



Newsflash

ECR Monthly Newsletter

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WELCOME

Welcome to the MARIS ECR newsflash where we share information that will be of use and interest to the broader MARIS ECR community. In this newsletter, you will find the latest news, opportunities and events. Enjoy the read!

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Give MARiS a follow on social media



Highlights of recent events

UNOC-3 in Nice, France

The latest buzz has been around the UN Ocean Conference 2025, that took place in Nice, France, where several important conversations regarding the ocean took place from 9 - 13 June 2025.

Prof Lynne Shannon and Dr Emma Roche of UCT-MARIS were actively engaging in the lead up to the UNOC-3 process through presentations at the UN Ocean Decade One Ocean Science Congress and during the UN Ocean Decade side-events in Nice, France. We are so proud to see such a great turn out at this exciting occasion. Many incredible and thought-provoking conversations were had, inspiring actions for our ocean - one of them included our Deputy Director, Lynne Shannon on how we can make ocean management and governance more inclusive and equitable and this is what was highlighted from their panel discussion yesterday with the International Science Council.

Emma took the opportunity to showcase the incredible work that we've been doing through the #MissionMicrobiome expedition as part of the Tara Ocean Foundation and AtlantECO Project initiatives over these last few years. Dr Louise Gammage also had the opportunity to participate in the International Science Council-led side event "Bridging academia and action: advancing partnerships for SDG 14, knowledge-sharing, and ocean literacy". Louise shared about the exciting opportunity for graduate students to participate in the upcoming AOS-SAMOS Masters Programme, where students will be provided with interdisciplinary training in applied aspects of oceanography and marine biology, and will gain skills to operate in the ocean services sector, with a focus on operational and conservational activities, food, water quality and recreation, preservation and other aspects of the Blue Economy.

Well done team on representing UCT and South Africa so well at the UN Ocean Decade events! We are excited to see what will come out from these discussions.



SEAmester VIII – Coast to Current Cruise, June 2025

From 17-27th June 2025, several MARiS ECRs had the incredible privilege of being part of the SEAmester programme aboard South Africa's Icebreaking Polar and Research Vessel, the SA Agulhas II – a true floating university. The SEAmester programme brings together lecturers and students from all corners of South Africa to dive headfirst into the fascinating world of marine science! **Picture this: you get to learn about marine science in a totally hands-on way.** You get to feel the sea breeze on your face as you learn and explore. It's an inspiring experience, and it's not just textbook stuff – the students really get a sense of what being a marine scientist is all about.

While braving the storms and rough seas, Electrical Engineering Master Students, **Daniel Jones** and **David Sephton-Poultney** went onboard as SEAmester students in the “Tools of the Trade” stream, and had the opportunity to learn from some of the most brilliant minds and passionate scientists in the field of marine sciences, gaining valuable experience on how to apply themselves in the marine field. Taking every possible moment to learn from this experience, they had a busy schedule filled with lectures and practicals, while embracing a little bit of some downtime gazing at the stars, painting and putting together some exquisite mosaics. **Dayna Collins** was one of the SEAmester assistants which assisted with facilitating SEAmester activities and practical demonstrations, and guiding students on where they needed to be throughout the SEAmester programme. **Leila Nefdt** was invited to lecture the students and share about the importance of Science Communication and the work that she does through UCT-MARiS. She also shared an evening lecture about her journey from being a SEAmester student back in 2016 until where she is today, hoping to inspire the students to follow their passion and share their story along the way. **Shanie Fourie** was also invited to be a part of the Coast to Current Science Team and assisted with collecting and filtering water samples from the CTD for Dr Emma Rocke's research.

During SEAmester, all of the students gained hands-on experience in oceanographic research – from understanding the dynamics of the Agulhas Current, collecting and analyzing water column data using the CTD, to using GIS tools for marine spatial mapping and so much more! Beyond the academic learning, this experience allowed them to network with diverse experts and fellow students from across the nation and beyond, forging connections that they will carry throughout their careers. **A big thank you to Prof Isabelle Ansorge and Tahlia Henry, the powerhouse organizers of SEAmester, whose dedication made this exciting journey possible. For more information feel free to reach out to Prof Isabelle Ansorge from the UCT Oceanography Department, via email Isabelle.ansorge@uct.ac.za. There are several videos and images found on the [SEAmester website](#) that explains the SEAmester experience.**





Dates to diarize

MARiS ECR Monthly Coffee Talk

Join us for our next ECR Coffee Talk during lunchtime for a chat over coffee and snacks.

