



Newsflash

ECR Monthly Newsletter

31 MARCH 2025, ISSUE 39

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!

LATEST NEWS INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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February–March Highlights

ECR Coffee Talk

On Tuesday, 11 March, during the monthly coffee talk, hosted at the UCT Chemical Engineering Department, we had the exciting opportunity to hear from two MARiS ECRs about their experiences onboard the OceanXplorer vessel. PhD student, **Yameen Badrodien** recently returned from a once-in-a-lifetime experience participating onboard the Around Africa Expedition (Comores Islands to South Africa leg) aboard the OceanXplorer in collaboration with OceanQuest. Masters student, **Daniel Jones** was one out of 14 students selected for the first OceanX Young Explorers cohort of 2025, that embarked on an immersive 5-day experience onboard the OceanXplorer vessel from Cape Town to Windhoek, Namibia, while learning through daily workshops, hands-on activities, and independent studies. It was so exciting for the rest of the ECRs to hear about their experiences onboard and find out more about the benefits of getting ship-based experience and how it can broaden your perspective on ocean science and opportunities in the field. You can read more about their experiences on the [MARiS Website here](#).



ECR Newlands Hike

On Thursday, 13 March 2025, early career researchers (ECRs) from UCT-MARiS, along with friends, took a well-deserved break from their studies and research to embark on a scenic hike through Newlands Forest.



Led by Deputy Director, Robyn Verrinder, the hike provided a refreshing change of scenery, allowing participants to unwind, connect with colleagues, and appreciate the breathtaking natural beauty of Cape Town.

As they made their way along the trail behind UCT Upper Campus grounds and through to Newlands Forest, they were treated to stunning views of the city and surrounding mountains, all while enjoying great conversations and shared laughter. Beyond the physical challenge, the hike served as an opportunity for team bonding and networking in a relaxed environment, reinforcing the importance of work-life balance for researchers. UCT-MARiS continues to foster a supportive and engaging community for early career researchers, with events like these encouraging collaboration and well-being.

Here's to many more outdoor adventures ahead! Stay tuned to the ECR Newsflash, UCT-MARiS social platforms or get in touch with the ECR Reps via email at ecr.maris@uct.ac.za to find out more.

Recent MARiS ECR Publications



2025

20 Feb 2025 | Increased Rotational Coupling Between Antarctic Sea Ice and the Atmosphere Over the Last 30 Years

Wayne de Jager *and* Marcello Vichi

UCT-MARiS PhD student Wayne de Jager and Marcello Vichi highlights a knowledge gap on the possibly increasing influence of the under-ice ocean on drift dynamics. Key Points of the article:

- New generation sea-ice motion products capture weather-driven cyclonic and anticyclonic features in Antarctic sea ice at daily timescales
- Increased correlation between sea-ice and atmospheric rotation dynamics indicates increasing response of ice to atmospheric forcing
- The lack of trend in the ice or atmospheric vorticity points to an increasing ocean influence on ice mobility



To read the article, you can [download the paper here](#).

26 March 2025 | Intercomparison of Antarctic Sea-Ice Thickness Estimates from Satellite Altimetry and Assessment over the 2019 Data-Rich Year

Magata Jesaya Mangatane, *and* Marcello Vichi

UCT-MARiS PhD student Magata Mangatane and Marcello Vichi presents a comparative study using three empirical methods (ERM, BERM, and OLM) and one lidar-only method (ZIF) to determine Antarctic Sea-ice thickness (SIT) from lidar freeboard observations, one method combining lidar and radar freeboard observations (FDM), and one that uses both lidar freeboard observations and an independent snow depth dataset from passive microwaves (SICC).



To read the article, you can [download the paper here](#).

Autumn 2025 Graduation

On behalf of UCT-MARiS, we would like to congratulate those students who will be graduating this week, from Monday, 31 March until Friday, 4 April 2025. The ceremonies will be [livestreamed on the website](#), and the video recordings will be made available on [UCT's YouTube channel](#) after the event. Please feel free to share your celebrations with us on your socials and tag MARiS at @maris_uct, or email some photos to leila.nefdt@uct.ac.za, as we would like to share your achievements from our side too.





