



OCEAN/UNI  
2026

Exploring the human dimensions of Mediterranean  
biodiversity as strategies for coexistence and resilience

Plural Seas,  
Porous Futures

January 28 — May 20, 2026

Apply



OCEAN / UNI is an initiative dedicated to art, activism, and science that invites fluid thinking with the Ocean as a way to move beyond the binaries of land and sea. OCEAN / UNI's curriculum provides students, researchers, and the public access to wide-ranging ideas and explorations through regular live sessions, reading groups, small-scale workshops or activations, and other online material, free and accessible to everyone on [Ocean-Archive.org](https://Ocean-Archive.org).

Aiming to complement and enhance land-based understanding of the Earth, it covers a wide range of ecological, political, aesthetic, ethical, and scientific topics around the realities and futures of the Ocean.

OCEAN / UNI: Spring 2026 Plural Seas, Porous Futures is developed within the framework of the MEDiverSEAty project, a European Doctoral Network exploring the human dimensions of Mediterranean marine biodiversity. The associated Digital Residency and Activations are supported by Ars Biologica (Budweis – European Capital of Culture 2028, CZ).



## Academic Partners

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- University Of Milan Bicocca (UniMiB)
- Centre National De La Recherche Scientifique (CNRS)
- Università Ta Malta (UM)
- Javna Ustanova Univerzitet Crne Gore Podgorica (UCG)
- Agencia Estatal Consejo Superior De Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC)
- Panepistimio Aigaiou (UAEGEAN)



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# Plural Seas, Porous Futures

**OCEAN / UNl: Spring semester 2026 Plural Seas, Porous Futures** turns toward the human dimensions of Mediterranean biodiversity. Participants are invited to examine how plural values, practices, and policies shape shared seas and coastal life. Across one introductory meeting and six biweekly sessions, we invite you to come together with MEDiverSEAty fellows, scholars, artists, researchers and community actors on the topics of values, participation and policy, digital narratives, relational foodscapes, and (sea)rewilding. In these exchanges, we traverse the passageways between the monoliths of art, science and conservation, led by scholars and speakers who are working towards porous futures for human–ocean relations.

This means examining the marine biodiversity pillar of the UN sustainable development agenda, articulated through SDG 14 (Life Below Water). Rather than sustaining technocratic constructions of marine socioecological systems, our lines of enquiry explore ways of cultivating relational approaches among the living beings that constitute biodiversity. The biological distinctiveness of the Mediterranean Sea — inseparable from its millennia of imperial expansion, maritime exchange, migration, and resource extraction — make it an instructive case, considering the plural modes of relation and value that have shaped its seascapes.

To complement these discussions, the semester is paired with a Digital Residency and Activation series, *Sound Ecologies*, led by artist/researcher Robertina Šebjanič, through which participants practice listening as a relational



and investigative tool. If the main sessions ask how plural values and policies shape Mediterranean biodiversity, and vice versa, this Activation series invites participants to sense and test those questions through embodied, more-than-human encounters.

*Sound Ecologies* proposes an attunement to environments through practices of listening, recording, and acoustic investigation. Instead of understanding ecological relations solely through visual or data-driven means, *Sound Ecologies* foreground the vibrational, affective, and often unnoticed sonic exchanges that constitute multispecies worlds. By using field recordings, microphones and hydrophones, and investigative audio methods, artists, researchers and ocean comm/uni/ty members can trace disturbances, witness submerged lives, and reveal the acoustic signatures of environmental change. Sound becomes both a medium of encounter and a forensic tool: it documents harm, amplifies nonhuman agencies, and cultivates an embodied awareness of cohabitation. By listening closely to the textures of the hydro-sphere, terra-sphere, and atmo-sphere, *Sound Ecologies* nurture forms of ecological responsibility grounded in resonance, empathy, and situated witnessing, inviting a shift from managing biodiversity to cultivating deeper sensory relations with it.

In the Plural Seas, Porous Futures OCEAN / UNI semester, we think with tools and languages, relational approaches, ocean literacy, and lived coastal knowledge. By moving between conceptual frameworks and situated examples from the Mediterranean, the semester seeks to co-design governance, pedagogical, and cultural practices that can sustain more-than-human futures and a more just, diverse experience of marine biodiversity.



# Who can Participate & How to Register

The program is intended for anyone eager to deepen their relations with the ecological, political, aesthetic, ethical, and scientific knowledges around the realities and futures of the Ocean. Lectures will be held in English.

Participants are invited to register for the program online to receive Zoom links and session reminders. Zoom links, session information, and recordings can also be found on the [ocean comm/uni/ty](https://oceancommuni ty.org) platform. You are welcome to register in advance for more than one session. If you attend all five sessions, you will receive an official certificate of attendance upon request.

