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The EBM Toolbox: Tools for crowdsourcing data and collaborative mapping

Editor's note: The goal of The EBM Toolbox is to promote awareness of tools for facilitating EBM and MSP processes. It is brought to you by the EBM Tools Network, a voluntary alliance of tool users, developers, and training providers.

Need to learn how your stakeholders are using the marine environment? Want to take advantage of the eyes (and brains) of those concerned citizens out there?

EBM Tools Network members recently shared a wide variety of tools they use, or have seen used, to crowdsource data or do wiki-style mapping (collaborative mapping and editing by users). We wanted to share a few tools and projects being used for marine conservation and management that practitioners could use or emulate for their own projects. Many thanks to all of the Network members who shared their knowledge and resources!

- The ocean planning tool [SeaSketch](#) has [survey functionality](#) that can be used to collect spatial and non-spatial data from targeted groups or broader crowdsourcing to help build fundamental data layers for marine spatial planning efforts.
- [Science4Surfing](#) collects information from surfers to help predict how sea level rise will affect the future of surfing conditions at different surf-spots around the world.
- With [iCoast – Did the Coast Change?](#), citizen scientists can help scientists at the US Geological Survey understand how coastlines are changing from extreme storms by annotating aerial photographs with keyword tags to identify changes to the coast after extreme storms.
- [Ushahidi](#) is a crowdsourcing tool that has been adapted by Invemar to [collect reports of 16 introduced marine species in Columbia](#).
- The [Whale Alert](#) app helps mariners navigate conservation areas and conduct required reporting when entering whale reporting areas. In addition, it enables mariners and members of the public to contribute whale sightings to a central database used by whale biologists and resource managers to reduce lethal ship strikes of whales.

If you are interested in the full compilation of tools that the Network has developed, please send an email to the EBM Tools Network Coordinator at ebmtools@naturereserve.org.

If you have a question about tools and resources for coastal and marine conservation and management that you would like to ask the EBM Tools Network, join their free discussion list at https://list.openchannels.org/mailman/listinfo/ebmtools_discuss and post your question to ebmtools_discuss@list.openchannels.org.

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