

The next five years: UK science-policy dialogue for the UN Ocean Decade

Monday 10 March 2025, The Royal Society, London
Workshop 09:30 – 17:30 | Reception 17:30 – 19:30

The UK's vision is for an ocean that is effectively governed, clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse, supporting resilient coastal communities and sustainable economic growth. The UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (2021-2030) is a unique opportunity to achieve this through its vision of delivering "the science we need for the ocean we want" and the UK ocean science community has actively engaged and supported it.

We are now at the midpoint of the UN Ocean Decade, and significant work remains to be done to meet the UK and UN Ocean Decade's 2030 vision for the ocean. This juncture provides an opportunity to take stock of UK engagement with the Decade and explore the UK's ocean science and policy priorities for the next five years.

Event Aims

- Showcase examples of UK projects and initiatives related to the Ocean Decade
- Highlight where UK engagement in the Decade supports and informs domestic and international policy
- Connect and discuss new policy directions and science priorities to seek broad agreement on the UK focus for the rest of the Decade
- Promote collaboration, networking and opportunities for co-design of future initiatives and development of the Ocean Decade's legacy for the UK

Programme

9.30-10.00 Registration – Tea & coffee

10.00-10.15 Welcome

- Prof. Matt Frost, UK National Decade Committee Chair
 - Prof. Sir David Baulcombe FRS, Biological Secretary, The Royal Society
 - Emma Hardy MP, Minister for Water and Flooding (pre-record speech)
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10.15-11.00 Opening Panel: UK ocean policy directions for the next five years

Moderator

- Prof. Matt Frost, UK National Decade Committee Chair

Panellists

- Mike Rowe, Director Marine & Fisheries, Defra
 - Alice Teague, Deputy Director, Marine and Biodiversity, Welsh Government
 - Lowri Griffiths, Head of Ocean Policy Unit, FCDO
 - Dr Sarah Honour, Deputy Director, Climate Science and Research, DESNZ
 - Debbie Owens, Deputy Director, Maritime Decarbonisation, DfT
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11.00-12.30 Workshop 1: Sustainable use, management and protection of the ocean

Moderator

- Dr Sarah Giles, The Royal Society

Speakers

- Prof. Helen Findlay, Plymouth Marine Laboratory
- Dr Adrian Martin, National Oceanography Centre

Followed by breakout session

12.30-13.30 Lunch

Programme

13.30-15.00 Workshop 2: Supporting climate-resilient coastal communities

Moderator

- Dr Sien Van Der Plank, University of Southampton

Speakers

- Prof. Bill Austin, University of St Andrews
- Dr Kate Salmon & Dr Andy Saulter, Met Office

Followed by breakout session

15.00-15.30 Break

15.30-17.00 Workshop 3: Human-ocean connections

Moderator

- Dr Emma McKinley, Cardiff University

Speakers

- Dr Georgia Holly, University of Edinburgh
- Dr Milica Prokic, University of Strathclyde

Followed by breakout session

17.00-17.30 Closing Plenary: Reflections and next steps

- Fiona Charlesworth, Head of Marine Environment, Defra
 - Dr Iain Williams, Director of Strategic Partnerships, NERC
 - Prof. Matt Frost, UK National Decade Committee Chair
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17.30-19.30 Evening Reception & Exhibition

- Emily Cunningham MBE, Motion for the Ocean
- Rebecca Daniel, The Marine Diaries

Exhibition pieces from the Royal College of Art, Historic England, the National Oceanography Centre, and SeaVoice