## Register



# Program

## Main Sessions

All main sessions and activations take place live online via Zoom, biweekly on

**Wednesdays at 6 pm CET or CEST // 12 pm ET // 1 pm AT // 2 pm BRT // 7 pm SAST // 10.30 pm IST**

## Community intro session to MEDiverSEAty

→ January 28, 2026, 6 – 7 pm CET

### **In quest of the human dimensions of Mediterranean marine biodiversity**

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A short introductory session to the semester, and a chance to find out more about OCEAN / UNI and the research behind the project. Meet others taking part in the semester, including the MEDiverSEAty researchers who have taken on the role of curators, and the team behind OCEAN / UNI.



# Session 1

→ February 4, 2026, 6 – 7.30 pm CET

## Creative and critical approaches to socio-ecological futures

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### Keywords

Human-marine relationship, Mediterranean biodiversity, art–science collaboration, migration.

Our Prologue sets up one of the pillars of the MEDiverSEAty project: the need for interdisciplinarity to build an inclusive and critical approach to conservation. Environmental conservation requires complementarity between descriptive and normative claims (as stated by Michael E. Souléin ‘What is conservation biology?, 1985).

Complementary to natural sciences, social, cultural, and political studies help us identify the hidden values we may implicitly use in current scientific practices and, no less important, imagine the world we wish to see in the future.

This session will introduce various cases of art–science collaborations as examples of conducting participatory transdisciplinarity research, showing how art can be conceived as both a legitimate source of knowledge and a creative means to foster public engagement.

The second part of the session will focus on the Mediterranean context. From a decolonial perspective, we will discuss the political and social dynamics that have long contributed to shaping Mediterranean communities beyond the European borders.



## Speakers

### Ruth Brennan

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Senior Research Fellow at the School of Natural Sciences and Associate Research Fellow at the Trinity Centre for Environmental Humanities, Trinity College Dublin, policy advisor at the European Parliament

Dr Ruth Brennan is a marine social scientist, integration expert and policy advisor to an Irish Member of the European Parliament, specialising in marine environmental governance, transdisciplinary research and the arts-science-policy interface. She is a Senior Research Fellow at Trinity College Dublin, currently based in the School of Natural Sciences. She is an Associate Research Fellow at the Trinity Centre for Environmental Humanities where she worked from 2017-2020. Her research interests include environmental governance with a focus on society-environment relations, socio-cultural values, socioecological systems and social justice. Ruth is a Board Member of Ireland's Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) and a member of MARA's Scientific and Technical Reference Committee. She is a member of the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES) WGSOCIAL Working Group on Social Dimensions and has served as an expert advisor to the Irish and Scottish Governments. She occupies the unusual niche of working both in academia and the policy environment at the same time, with part-time roles in both areas.



## Nikolas Kosmatopoulos

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Associate Professor of Politics and Anthropology at the American University of Beirut, Co-founder and member of the research network FLOATS and Decolonize Hellas

Nikolas is an Associate Professor of Politics and Anthropology at the American University of Beirut, with joint appointments in the Department of Political Studies and Public Administration and the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Media Studies, and an Associate Editor for Middle East Critique. He is also co-founder and member of the research network FLOATS (floating Laboratory of Action and Theory at Sea) as well as the collective Decolonize Hellas, which bridges research and community work. His work engages with pressing issues such as the struggles of fishers in South Lebanon facing the dispossession of their fishing grounds, and more broadly with questions of the Mediterranean within the Global South. His current research also includes an ethnographic study of the Gaza Freedom Flotilla, examining the politics of the sea and the infrastructures of international solidarity.

## Carlotta La Penna

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Carlotta La Penna is a PhD candidate in Law, Political Studies, and Philosophy at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS) in Paris. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy and a Master's Degree in Philosophical Sciences from the University of Florence, where



she completed a thesis titled “Theory and Praxis of Conservation Biology: A Philosophical Perspective.” During her master’s studies, she spent a period abroad as an Erasmus student at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon–Sorbonne, which allowed her to engage with diverse branches of the philosophy of science. Her research interests lie at the intersection of the philosophy of biology, environmental aesthetics, and biodiversity studies.

## Inès Vincent

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Inès Vincent is a PhD candidate in the Department of Marine Sciences at the University of the Aegean, as part of the Marie Skłodowska–Curie Doctoral Network MEDiverSEAty. Her doctoral research titled: “Socio–ecological Approach for Mediterranean ICZM under Global Change”, investigates how the integration of local knowledge through coastal communities engagement strengthens collaborative coastal governance.