- **Date:** Tues, 08 July 2025
- **Time:** 13h00 - 14h00
- **Venue:** Biological Sciences Tea Room, Level 1, John Day Building
- Bring a mug along, and let's chat about some of the amazing plans we have planned for 2025!

Stay tuned for more information on our upcoming MARiS ECR planned events.

Doughnut Talks

Yeah, buoy! 😊 It's time for Oceanography's bi-weekly doughnut talks again! This is a great opportunity for all our post grads to share their research with the department, and improve our science presentation skills. Please be brave and use this opportunity to showcase just how awesome your research is! To all the doughnut eaters - please bring positive feedback and engage with the science being communicated!

Please check out the line up on the [Oceanography website](#) or contact the Oceanography PostGrad Committee at oceanpgc@gmail.com or cashifa.karriem@uct.ac.za to sign up to give a talk.

Present at the UCT-SANCOR Seminar Series

We invite you to present on your coastal, marine or polar research projects at the UCT-SANCOR Seminar Series in 2025. **The seminars are held on Mondays at 13h00 at UCT (hybrid format).** [Book your date now by emailing Carmen Visser](#) and join the conversation!

Marine Chatties



The Marine Chatties seminars are used as a platform for students and researchers within the marine & polar research field to informally share their science, practice presentations for conferences, discuss and workshop ideas, and work through the various marine science problems that ECRs face with the transition from studying to finding themselves in the workplace.

These seminars take place every Friday from 12h00 til 13h00, usually in the Seminar Room 4, Level 4 in the John Day Building at UCT Upper Campus.

If you are interested in joining the Marine Chatties mailing list or offering up a talk or a workshop, please feel free to email [Tess Attwood](#) or [Robyn Fabian](#), who are currently running the Chatties seminars.

Calling All ECRs & Experienced Mentors!

Are you an early-career researcher looking for guidance in the polar and marine research fields? Or an experienced researcher / technician / communicator eager to support the next generation?

The [Mahlalela Mentorship Programme](#) co-designed by #SAPRI, #SANCOR and APECSSouthAfrica - connects emerging scientists with established experts to bridge the gap in career development and research opportunities.

We would like to invite all institutions involved in marine and polar research.

- Gain or provide valuable career insights
- Build meaningful connections
- Strengthen the future of polar and marine science

To find out more about the mentorship programme, please check out the [SAPRI Website here](#).

Call for Abstracts – MARiS ECR Conference 2025

The MARiS Early Career Researchers Conference Organizing Committee would like to invite all Southern Ocean polar and marine researchers to our inaugural MARiS ECR Conference. We would like to celebrate the wonderful inter-and-trans-disciplinary research that our ECRs are currently working on.

Date: Friday, 12 September 2025

Time: 8:30am - 17:00pm

Venue: Snape Building, Upper Campus, UCT

You do not want to miss out! **See more information on the [MARiS Website](#).** We would like to encourage all ECRs who are at least in their last year of research to present an oral presentation and anyone else is allowed to sign up for a poster presentation. We will also be hosting a photo competition, so get your research photos ready to show them off and win some prizes. **Participants are invited to submit applications for oral or poster presentations, [research photographs](#) or attendance by the 25 July 2025 and selected participants will be notified by early August 2025.**

Apply and Submit your abstract here: [MARiS ECR Conference Application Form](#). For more information, please contact the MARiS Early Career Researchers Conference Organising Committee via email at ecr.maris@uct.ac.za. See you there!



MARiS Quiz Night – July 2025



MARIS QUIZ NIGHT 2025

Thursday, 31 July 2025 | 5:30pm - 8:00pm
Venue: John Day Museum, Level 3
John Day Building, UCT Upper Campus
Entry Fee: R20 per person (cash only)

SCAN HERE TO **SIGN UP!**
Email queries to: ecr.maris@uct.ac.za

GET READY TO TEST YOUR GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

*Refreshments will be served and prizes are up for grabs!

Join us for an evening of friendly competition at the 2025 MARiS Quiz Night.

Date: Thursday, 31 July 2025

Time: 17:30 to 20:00pm

Venue: John Day Museum, Level 3, John Day Building, UCT Upper Campus

Entry Fee: R20 per person (cash only at the door)

You're welcome to bring along friends, snacks, and your own drinks. Alcohol-free drinks and finger-foods will be provided at the event. Teams will be limited to 5 people.

Please [sign up here](#) by 21 July !

Represent & Sign up for UCT-MARiS Merch now!

