

MEOPAR



Strategic Plan

2026–2031

A coordinated Canadian
approach to ocean research,
resilience and innovation



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Introduction

MEOPAR is an independent, not-for-profit organization bringing together expertise from across Canada's regions and sectors to advance ocean research and development.

Over the past decade, MEOPAR has cultivated a strong national role, coordinating major initiatives with a broad cross-section of partners, including governmental agencies and organizations, non-profits, private research foundations, industry partners, and universities.

MEOPAR has developed creative funding mechanisms that foster collaborative research, support knowledge sharing, and strengthen professional capacity in the ocean sector. This work has helped establish important national platforms and capabilities, such as the Canadian Integrated Ocean Observing System (CIOOS) and the Modular Ocean Research Infrastructure (MORI).

As the organization continues to expand, in response to resurgent interest and urgency in deepening our understanding of the Canadian oceanscape, MEOPAR presents its renewed Strategic Plan, one that considers new opportunities and emerging trends in response to the ocean-related inquiries, needs and challenges of today and of the future.

MEOPAR's Strategic Positioning

From national network to coordinated Canadian leadership

An Independent Canadian Network

that enables the advancement of ocean science through connecting and coordinating research efforts nationally.

A highly credible leader

in the ocean science ecosystem, supporting the scientific activity essential for innovation and adaptation.

A driver of partnerships

through an inclusive approach to science, bringing together academic, industry, non-profit and community partners, while championing Canadian ocean research internationally.

Our Purpose Statement

Recognizing the ocean as essential for culture, sovereignty, livelihoods and well-being, MEOPAR enables leading-edge interdisciplinary ocean research, fostering collaborations and providing funding and support for marine scientists and ocean-connected communities.

MEOPAR is connecting people and initiatives across sectors, regions, languages and disciplines.

Organizational Values

Our values guide us in our work and in how we collaborate.

At MEOPAR we are...



Impact Driven

We strive to make a difference by harnessing the power of science to support ocean health and community well-being.



Innovative

We lead with a proactive, solutions-focused mindset to generate new knowledge, embracing creativity and staying responsive to an evolving environment.



Caring

Guided by empathy, inclusion and equity we support one another and celebrate one another while enabling the empowerment of ocean scientists and ocean-connected communities.



Collaborative

We promote connection and communication across the ocean science community and within our own team.



Trustworthy

We are committed to the Canadian ocean science ecosystem, serving as an independent and neutral convener of ocean science researchers across the country.



Emerging Trends

These highlight external factors that may affect MEOPAR's development in the coming years.

Critical Emerging Trends

- 01 Shifting national priorities toward global defence, national security and sovereignty.
- 02 Increasing global and national interest in the ocean as a strategic space and as essential to life on Earth, with increasing social and economic impacts such as coastal erosion and regional food security challenges.

Important Emerging Trends

- 03 Opportunities arising from the political context in the U.S.
- 04 Limited scientific sovereignty within Canadian waters and barriers to researchers' access to the ocean.
- 05 Misinformation, disinformation and the crisis of trust in science.
- 06 Rapid development of emerging technologies including AI tools and applications, novel science, and autonomous ocean systems.
- 07 Perceived decline in Canadian influence and contribution in the international scientific community.





Strategic Vision *In 2035*

MEOPAR is recognized for its leadership in advancing the way we pursue ocean science in Canada and internationally by bringing together a broad group of partners under a shared vision of belonging and purpose, mobilizing scientific expertise and ocean knowledge to enable collective action on challenges of national importance.

MEOPAR is guided by 4 Strategic Directions and 8 Strategic Objectives

1 Strengthen Strategic Science Fund program delivery

- 1.1 Ensure timely, efficient, and strategic allocation of SSF funds while preparing for renewed ISED funding opportunities.
- 1.2 Develop programs that are impactful in addressing national priorities and gaps.

2 Develop new strategic partnerships and revenue streams

- 2.1 Initiate and expand partnerships of high strategic value.
- 2.2 Explore avenues for revenue diversification.

3 Consolidate and communicate MEOPAR's role as a trusted leader in the ocean science ecosystem

- 3.1 Leverage MEOPAR's role as a connector.
- 3.2 Communicate MEOPAR's value proposition and impact.

4 Reinforce MEOPAR's internal operations, collaboration, and culture of care

- 4.1 Strengthen MEOPAR's organizational structure and capacity.
- 4.2 Enhance operational efficiency and collaboration.



Strategic Framework

The strategic framework maps out the organization's key priorities for the duration of the 2026–2031 planning period.

Four strategic directions define MEOPAR's strategic priorities for the next five years. They address the main challenges identified during workshops and will enable MEOPAR to achieve its vision.

Eight strategic objectives specify how MEOPAR intends to achieve its strategic directions.



WHAT'S NEXT?

The success of MEOPAR's 2026–2031 Strategic Plan depends on its thoughtful and deliberate implementation. Advancing the plan's objectives will require identifying and developing projects that align with MEOPAR's priorities, with timelines shaped by the organization's leadership and direction. Regular reviews will ensure the plan remains a dynamic tool—responsive to new information, grounded in evidence, and aligned with MEOPAR's mandate.

As a living document in a rapidly changing field, the plan will be revisited periodically. Priorities are expected to shift as new threats emerge, novel opportunities arise, and the ocean research landscape continues to evolve. This adaptability is not a limitation but a strength, enabling MEOPAR to remain agile, relevant, and forward-looking.

Guided by its strategic plan, MEOPAR will continue to consolidate its role as an enabler of leading-edge ocean science. By mobilizing scientific expertise and ocean knowledge across the country, MEOPAR is uniquely positioned generate impact global to locally for ocean-connected address communities, priorities and to of national importance, to influence discussions on the stage. This plan strengthens that trajectory—charting a path toward deeper collaboration, greater impact, and a more resilient ocean future.



The MEOPAR Strategic Plan was created by human intelligence with key input from a wide-ranging number of participants among MEOPAR's directors, staff, board members, and partners. The planning process was guided and supported by Montréal-based consulting firm Espace Stratégies.