# Session 2

→ February 18, 2026, 6 – 7.30 pm CET

## Empowering communities through activism, artistic practice and science for ocean protection

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### Keywords

Public policy; citizen science; participatory science; ocean stewardship; activism; community engagement.

Ocean governance requires a dynamic shift from top-down regulation to inclusive, bottom-up engagement if it is to be socially fair and environmentally sound. This session examines the critical role that communities play in shaping the future of ocean governance and protection. We will explore the symbolic power of artistic practice, together with robust citizen science and participatory science, and the impact of data-driven environmental movements, that form new pathways for meaningful public involvement in ocean protection. We will also discuss how activism and broader societal engagement can influence political decision-making.

### Guests

#### Baiba Prūse

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Citizen science researcher, SPOTTERON Citizen Science App Platform, Austria

Baiba is an ambassador of citizen science who has been researching and applying various engagement methods together with various collaborators. Her continuous journey



across Europe has brought her to numerous places and diverse projects at the intersections of art, local ecological knowledge, marine science and citizen science. Baiba is currently based in Vienna, where she recently joined the SPOTTERON Citizen Science App Platform team.

## Léna Frejaille

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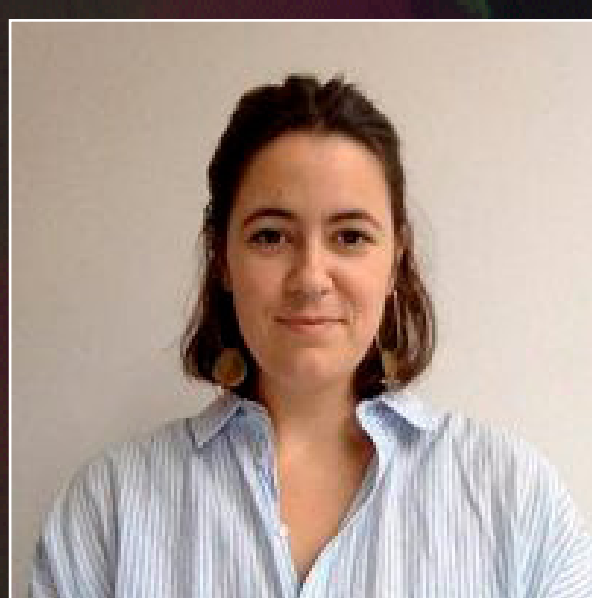


Project coordinator at Bloom Association

Léna studied political science and agricultural development and currently works as a project officer on fisheries transition at BLOOM. She was previously the project officer on rural development, biodiversity and oceans for the French Development Agency, in charge of monitoring two projects on fishery transition and marine conservation in Mexico.

## Victoria Campón

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Victoria is a PhD student at the Institut Jean Nicod (ENS – PSL), where her research focuses on the complex interplay between scientific evidence, policy, and the social dimensions of fisheries. Prior to beginning her doctoral studies, she worked as a Fisheries Scientist at CEFAS (United Kingdom), gaining extensive experience in fisheries and fisheries management.



With a background in fisheries science and biodiversity conservation, she is particularly interested in how human behaviour and environmental factors shape resource management. Her previous professional experiences and research interests enable her to adopt a multidisciplinary approach, integrating ecological, social, and policy perspectives to develop innovative solutions for sustainable fisheries.

## Justin Whittle

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Justin Whittle is a distinguished professional with expertise in nature-based solutions, international sustainable development, and environmental conservation. He is currently pursuing a PhD in Marine Biodiversity in Malta. Originally from Australia, he has long been driven by a commitment to protecting oceans and landscapes. He holds a Master of Science degree completed in the Netherlands and Germany, as well as a Bachelor of Science earned through studies in Thailand and Australia. His international academic background and global experiences enable him to bring a multidisciplinary perspective to contemporary environmental challenges.



# Session 3

→ March 4, 2026, 6 – 7.30 pm CET

## Sensing the sea: Digital immersion for ocean literacy and conservation narratives

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### Keywords

Storytelling, digital games, audience engagement, interaction, gamification.

