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The European Research Fleets

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Installation and maintenance of Subsea observatories and very large telescopes require access to workhorse marine vessels and underwater systems. The cost of possession of such infrastructures is highly dependent to their rate of usage. Such rate of usage could be optimised by the multipurpose use of the infrastructure, or by full rate of usage. Other possibilities are Bartering, chartering schemes or sharing of the investments and running costs between several partners and users. Its also possible to use opportunities within industrial fleets, through tenders processes. However, availability of the systems, specificities and complexities of the tasks required high level of services and access to trained and experimented teams. In the presentation we will set-up the situation of the European research fleets within green, blue books, OFEG, Marine Board, Eurofleet and ESFRI contexts. A survey of existing systems (ships and underwater systems), and access in an optimal way would be addressed. The presentation will emphasis new views toward common strategy and enhanced uses of European Ocean research Fleets. The description of the existing fleets and their management, and the evolution over the next decades would be addressed, and the inventory of large exchangeable instruments will open a discussion on the possible exploitation schemes for future maintenance and installation of underwater observatories.

Orateur: RIGAUD, Vincent (IFREMER, Centre de Brest, France)**Classification de Session:** Plenary Session II