Dates to diarize

Side Events at ICSHMO

The following side events will be held at the 14th International Conference on Southern Hemisphere Meteorology and Oceanography (ICSHMO) at the CTICC. Please click on the links below for more information, sign-up details and/or livestreaming options:

- [South Africa Risk and Vulnerability Atlas \(SARVA\) Policy Session](#)

1 April at 10h30 SAST

- The [Ocean20 \(O20\) Launch](#)

2 April at 10h30 SAST

- An [Evening of Science, Stories & Solutions](#)

2 April at 17h00 SAST

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 April 2025
- Time: 13h00 - 14h00
- Venue: Electrical Engineering Departmental Seminar Room, 6th Floor, Menzies Building, Upper Campus.
- Bring a mug along, and let's chat about some of the amazing plans we have planned for 2025! We've got another hike in store and a games night coming up soon, so stay tuned!



Present at the UCT-SANCOR Seminar Series

We invite you to present on your coastal and marine research projects at the UCT-SANCOR Seminar Series in 2025. **The seminars are held on Mondays at 13h00 at UCT** (hybrid format). Speakers outside of Cape Town will be hosted via Zoom. [Book your date now and join the conversation! Email Carmen Visser at \[c.visser@risa.nrf.ac.za\]\(mailto:c.visser@risa.nrf.ac.za\).](#)

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

For enquiries regarding the mentorship programme, please contact the SAPRI Engagement Manager: [Dr Wade De Kock](#)

SANCOR Vacancies

April 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: The Future Evolution of Global Ocean Overturning Cells at Different Global Warming Levels

National Centre for Meteorological Research (CNRM), Toulouse, France

Closing Date: [01 April 2025](#)

Find out more information [here](#).

Thematic Experts for the Digital Twin of the Ocean: Ocean Modelling Expert | Earth Observation Expert | Coordinator of Downstream Applications & Calls | DTO Release Manager.

Mercator Ocean International, Toulouse, France

Closing Date: [04 April 2025](#)

Find out more information [here](#).

Coastal Zone Management Research Group Leader

Oceanographic Research Institute (ORI), Durban, KwaZulu-Natal

Closing Date: [04 April 2025](#)

Find out more information [here](#).

Postdoctoral position in ocean biogeochemistry
GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel, Germany

Closing Date: [06 April 2025](#)

Find out more information [here](#).

Conservationist

Cousine Island Company, Cousine Island, Seychelles

Closing Date: [06 April 2025](#)

Find out more information [here](#).

PhD position: Multidisciplinary analyses for understanding the long-term development and daily-dynamics of tidal flats, and its consequences for ecological quality

Royal Netherlands Institute of Sea Research (NIOZ) Zeeland, Netherlands

Closing Date: [18 April 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

Applications open for SEAmester VIII

Closing date: 31 March 2025

SEAmester VIII will take place during 17-27 June 2025. Applications are now being accepted for student and lecturer positions. Click here for an [overview of the layout of the programme](#). SEAmester introduces marine science as an applied and cross-disciplinary field to students. Its long-term vision is aimed at building capacity within the marine sciences by co-ordinating cross-disciplinary research projects through a highly innovative programme. The strength of SEAmester is that postgraduate students combine theoretical classroom learning with the application of this knowledge through ship-based and hands-on research. The state-of-the-art research vessel, SA Agulhas II, provides the ideal teaching and research platform for SEAmester; its size, comfort and shipboard facilities allow large groups of students and lecturers to productively interact over a period of 10 days.

To find out more about previous SEAmester students' experiences, [read the article on the UCT-MARiS website](#).

Webinar on Project Management

9 April at 13h00 SAST

The Mahlalela Mentorship Programme, supporting postgraduate students and early-career marine and polar researchers, presents its second webinar: "Project Management" with Tafadzwa Muza. This session, following the successful CV Building webinar ([recording](#) and [slides](#) available), will offer valuable insights on April 9th, 2025, at 13h00 SAST. All interested individuals are encouraged to attend and contribute to building a vibrant, inclusive research community. [Click here to receive the link](#) and further updates.

