research days lost due to maintenance.
- Although funding for ocean science in Canadian universities is

increasing, direct funding for individual research projects has declined since 2008.

- The state of human capacity in ocean science could not be determined due to data limitations.

"Canada's proximity to three of the world's ocean basins provides unlimited opportunities for ocean science research," commented Dr. David Strangway, Chair of the Expert Panel. "The science is changing quickly and there are many new tools that will come online in the next decade. The challenge will be how to effectively use these technologies, innovate, and protect and use our oceans."

This assessment was requested by the Canadian Consortium of Ocean Research Universities (CCORU) – a group of nine Canadian universities involved in ocean science research – and follows up on the Council's expert workshop report, 40 Priority Research Questions for Ocean Science in Canada.

"This assessment provides a balanced perspective on the state of [ocean science](#) today and provides policy-makers and the science community with clear insights that should assist in mapping a future course for Canada," said Elizabeth Dowdeswell, President of the Council of Canadian Academies.

Provided by Council of Canadian Academies

Citation: Maintaining strength in ocean science requires greater collaboration, coordination, and integration (2013, November 6) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2013-11-strength-ocean-science-requires-greater.html>

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