The human experience underwater is almost entirely mediated by technology, which shapes how we see, move in, and sense the ocean. The mediated relationship between humans and the underwater world is often narrated in pessimistic tones. Creative projects offer a way to reconsider these technological relationships, opening space for imaginaries that move beyond dystopian narratives toward more constructive, situated, and emotionally resonant futures. Grounded in the concept of immersion, this session explores the sensorial and affective dimensions that art and digital media can bring to underwater technologies. By engaging with digital art, 3D design, and video games, we aim to understand how creative practices can expand ecological discourse—helping us to feel, not just understand, the ocean's complexity. The session brings together two distinct approaches: the institutional and collaborative projects of 3D Research, which investigate how structured creative processes can engage audiences with underwater themes; and the DIY, activist practice of cyber\_nymphs, artists whose work spans digital media and augmented reality to evoke intimate, sensorial relationships with ecological worlds. Together, these perspectives invite us to immerse ourselves—emotionally, imaginatively, and digitally—to explore how creativity can cultivate new relationships with underwater technologies and inspire more empathetic ways of engaging with the ocean.



## Guests

### cyber\_nymphs

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(Ewelina Jarosz, Justyna Górowska) – Independent researchers and activists/artists

Since 2021, Justyna and Ewelina have collaborated as the art research duo known as ‘cyber\_nymphs.’ As artists and scholars, they exchange skills, share knowledge, and work towards making the Blue Planet a lovable and desirable home for planetary survival. The duo aims to infuse blue posthumanities and blue environmental art with elements of fun, sensuality, and diversity. By advocating for a transdisciplinary approach that bridges new humanities and marine sciences, they delve into digital art and eco technologies as potential means to amplify ecological messages. In 2023, cyber\_nymphs launched the hydrosexual movement in the arts, aimed at fostering a community of artists, academics, and activists sharing their cross-disciplinary approach to water. They continue the work of Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens, Californian artists who launched the ecosexual movement in arts in 2008. Drawing from their ideas on environmental change through art and activism, Ewelina and Justyna invited Annie and Beth and the scientist from the Great Salt Lake Institute at Westminster College to participate in ‘Cyber Wedding to the Brine Shrimp’ performance (2021). Since then, they have initiated collaborations in art projects and take part in symposiums, art events, and conferences dedicated to aquatic ecosystems. They are the mothers of brine shrimp babies and founders of the [Blue Humanities Archive](#), a platform for networking and sharing projects in blue digital and hydro-creative art.



# Marco Cozza

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CTO of 3D Research, Creamare

Marco received his Master's Degree in Computer Science in 2015 at the University of Calabria, with a thesis entitled 'Mining and Recommendation Techniques for museums tours'. He is a Senior Software Engineer, Project Manager and CTO at 3D Research, since 2014. He has experience in design and development of interactive applications for the exploitation of the Cultural Heritage. In particular, he has considerable experience in VR and AR applications, mobile applications and serious games

## Moderators

# Ludovica Montecchio

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Ludovica Montecchio is currently doing her PhD in cultural anthropology at the University of Milano-Bicocca in partnership with TBA21. Her research investigates how artistic practice and public participation can contribute to more social and cultural approaches to marine conservation, both in digital and physical cultural institutions. She has held various internships, including at TBA21-Academy, EqualSea Lab, and IOC-UNESCO, where she engaged in ocean literacy projects, citizen science initiatives and environmental education. She got her MA in Environmental Humanities at Ca' Foscari University of Venice.



# Antonija Avdalović

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CTO of 3D Research, Creamare

Antonija Avdalović is a PhD researcher at the Institute for Marine Biology in Kotor, Montenegro. Her research focuses on the impacts of microplastic pollution in marine ecosystems, with an emphasis on the Mediterranean Sea. Antonija holds a Master's degree in Zoology from the University of Belgrade, where her thesis on the effects of temperature on *Triturus* newt larvae earned her the award for Best Master's Thesis. During her studies, she was actively involved in the student field group Bid Josif Pančić, contributing to projects in hydrobiology and herpetology. She also served as Editor-in-Chief of the student magazine Simbioza, where she fostered her passion for science communication and the popularization of science.



# Session 4

→ March 18, 2026, 6 – 7.30 pm CET

## Relational foodscapes by the sea

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### Keywords

Relational foodscapes, more-than-food, visceral politics, food memories, relationality, interconnectedness.

Departing from one of our most visceral interactions with the sea – seafood consumption – this session traces how everyday culinary practices crystallize political, cultural, ecological, and affective relationships along and with changing shorelines. We bring geographer Michael K. Goodman and multidisciplinary artist Yolenn Farges into dialogue to explore how coastal foodscapes are entangled with multiscalar contexts of rapid socio-ecological change. Rather than framing shifts in eating patterns as primarily cognitive or awareness-based, we ask how they might emerge through embodied, sensorial ways of engaging with food that open space for other relationalities – eventually posing new political possibilities. How are seafood practices and memories being reshaped as marine ecologies transform? Can culinary practices linked to the sea foster more-than-consumerist relationships to a living sea? And how might the political force of transgressing through embodied practice and performance be mobilized together with urgently needed multiscalar transformations in coastal food systems and marine governance?