PhD opportunity in Physical Oceanography

Closing date: 31 March 2025

PhD opportunity in Physical Oceanography to investigate the "Drivers influencing sponge distribution along South Africa's southern and western shores". The knowledge derived from this research will be used to inform the management and expansion of Marine Protected Area networks in South Africa. The selected student will form part of the Nansen-Tutu Centre for Marine Environmental Research. The student will be required to spend some of their study period in France with their French supervisor in Brest. No closing date indicated.



2025 Opportunities

Summer School in Italy on Marine Acoustic Ecology

The Anton Dohrn Napoli Zoological Station (SZN) will host the upcoming Summer School 2025 ECOWAVES, entitled "Marine Soundscapes in the Anthropophony Era", which will take place from **26-30 May 2025**, at the Darwin-Dohrn Museum of SZN in Naples, Italy. This intensive programme offers participants a comprehensive introduction to the application of acoustics in ecological studies. Early-career researchers, graduate students and professionals with an interest in marine ecology and bioacoustics are invited to apply. Attendees will explore the science of acoustic waves in seawater, gaining fundamental knowledge of the physics of sound and the use of cutting-edge instruments to analyse marine soundscapes. Through a combination of theoretical sessions and hands-on training, participants will develop the skills needed to assess the role of sound in marine ecosystems and evaluate the impacts of noise on the physiology and behaviour of marine organisms. The programme takes a multidisciplinary approach, equipping attendees with the tools to contribute to innovative research and conservation strategies in marine ecology. [See more information here.](#)

L'Oréal-UNESCO Grants for South African Women in Science

The L'Oréal-UNESCO For Women in Science South Africa programme is offering research grants to support talented South African women in STEM fields. Three PhD researchers will receive R80,000 each, and three post-doctoral researchers will receive R160,000 each. The programme aims to address the gender gap in science by empowering female researchers and recognising their contributions. [See more information here.](#)

SCAR 2025 Fellowships

SCAR has launched its 2025 Antarctic-related Fellowships for early-career researchers. Following the launch of the Polar Initiative in 2022 the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation has funded an additional SCAR fellowship and as a result SCAR will offer in total four to five fellowships of up to USD \$15,000 each for 2025. [See more information here.](#)

Free MOOC on Marine Spatial Planning

The Institute for Coastal and Marine Research (and collaborators) is offering a free Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to share lessons learnt in developing the Algoa Bay Marine Spatial Plan (MSP). The MOOC will be available for free on the Nelson Mandela University's Engage platform and can be accessed at any time by anybody around the World! [Click here for further details, if you are interested in doing this course, kindly register here.](#) YouTube details: https://youtu.be/_g2PxfPKVOQ.

One Ocean Science Congress

ICES Seminar for Early Career Ocean Professionals

You don't have to swim alone before your next big presentation! The Strategic Initiative on Integration of Early Career Scientists (SII ECS) Seminar Series provides a platform for sharing marine science outputs, with a particular focus on early career scientists. The platform allows them to practice their presentations in an inclusive and equitable space where we encourage active participation, thoughtful questions, and constructive discussion from the attendees. If you are an ECOP attending and presenting at the OOSC in June 2025, you may be interested in the upcoming seminar series on 8 April 2025. [You can find more details using this link.](#)

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

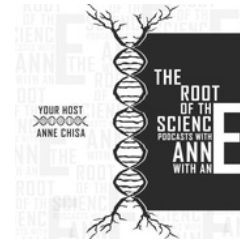
A podcast series exploring the latest thinking, approaches and debates in climate science, hosted by the Climate System Analysis Group, or CSAG, at the University of Cape Town.

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.

Agulhas Current Affairs

A marine science podcast set in Southern Africa with marine biologists Dr Yanas Kisten and Dr Nelson Miranda.

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
Instagram: @maris_uct**



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Because you are part of our MARiS ECR network.



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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.