



Science

Study: Humanity depends on the oceans

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SAN DIEGO, Nov. 26 (UPI) -- A U.S. scientist said he believes a speedy diagnosis of the "vital signs" of the Earth's oceans is essential to the well being of humanity.

Tony Haymet, director of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California-San Diego, made the statement in advance of this week's annual meeting of the Group on Earth Observations. The GEO, an intergovernmental body comprised of 71 governments and the European Commission, is constructing a comprehensive, global monitoring system to provide near real-time information on the changes in the Earth's land, oceans, atmosphere and biosphere via a single Web portal.

Haymet, chairman of the Partnership for Observation of the Global Oceans, said warming seas, over-fishing and pollution must be better measured.

"A system for ocean observing and forecasting that covers the world's oceans and their major uses can reduce growing risks, protect human interests and monitor the health of our precious oceans," said Haymet. "The good news is we have demonstrated that a global ocean observing system can be built, deployed and operated with available technologies. Now we must move from experiment and proof-of-concept to routine use."

The GEO conference is set for Wednesday through Friday in Cape Town, South Africa.

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