## Guests

### Michael Goodman

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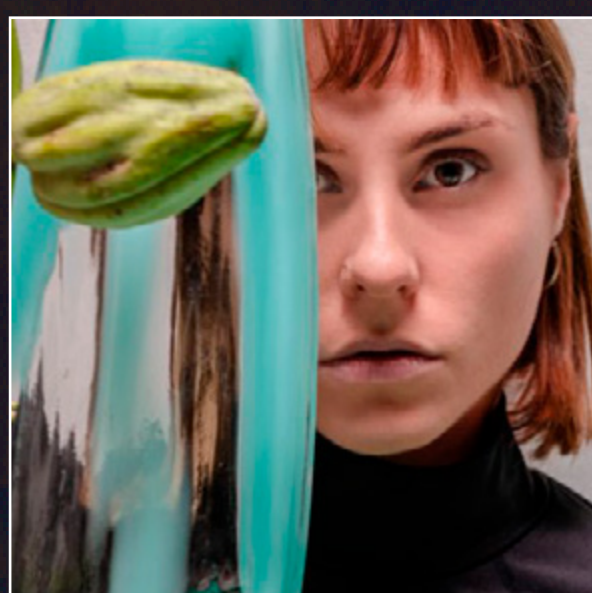


Professor of Environment and Development/Human Geography

Michael Goodman is an interdisciplinary, critical human geographer focusing on the cultural politics of food, humanitarianism and the environment. Research topics have included fair trade networks, alternative food networks, the rise of celebrity politics in the context of food, climate change and global development and ways society is attempting to make life more just, liveable and care-full in the Anthropocene. He holds a position of Professor of Environment and Development/Human Geography at the University of Reading (UK), and grew up by the ocean.

### Yolenn Farges

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Artist and researcher

Yolenn Farges is a French artist-researcher. She lives and works between Palermo and France. In 2020, she graduated from the École des Beaux-Arts de Nantes with a DNSEP “Construire les mondes”, a master’s program that connects art with reflections on the contemporary world through scientific, ecological, and political issues. Her work combines art, science, and cooking to address themes related to ecosystems and post-nature paradigms. She particularly explores the interdependent relationships

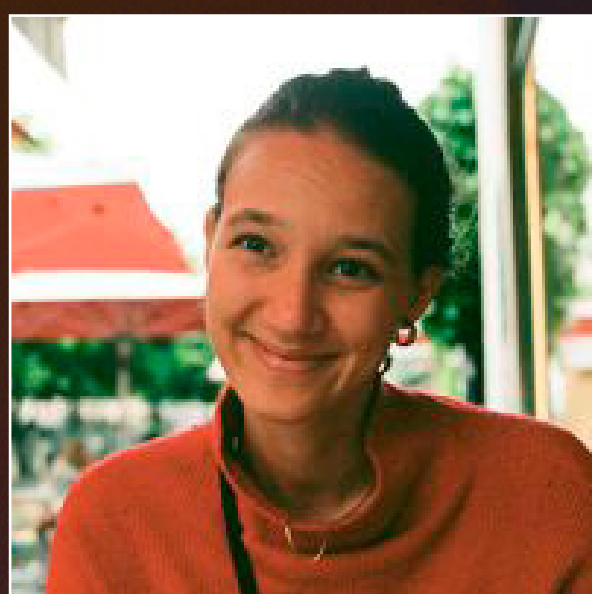


among different forms of otherness. She has undertaken several artistic research residencies, including Les Ateliers Panormos, organized by the Institut français of Palermo, and Création en Cours with Ateliers Médicis (Paris), as well as workshops with educational and artistic associations. She has been awarded several grants, including the ECHOS grant (IF Chile). Her work is currently exhibited in the show “Potion Vial” at Plateforme, Paris. Since 2024, she has been based in Palermo, working in curation and production with FSR on these same themes, particularly within the ecological context of the Mediterranean.

## Moderators

### Aloïs Aguezzant

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Aloïs Aguezzant is a political scientist, holder of a Bachelor's in political science and international relations from SOAS, University of London and of the Interdisciplinary Master in International Affairs from the Geneva Graduate Institute, where she specialised in environmental governance and in gender studies. Her interdisciplinary research specifically looks at the gender dynamics of fishing communities – tying together notions of care and equity in marine spaces. She experiments with participative photography and mixed-creative methods as a way of collecting scientific data.