MARiS would like to see all MARiS ECRs well represented at varsity and research related events, and in saying so, the Management Team would like to sponsor each MARiS ECR **one** MARiS t-shirt. We are currently in the process of improving the design of the t-shirt by having the logos embroidered and use locally sourced cotton golf t-shirts. **So we will need to get the numbers for how many t-shirts to order by Friday, 11 July 2025. Please make sure to [complete this form](#) if you are interested in getting one of these freebies.** You will need to select your preferred size and cut of the t-shirt. If you are wanting more than one t-shirt, we will have to kindly ask you to pay for the extra t-shirts and make [Leila](#) or [Siwapiwe](#) know as soon as possible.



AOS – SAMOS 2026 Applications open

Closing date: 31 August 2025

In 2026, the UCT Master in Applied Ocean Sciences (AOS) program will serve as the pilot project for the South African Master in Ocean Sciences (SAMOS), a project funded by the EU ERASMUS+ Capacity Building in Higher Education programme. The coursework structure will expand on the established AOS course, with the opportunity to benefit from the expertise of the universities and experts, drawn from across the South African marine landscape who are participating in SAMOS.

Applicants will register at and receive the degree from UCT, with most of the coursework component (approx 6 months) taking place at the Ocean Campus of the Nelson Mandela University, Gqeberha (Port Elizabeth), Eastern Cape. This exciting opportunity will allow for you to benefit from the wide range of ocean-expertise we have at the South African partner universities.

A webinar, introducing the program and providing you with an opportunity to ask questions will take place on Wednesday, 9 July @ 1pm. [Sign up here to register for the webinar](#). For now you can [view more information on our website](#). Any questions can be directed to aos.maris@uct.ac.za.



South African Master of Ocean Sciences

SANCOR Vacancies

July - August 2025

Looking out for the next step in your career path?

The South African Network for Coastal and Oceanic Research (SANCOR) has listed some recent vacancies available within the marine and coastal environment.

Here are a few posts available:

Postdoctoral position: hybrid eco-engineering in saltmarshes

University College Cork, Cork, Ireland

Closing Date: [10 July 2025](#)

Find out more information [here](#).

PhD in Physical Oceanography

University of Gothenburg, Sweden

Closing Date: [18 July 2025](#)

Find out more information [here](#).

PhD Position on Benthic Microalgae and Blue Carbon Burial

Utrecht University, Utrecht, The Netherlands

Closing Date: [01 August 2025](#)

Find out more information [here](#).

PhD position in Deep Learning for Metocean Data

Norwegian Meteorological Institute, Bergen, Norway

Closing Date: [15 August 2025](#)

Find out more information [here](#).

Fisheries Analyst (Position is open until filled)

OLSPS Marine, Remote (South Africa-Based)

Closing Date: [31 August 2025](#)

Find out more information [here](#).

To view the rest of the vacancies, check out the SANCOR website using [this link](#). Other job opportunities can be found [here](#) too.

Funding Opportunities

Check out UCT's current funding opportunities [here](#) and other student research grants [here](#).

Funding opportunities have also opened up through the Early Career Ocean Professional (ECOP) Network Programme or you could have a look at the NRF [website](#) and [Proposals for Funding in 2025](#).



2025 Opportunities

SAMSS – Southern African Marine Sciences Symposium

Cape Town, 8 – 12 September 2025

The 2025 Southern African Marine Science Symposium (SAMSS) will be hosted in Cape Town from 8–12 September 2025 at the Southern Sun Cape Sun, 23 Strand Street, Cape Town City Centre.

Organised by the Department of Conservation and Marine Sciences at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) under the auspices of SANCOR, this year's symposium will explore the theme: **"The Triple Planetary Crisis – Resilience and Conservation of Ocean and Coastal Ecosystems"**.

We invite researchers, practitioners and students to submit abstracts that align with this critical theme and contribute to advancing marine and coastal science in Southern Africa.



- Submit your abstract here: <https://samss2025.org/abstracts-papers/>
- View all key dates: <https://samss2025.org/critical-dates/>
- Visit the official SAMSS 2025 Website here.

Please like, follow, and share their channels to help spread the word.

Let's work together for a sustainable ocean future.

We look forward to your contributions!

