

World Association of Marine Stations



Version Control – Version 1.1., May 2025

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the Steering Committee at least on a biennial basis but otherwise will be updated as required with sign-off by the Steering Committee.

Version 1.0	Agreed by the WAMS Steering Committee in June 2021 following the first WAMS Congress
Version 1.1	<p>Agreed by the WAMS Management Group in May 2025 following the second WAMS Congress. Changes introduced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Background section expanded to include purpose of the network and links to key resources- Frequency of World Congress of Marine Stations meetings changed from 3 to 2 years- Structure of WAMS updated to include Secretariat, ECR committee and other ad-hoc committees- Terms of appointment updated – Steering Committee members can remain on the committee as long as they are willing to assuming they continue to represent their marine station / organisation

Background

The World Association of Marine Stations (WAMS) is a major effort to mobilise the capacity for marine stations globally, providing a forum for marine stations from all regions of the world to strengthen collaboration and establish inclusive partnerships for the fostering of marine research and education.

Discussions on the establishment of a World Association of Marine Stations date back to 2008 when a small delegation met with representatives from IOC-UNESCO. In November 2021 the first [World Congress of Marine Stations](#) was held and key members from Marine Stations across the globe signed a joint [communiqué](#) committing to the formal establishment of WAMS. The WAMS Steering Committee was formed on the final day of this Congress.

The purpose of WAMS is to provide a forum for marine stations from all regions of the world to establish inclusive partnerships and strengthen collaboration among marine scientists to foster marine scientific research internationally.

WAMS will enable better identification of global capacity and facilitate coordination on a range of issues including;

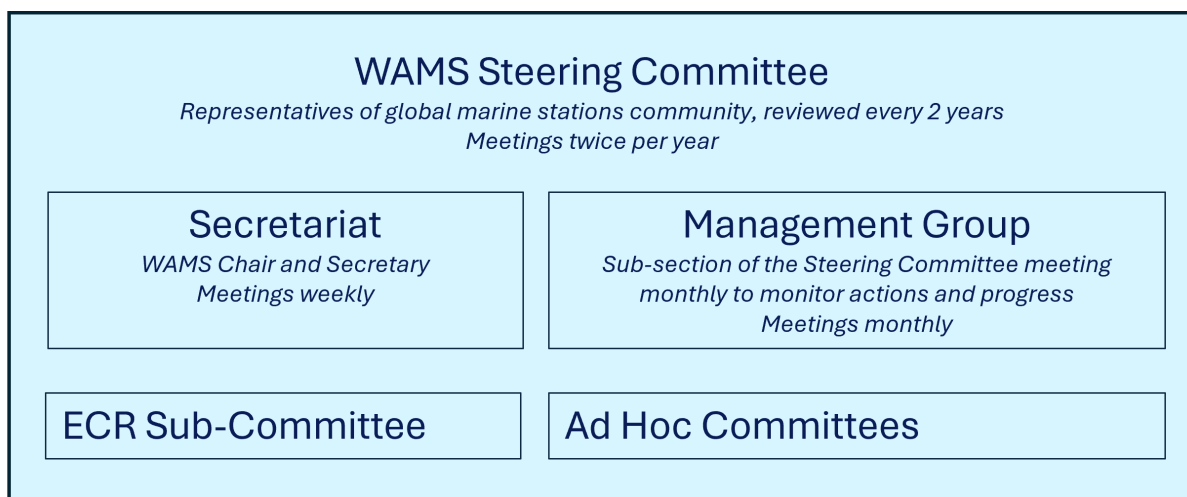
- education and training;
- citizen science and public outreach;
- interdisciplinary research;
- and survey, monitoring and long-term observations.

This global network will provide the marine scientific community with a common voice on marine research matters and marine policy, which in turn will foster the use of science to inform policy at the international level. In turn, this will facilitate an integrated global response to climate change impacts on marine ecosystems, their sustainability and biodiversity. Ultimately, WAMS will help the marine scientific community to better support global goals for the ocean and provide a stronger voice to champion the role of marine stations.

In the following 4 years since the formal establishment of WAMS, the following resources were developed:

- Website: <https://worldmarinestations.com/> - which serves as the main information platform of the network
- World Atlas of Marine Stations: <https://worldmarinestations.com/the-world-marine-stations-atlas/> - an interactive online atlas which can be used to explore the most up to date information from around 800 marine stations across the globe.
- LinkedIn: [World Association of Marine Stations \(WAMS\) | LinkedIn](#) – social media page used to aid in dissemination of WAMS news and updates

WAMS Structure



WAMS will consist of the:

- Steering Committee, responsible for overall strategic oversight
- Management Group, responsible for operational delivery of the WAMS work programme including developing a regular World Congress
- Secretariat, responsible for the day-to-day management of the network, including communications, files, resources

- ECR Committee, representing the interests of the early career scientists in the network
- Other ad-hoc committees as required (examples – Development Sub-Committee; Digital Infrastructure Sub-Committee, Website & Atlas Sub-Committee).

Role and purpose of the Steering Committee

The key objectives of the Committee are to:

- Lead on the further development of WAMS
- Support the WAMS Management Group and Secretariat through advice, expertise and strategic direction

Steering Committee Membership / Terms of appointment

- The Committee consists of members appointed at World Congress meetings (every 2 years)
- Members can be appointed to represent their organisation (e.g. Marine Station, network), a specific sector (e.g. Early Career Ocean Professionals, ECOPs) or as individuals bringing a specific expertise
- Membership will be reviewed at each World Congress. Members can remain in the Committee as long as they continue to represent the respective marine station / organisation / expertise, and are able to provide the necessary input including attendance of the Steering Committee meetings twice per year
- A subset of the Steering Committee will serve on the Management Committee with responsibility to implement the WAMS strategy. The Management Committee will be chaired by Chair of the Steering Committee
- The Chair of the Steering Committee will be eligible for re-appointment at each World Congress
- The Secretary of the Steering Committee will be appointed by the Management Committee
- The Secretary of the Steering Committee will also be Secretary to the Management Committee

Meetings

- The Steering Committee will meet twice a year in addition to ad-hoc meetings as required. In years where a World Congress is held the Steering Committee meeting will be held as part of the Congress.
- The Management Group will meet as required but generally once a month.
- The ECR Committee will meet as required
- Other ad-hoc committees will meet as required.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The role of the WAMS **Chair** will be to provide leadership; represent and promote the value of WAMS externally; liaise with the WAMS host institute (for IT, website); oversee the sub-committees and work with the World Congress organisers.
- The role of WAMS **Secretary** will be to organise meetings; maintain a record of WAMS files (meeting agendas, notes, supporting documents); maintain WAMS communications (monthly newsletter, mailing list, social media); liaise with external and internal partners as necessary to support the Chair in the running of the association. The WAMS Secretary will also lead the broader Secretariat as this develops.