# Gabriel Araújo Njaim

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Gabriel Araújo Njaim is currently based in Mallorca, working at the Mediterranean Institute of Advanced Studies (IMEDEA). There, he continues to explore human–non-human relationships through multiscalar and multitemporal analytical lenses. His research sits at the intersections of geography, island studies, development pathways, migration, place attachment, identity studies, and psychology. He is particularly focused on examining socio-ecological relationships through a biocultural perspective, interpreting marine food elements in relation to shifting contexts such as climate change, trade markets, fishing practices, and evolving social values—all while maintaining ethical, intersectional, and progressive approaches to analysis.



# Session 5

→ April 1, 2026, 6 – 7.30 pm CEST

## Empowering marine biodiversity and the people around it: Shall we call it seawilding?

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### Keywords

Rewilding, ecosystem, coastal management, conservation, restoration.

‘Bringing nature back’ is the current motto of ecological conservation and restoration approaches, which focus on recovering and preserving biodiversity and ecosystem functioning so that we can learn to coexist with nature. However, we need to understand how to conduct and maintain these activities in the long term. In this session, we invite Carlos Mallo Molina and Xandra van der Eijk to talk about their work in marine ecological restoration. Both guests have experience engaging with different stakeholders to make the conservation of marine ecosystems a habit for local people in their ongoing projects, and make use of contrasting tools. We will discuss the idea of ‘seawilding’, the dynamics between marine restoration and people, and the role of mutual empowerment for transitioning into a more inclusive and sustainable society.



## Guests

### Carlos Mallo Molina

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Founder Innoceana

Carlos Mallo is a civil engineer and conservationist with extensive experience in large-scale engineering projects before founding Innoceana, an international non-profit marine conservation organization with entities in Spain, Costa Rica, and the United States. Recipient of the 2025 Goldman Environmental Prize for Islands & Island Nations, in recognition of his environmental leadership.

He has developed innovative conservation projects in Macaronesia, Central America and Fiji, combining engineering, science and community action. His work focuses on promoting Ocean Nature-Based Solutions, the regeneration of marine ecosystems and the integration of sustainability in coastal development. Carlos also serves on the Expert Committee for Marine Protected Areas of the Canary Islands and has represented Innoceana in numerous European programmes such as Horizon Europe and Interreg.

### Xandra van der Eijk

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Artist and researcher

Xandra van der Eijk is a Dutch artist and researcher, interested in the fluid, networked actors that constitute waterbodies. Central to their methodology is the concept

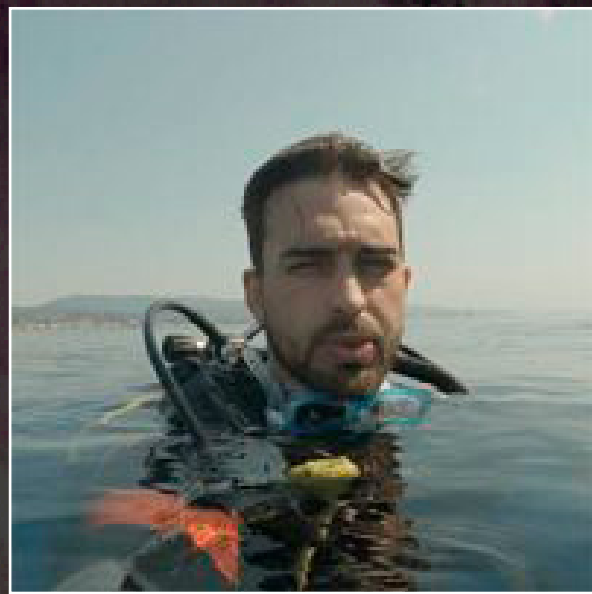


of Materiality of Place, a term devised to describe how site-specific actors embody ecological, cultural, and political worlds and how these can be uncovered by engaging in artistic fieldwork, material experimentation and technological mediation. As the founder of Ecology Futures at the Master Institute of Visual Cultures (Avans University of Applied Sciences), Xandra has played a pivotal role in shaping ecological art education in the Netherlands. In 2024, Van der Eijk started the long-term project Hydroformations, that focuses on the Rhine; meeting the river not as a resource to be managed, but as a living entity with its own rhythms and agency. Xandra is also involved in the School of the Dogger Bank project, where she is part of the Landscape & Public Space team.

## Moderators

### Gabriel Rivas Mena

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Gabriel Rivas Mena was born in Sevilla, Spain. After completing a Bachelor's degree in Biology at the University of Sevilla, he pursued a Master's degree through the Erasmus Mundus program in Marine Biological Resources (IMBRSea), where he deepened his knowledge of marine ecology, experimental design, and marine conservation. Over the course of the program, he studied in seven different European countries, gaining broad exposure to diverse marine environments.