SOOS News

Calling for a SOOS ECR Representative with interest in the Southern Ocean Indian Sector

The Southern Ocean Indian Sector (SOIS) Regional Working Group (RWG) is calling all early career researchers with working knowledge of observational research in the Southern Ocean with a particular interest in the Indian Sector to apply for the position of APECS ECR representative. The successful applicant will attend RWG meetings and be responsible for assisting with data collection, curation, and reportage. The position will be for 2 years and non-salaried, but there will be travel reimbursement for attending one meeting if the working group holds a meeting during your term, and potential for co-authorship of publications. The ECR representative will be the key point of liaison with the Association of Polar Early Career Scientists (APECS). Apply by 22 May.

SOOS Highlights 2025

SOOS's 2024 Annual Report is now available, highlighting a year of dynamic progress across science, data, and policy in a stylish format. From major upgrades to the SOOSmap data portal and the launch of a new joint hub on ocean acidification, to high-impact publications and strong representation at international policy forums, SOOS has continued to connect Southern Ocean science with global priorities.

2025 Opportunities

Register for ESKOM Science EXPO judging 2025

Hi MARIS ECRs, it's that time of year again to give back to the Cape Town community. Many of you may have participated in the Eskom Science Expo as high school learners. Now, you have the opportunity to return as judges and help inspire the next generation of young scientists and engineers. I'll be convening the Engineering category, but please feel free to register for any category where you feel confident contributing.

Judging Details:

19 August 2025 (whole day) at the UCT Sports Centre, Upper Campus, UCT, Rondebosch

It would be wonderful to have a strong MARIS presence this year and your involvement makes a real difference. If you have any questions or would like more information please feel free to contact Robyn Verrinder. I have also attached the email from the Cape Town Organisers below for more information:

Dear Selectors (2025) and previous Chief Judges, Conveners and Judges

Thank you for giving up your time to act as a Selector at one or more of the 2025 District Expos. We appreciate the time you spent with our young scientists. We are now giving 2025 Selectors and previous Chief Judges, Conveners and Judges the opportunity to register as a Judge for Cape Town Expo 2025 also known as Expo.

We also welcome new judges so please recruit where you work or where you are studying. Expo alumni are also welcome to apply to judge - all in person at Cape Town Expo 2025.

Please note the following:

1. The Expo will take place at the UCT SPORTS CENTRE, UPPER CAMPUS, UCT, RONDEBOSCH. This is close to Rondebosch Station.

2. Meals and refreshments will be provided. You will need to bring your own water bottle and coffee mug,

3. There will be a virtual Judges training session on the evening of 29 July 2025. July. Details will be sent to Registered Judges

4. In a nutshell, the programme for Cape Town Expo will run as follows:

*Tuesday 19 August in the morning, register by 8am, prejudge all morning and interviews start at around 12.30 - all interviews should be done and results finalised around 19.00. Then Judges will receive a certificate and a gift and can leave. Dress: Smart Casual = the learner will be in school uniform. Details to follow to registered judges.

5. Please only register if you can attend all day on Tuesday 19 August. Your registration is also a commitment to keep the lines of communication open.

6. Transport: from Stellenbosch - we will ask the Conveners who are based in Stellenbosch to see if they can organise a bus. To be confirmed. Unfortunately, we cannot assist with transport within Cape Town.

7. To register as a Judge - please complete this form: [Cape Town Expo 2025 Judges registration form](#) by the latest 5pm on Monday 7 July so we can assess our Judging needs. I have attached a list of categories as you will need to select two different categories to assess projects in.

8. Also attached is the Judges Manual which is an excellent guide to being an Expo Judge.

Please email Judging queries for attention Olga Peel to admin@ctexpo.org.za

2025 Opportunities

12th SCAR Open Science Conference: Call for Event Proposals

The DSTI and NRF have announced a call for new Master's and Doctoral funding applications for the 2026 academic year, with continuing eligible students required to submit progress reports. Funding is available at Full Cost of Study (FCS) for eligible South African citizens and permanent residents (financially needy, disabled, or exceptional academic achievers) and Partial Cost of Study (PCS) for a limited number of international students and other qualifying South Africans. Applications across Science, Engineering, Technology, Social Sciences, and Humanities must be submitted online via the NRF Connect System, with specific opening and closing dates for students at different study levels.

Short course: Statistical modelling and data analysis using R

Closing date: 26 September 2025

The Centre for Statistics in Ecology, Environment and Conservation (SEEC) at the University of Cape Town is offering an **online short course on statistical modelling and data analysis** using R from October 27-31, 2025. Targeting researchers and scientists, the course covers R basics, regression, experimental design, and generalized linear models. The fee is R5000, and participants need basic statistical knowledge and their own computer with R and R-Studio.

