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### **New resource to improve accuracy and consistency of seabed characterisation**

A new glossary of seabed morphology, published this month, is set to be a valuable asset for marine and ecosystem sciences, development, conservation, and marine planning. Led by British Geological Survey Marine Geoscientist Dayton Dove, an international network of marine geoscientists have developed the glossary, further building on a classification scheme they first published in 2016.

The glossary will provide a novel and unique resource to support accurate and more consistent seabed mapping. Seabed geomorphological mapping is often conducted in a variety of ways depending on factors such as the project, location, and science discipline. There has been increasing demand, however, for standards so that mapping is comparable across different areas. The new glossary provides a straightforward guide and robust framework for marine scientists to help them to clearly explain their research findings and minimise duplication or ambiguity. Feature definitions and diagrams in the glossary make clear and accurate classification easier.

Mapping of the seabed is important as it means we better understand a complex range of environmental processes, increase knowledge of the physical properties of the seabed and shallow sub-surface and help predict natural or anthropogenic impacts. In turn, this helps to support both the Blue Economy and marine ecosystem conservation.

Collaborative partners in this project include Geoscience Australia, Geological Survey of Norway, Geological Survey Ireland and the Centre for Environment, Fisheries, and Aquaculture Science (Cefas). The team used existing resources such as the International Hydrographic Organization's (IHO) guide for undersea feature names, adding further terms and detail to ensure the final feature catalogue and glossary encompasses the diversity of morphologies observed at the seabed.

The paper and glossary can be accessed at:

<https://zenodo.org/record/4075248#.X42mvtBKHPa>

**ENDS**

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## Notes to editors

The Lyell Centre is a strategic partnership between Heriot-Watt University and the British Geological Survey, funded by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), the Scottish Funding Council and Heriot-Watt University. The partnership enables them to work together combining their expertise in geoscience. Exploring themes ranging from geology and geophysics to marine ecosystems, the centre's combination of pure and applied expertise employs innovative methods and technologies to society's most important environmental science and energy challenges.

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