He has experience working with deep-sea ecosystems, benthic habitats, and marine restoration. He is currently based at the Institute of Marine Biology of the University of Montenegro in Kotor, where he is conducting his PhD research on "Using Artificial Reefs to Preserve Biodiversity: Potential Implications for Marine Literacy and Education."



# Vincenzo de Cancellis

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Vincenzo is an Italian PhD student at the Islands and Small States Institute of the University of Malta. His research focuses on marine conservation and its coexistence with human activities, with particular attention to how protected areas can enhance local well-being and support climate change adaptation.

He holds a Master's degree in Global Change Ecology and Sustainable Development Goals from the University of Bologna, where his thesis explored sustainable fishery techniques to reduce elasmobranch bycatch while supporting artisanal fishing communities in Costa Rica. Alongside his studies, he collaborated with Triton Research on European marine conservation projects, including LIFE Conceptu maris, PINNA, and A-Mar 2000.



# Community closing session

→ April 8, 2026, 6 – 7 pm CEST

## Plural seas, porous futures?

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We invite you to a short closing session to wrap up the semester! All are welcome to bring any final questions or reflections to discuss with other OCEAN / UNI participants and the research team – or just to listen and spend some time in the OCEAN / UNlverse. Find out more about the next steps of the MEDiverSEAty project, and the opportunity to contribute to a digital publication.



# Open Calls

## Activations

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**Sound Ecologies** is a series of five online ‘activation’ sessions (April 15 – May 20, 2026) that serves as a collective research and skill-sharing platform within the OCEAN / UNI program.

Focusing on the relationship between **biodiversity**, **investigative listening**, and **ecoacoustics**, the program challenges the dominance of visual data by prioritizing the acoustic and affective dimensions of environments. Participants, including researchers, artists, and investigators from various fields, will use methods like deep listening, field-based investigation, and acoustic sensing to attune to the ecological, political, and multispecies dynamics of their surroundings.

The goal is to collaboratively produce a knowledge resource and an output that uses sound to reveal latent environmental dynamics and foster a more relational, porous understanding of the world. One participant’s project idea from the final pitching session will be selected for further development with a stipend.

The Activations are led artistically by **Robertina Šebjanič**, and feature special guest contributions from **Paula Zapata Ramiréz**, **Earshot collective**, and **Vladan Joler**.



Online sessions are held on:

→ April 15, 2026, 6 – 8 pm CEST

→ April 22, 2026, 6 – 8 pm CEST

→ April 29, 2026, 6 – 8 pm CEST

→ May 6, 2026, 6 – 8 pm CEST

→ May 20, 2026, 6 – 8 pm CEST

Participants will be expected to attend all sessions.

See more details apply directly via [Google Form](#),  
no later than February 28, 2026.

Apply



Ocean-Archive.org Digital Resident 2026 and facilitator of *Sound Ecologies* activation series:

## Robertina Šebjanič

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© Alexis Gilli

Robertina Šebjanič, based in Ljubljana, is an artist/researcher whose practice drifts through the fluid thresholds of ecology, (geo)politics, and arts, attuned to the rhythms and ruptures of aquatic worlds. Her award-winning works navigate the intertidal zones between species, and bringing to the surface the submerged voices of oceans and rivers. Her works received awards, honorary mentions and nominations at Prix Ars Electronica, Starts Prize, Falling Walls, and Re:Humanism. Her work has been exhibited widely in museums, biennials, and festivals such as Villa Arson (Nice), Momentum Biennale (Moss), Ars Electronica (Linz), Tribeca Immersive (New York), Kunstgewerbemuseum (Berlin), Cukrarna (Ljubljana), Matadero (Madrid), Sea Art Festival (Busan), Akbank Sanat (İstanbul), MSU Zagreb, MSUB Belgrade, MSUM Ljubljana, CCD (Mexico City) among others.



## Guests

### Paula Andrea Zapata-Ramírez

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© Paula Andrea Zapata-Ramírez archive

Paula Andrea Zapata-Ramírez is a leading marine biodiversity expert, researcher, and science leader with over 15 years of international experience in ecosystem conservation, marine spatial planning, and science–policy integration across the Caribbean, Pacific, and Mediterranean regions. She currently serves as Chief Scientist at Ocean Quest, a foundation incubated at KAUST and part of the Pink Flamingo Society of Oceanographic Research Vessels, where she provides strategic scientific leadership with a strong focus on capacity building, inclusive ocean exploration, and support for early-career researchers in the Global South, particularly in Latin America. In parallel, Paula is an Associate Professor at Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana and an Associate Researcher at the Center of Excellence in Marine Sciences (CEMARIN), where she has played a pivotal role in shaping Colombia’s national strategies for ocean and coastal governance.