Opportunity for NRF-funded postgraduates

Your story could feature in the annual UCT Postgrad Report, a strategic consolidation of the postgrad landscape presented to UCT's senior leadership committees to give them pulse-check of your community's initiatives, challenges and success as they unfolded over the past year at UCT. This could be your opportunity to share your story with them.

Deadline to respond online: 9.00am Tues 8 July 2025

[Complete the online form here.](#)

Programme for World Aquaculture Safari 2025

The World Aquaculture Safari 2025 (WA25 Uganda), set for June 24–27 at Speke Resort Munyonyo, will unite global experts, researchers, and stakeholders under the theme “Aquaculture on the Rise.” The [Conference Programme Grid](#) is now live on [WAS webpage](#) and will also soon feature on the Programme Book and Programme App (WAS Meetings Assistant). With over 400 presentations, multilingual sessions, student and farmer-focused events, and a major international trade show, the conference highlights Africa's aquaculture potential and the vital role of development partners. Key sponsors include the EU-funded TRUEFISH Project, GIZ, and the World Bank. The event promises rich dialogue, innovation, and collaboration to shape sustainable aquaculture across the continent. Full press release [here](#).

Podcasts:

What to listen out for?



There are so many new amazing podcasts available online so we thought we would share some of those that might interest you. Have a listen to them in your spare time, you might learn something new from various people's stories or from the array of environmental topics discussed.

[Climate Frontiers](#)

A podcast series exploring the latest thinking, approaches and debates in climate science, hosted by the Climate System Analysis Group, or CSAG, at the University of Cape Town.

[The Root of the Science Podcast](#)

Hosted by Anne Chisa. This show has interviews with guests involved in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

[Ready or Not, Change is Coming](#)

A 12-part Climate Podcast Series, dedicated to breaking down climate change into chewable elements to help us all understand it better, dispel the myths and remove the ambiguity. Tracey Thomas is the host of the the RONCIC series.



[The AtlantECO podcast](#)

A science popularisation show, revolving around conversations between the host and a guest to discuss aspects of AtlantECO, a marine science project which focuses on the Atlantic Ocean.

[BEPSII Podcast: Sea Ice Research, Studies, and Scientists](#)

the official podcast of BEPSII brings you the research studies and work, stories and resources by the members of BEPSII (Biogeochemical Exchanges Processes at Sea Ice Interfaces) – scientists from all over the world and at all career stages.

[Iceworld podcast - British Antarctic Survey](#)

From polar scientists to plumbers, ICEWORLD is a series of interviews with ordinary people who are doing extraordinary jobs in Antarctica. The team talk climate science, extreme living, expeditions and becoming a community. Iceworld is hosted and recorded by Nadia Frontier, and produced in partnership with Boffin Media.

Call for ECRs to join the Working Group

The **UCT-MARiS ECR Working Group** is looking out for volunteers to assist us in putting ideas and actions together to better the ECR community, to build relationship and foster a spirit of community-led research. We aim to have representation from each of the MARiS-related departments, so that we can have a balanced set of ideas and planning throughout the year.

We have several portfolios that each of us contribute to in the working group, see as follows:

1. Events
2. Transformation and Outreach
3. Integration and Sustainability
4. Communications
5. Finances

The ECR working group meets bi-monthly and usually dedicates a couple hours a week to make sure to get the necessary work done in preparation for an event or the next WG meeting. If you are interested in getting involved and committing to assisting the ECR Working Group for the next year, we would love for you to mail us at ecr.maris@uct.ac.za and let us know which portfolio you would prefer to work with. We're especially looking for enthusiastic ECRs from the Electrical Engineering and Chemical Engineering departments to ensure a well-balanced group, but everyone is welcome to join! **[Sign the form here too!](#)**

If you are interested in generating content for MARiS, please email comms.maris@uct.ac.za directly. We want to share marine related content, involving interdisciplinary research, whether it may be fun facts, opportunities available, or sharing your current research, fieldtrips, cruises, conferences, workshops, events, etc. You let us know!



We want to know what is happening in the marine and Antarctic sphere and share it with our networks.

Follow us and feel free to tag us on social media and we'll be happy to repost what you get up to with your research:

Twitter: [@MARIS_UCT](https://twitter.com/MARIS_UCT)
Instagram: [@maris_uct](https://www.instagram.com/maris_uct)



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Because you are part of our MARiS ECR network.



Give MARiS a follow on social media

CONTACT US

If you'd like to sign up for the [ECR mailing list](#) or you'd like to include an event or opportunity in our next newsflash, please email ecr.maris@uct.ac.za.