

Interactive comment on “Marine monitoring in Europe: is it adequate to address environmental threats and pressures?” by Suzanne J. Painting et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

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This paper presents the results of an opinion poll on marine monitoring needs and gaps based on a questionnaire filled by a number of scientists (36) from 12 European countries involved in the EU-project JERICO- Next. The topic of the questionnaire is interesting and timely. The paper is well written and perfectly fine as a project deliverable, and as a way to advertise the project. To make it more interesting to a broad and specialised scientific community, a better balance should be taken among the topics stated in the abstract by giving more space to an updated synthesis of the literature and to an exhaustive and informative overview of the monitoring operations in place. This approach would possibly allow to improve and sharpen the conclusions which are presently too general. As acknowledged by the Authors, the topic of the questionnaire

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has been addressed several times in recent years, but the most recent and relevant contributions to OceanObs '19 (published in *Frontiers in Marine Science*) are not considered. The respondents had been given the task to act as national representatives, but it is not clear how this worked, because multiple questionnaires were filled for several countries, with 14 only from UK. This results in a lack of balance among countries and the bias that only countries and scientists participating in the project were directly involved, while it is hard to assess the actual coverage of those opinions not even in individual countries. The other weakness is that the large part of the paper is based on opinions and partial overviews of the various issues. Although coming from qualified people and potentially interesting, it is hard to check their actual soundness and the completeness of the information. Among the improvements suggested in section 4, I was surprised not to find any references to advanced molecular technologies. The most interesting part could have been the overview of the Monitoring Programmes in each country, but admittedly the reported programmes were a subsample rather than an exhaustive inventory.

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