VACANCY NOTICE – 2026-JRC.D.2-IPR-FGIV-002666

Project Officer - Earth Observation Expert for European Water Resilience and Ocean Pact

Type of contract	Member of the European Commission's contract staff, Function Group IV (article 3b of the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants)
Duration of contract	36 months (renewable up to maximum 6 years)
Area	*Remote Sensing, Water Quality*
Place of employment	Ispra (IT)
Indicative basic salary	4.449,31 - 6.444,59 € (applicable as of 1st of July 2025) For more detailed information please consult: Working Conditions

WE ARE

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) provides independent, evidence-based knowledge and science, supporting EU policies to positively impact society.

The current vacancy is with the **Unit Ocean and Water** of the **Directorate for Sustainable Resources**.

The Directorate's science, positioned at the crossroads of the environment, economy and society, coupled with scientific networks across the EU and beyond, informs policies to ensure that present and future generations enjoy a sustainable planet.

The Ocean and Water Unit's mission is to carry out cross-disciplinary science to provide independent evidence in support of EU policies that underpin freshwater and ocean governance. Our activities are aligned with the European Water Resilience Strategy and European Ocean Pact. We develop innovative solutions and support Member States in enabling a sustainable and competitive future for water and marine resources in the context of the triple crises of climate change, pollution and biodiversity decline.

We are looking for a skilled Earth Observation (EO) expert to join our team working in the WAT€RS project that seeks to promote a coherent freshwater, coastal and ocean resource management to ensure long-term resilience of ecosystems and our society's prosperity. The overall purpose of this job is to support the JRC best available scientific advice provision from source to sea under the remit of the European water resilience strategy and the European ocean pact.

The successful candidate will contribute to the development of innovative EO products and solutions to address issues related to aquatic ecosystems health and water quality, including the monitoring of harmful algal blooms. This will also involve working closely with various stakeholders to promote the use of EO data for policy development and implementation, ultimately supporting the integration of scientific advice into European Union policy-making for the benefit of greater policy cohesion and support to Member States.

We offer:

- A unique opportunity to be part of a dynamic, multidisciplinary and multi-cultural team, tackling the critical issue of water resilience.
- Hands-on experience in shaping and implementing impactful EU policies, driving real change in the area of water resilience.
- Collaboration with a broad network of academics and policymakers and participation in meetings, conferences and workshops that advance research on cutting-edge technologies.
- The opportunity to contribute to high-impact projects and collaborate with leading experts in the field.
- A chance to be at the forefront of innovation, experimenting with new approaches and solutions.

Please see also Working at the Commission – conditions and environment (europa.eu)

WE PROPOSE

An exciting position for an Earth Observation expert to support JRC's work under the remit of the European water resilience strategy and the European ocean pact.

The jobholder will leverage the potential of Earth Observation (EO), under the remit of Copernicus, from source to sea, to address issues of aquatic ecosystems health and water quality in the context of a changing climate. One focus of the assignment will support our ambition of developing a European monitoring and warning system for the occurrence of harmful algal blooms in European waters, in cooperation with the European Parliament. The assignment entails the development and implementation of innovative EO products to design solutions along the source-to-sea gradient, which provide harmonized and coherent information for policy implementation and decision making as well as cohesion-building and simplification across all water-related and ocean-related policies (Marine Strategy Framework Directive, Water Framework Directive, Bathing Water Directive). Due to the current swift and epochal transformations in EO data in terms of diversity, complexity and quantity (big data, new space) and the increased relevance of EO-derived knowledge, we require appropriate expertise and skills, able to accommodate new developments and innovative solutions, including artificial intelligence, state-of-the-art modelling and digital twinning. Only this will allow us to integrate best available scientific advice for the benefit of a more cohesive EU policy environment, and to promote richer actionable knowledge while reducing the reporting burden for Member States.

Key main responsibilities will be:

- Conduct investigations to assess and improve EO data and information and develop best practices for their usage that are grounded in metrology.
- Design and steer activities that underpin the development of a monitoring and early-alert system for the occurrence of harmful algal blooms in European waters.
- Identify and diminish obstacles that currently limit the use of EO data for policy development and implementation.
- Apply EO data to test cases demonstrating how they can be integrated into a policy monitoring and compliance approach.

- Follow latest developments and innovation in remote sensing technologies and relevant fields, - new algorithms, new sensors and platforms, artificial intelligence, data mining in the ocean and water analytical policy advice framework.
- Enhance the integration of EO applications into JRC modelling activities and field programs.
- Collaborate with Commission services and other stakeholders to promote and facilitate the use of EO data for the analysis of, and advice to, policy scenarios.
- Co-author reports, oral presentations, data portals/dashboards and publications in peer-reviewed journals and contribute to the JRC.D2 Ocean and Water unit dissemination strategy.

WE LOOK FOR

We are looking for an Earth Observation expert with the following skills and experience, considered **essential:**

- A University degree in a relevant scientific or engineering field (remote sensing, environmental sciences, computer science), with a minimum of 5 years of relevant experience, or a PhD in the field of interest.
- Experience in earth observations technology.
- A strong interest in conducting scientific investigations on aquatic ecosystems and linking them to socio-economic aspects and policy applications.
- Proficiency in programming languages such as Python, R, IDL or other similar tools in a Linux environment, with experience in handling Earth Observation and spatial data.
- Excellent analytical skills, with the ability to collect, analyse, and interpret complex and very large (big) data sets.
- Proven skills in writing scientific publications and communicating to scientific and non-scientific audiences as well as the general public.
- Very good written and spoken English skills (B2), with the ability to write clear and concise technical and policy reports.

The following additional qualifications would be an **asset:**

- Experience in statistical analyses of large data sets and in the use of artificial intelligence / machine learning techniques.
- Experience in field activities collecting measurements of relevance for Earth Observation assessment and improvement.
- Knowledge of EU water or environmental policies.
- Knowledge of metrology practices.

Candidates will also be assessed against the following **soft skills:**

- Commitment, motivation and proactivity in project execution, with a strong work ethic and ability to deliver results.
- Ability to work independently, as well as collaboratively as a part of a team, with excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

HOW TO APPLY

If you are **already on a valid CAST FG IV reserve list**, or you **have already applied to one of the calls below**, you can directly submit your application at JRC Recruitment Portal.

If not, before applying to this position, **you must register** for one of the two following databases:

- the Call for Expressions of Interest | EU Careers (europa.eu) (CAST Permanent FG IV), which is used by a wide range of organisations (institutions, bodies, offices and agencies of the European Union), or
- the call for researchers (JRC Call COM/1/2015/GFIV – Research), which is mainly used by the JRC.

Note that each of the calls above has **different minimum eligibility requirements and different selection tests**.

The JRC cultivates a workplace based on respect for other people and the environment, and embraces non-discriminatory practices and equality of opportunity. In case of equal merit, preference will be given to the gender in minority.