# Vladan Joler

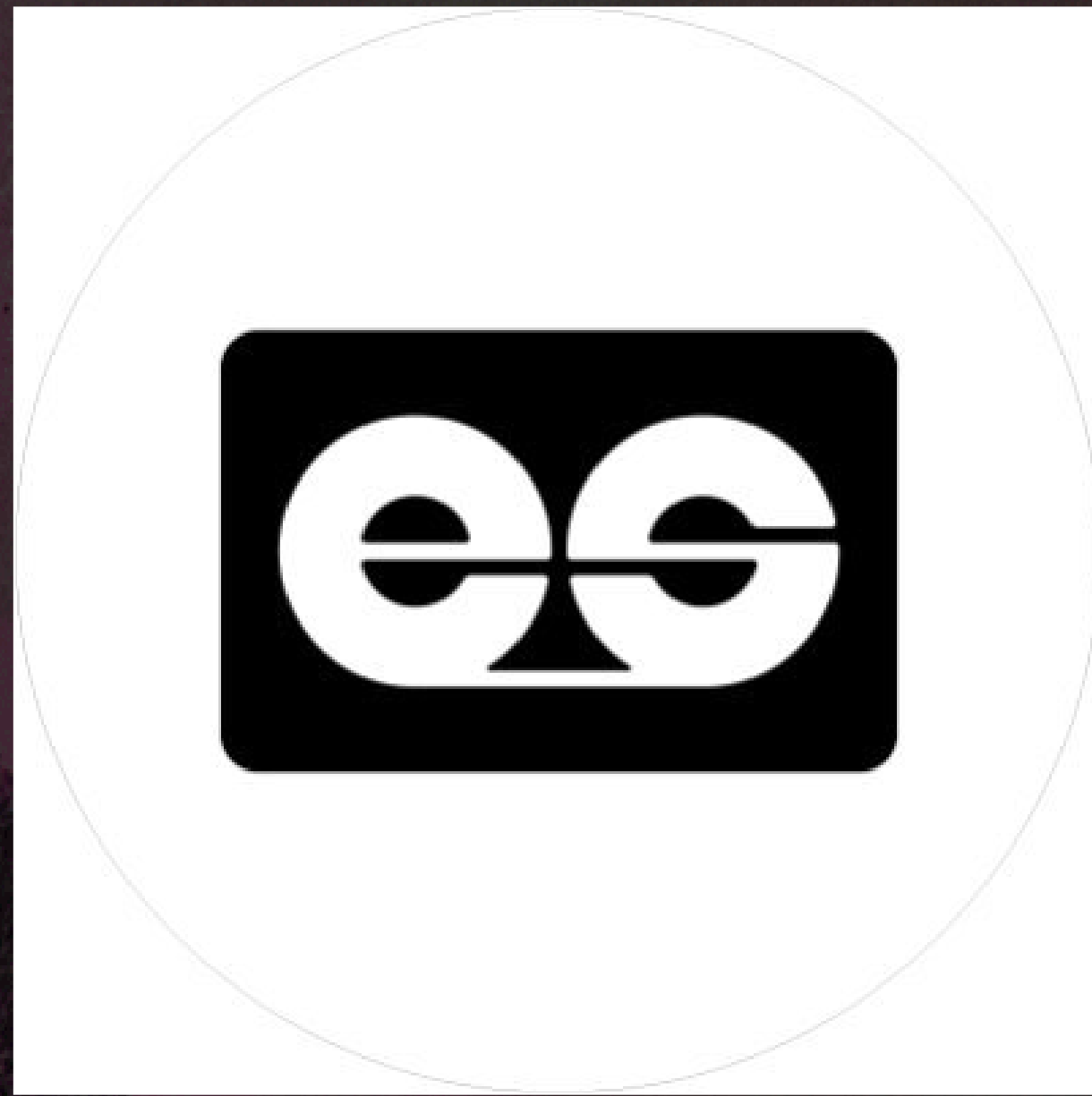
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© Vladan Joler archive

Vladan Joler is a Professor at the University of Novi Sad, and a researcher and artist whose work spans critical design, counter-cartography, investigative journalism, writing, data visualisation, and related disciplines. His projects explore and visualise various technical and social aspects of algorithmic transparency, digital labour exploitation, invisible infrastructures and other contemporary phenomena in the intersection of technology and society. With a background rooted in media activism and game hacking, he has curated and organised numerous events and gatherings of internet activists, artists, and investigators, including SHARE events in Belgrade and Beirut.



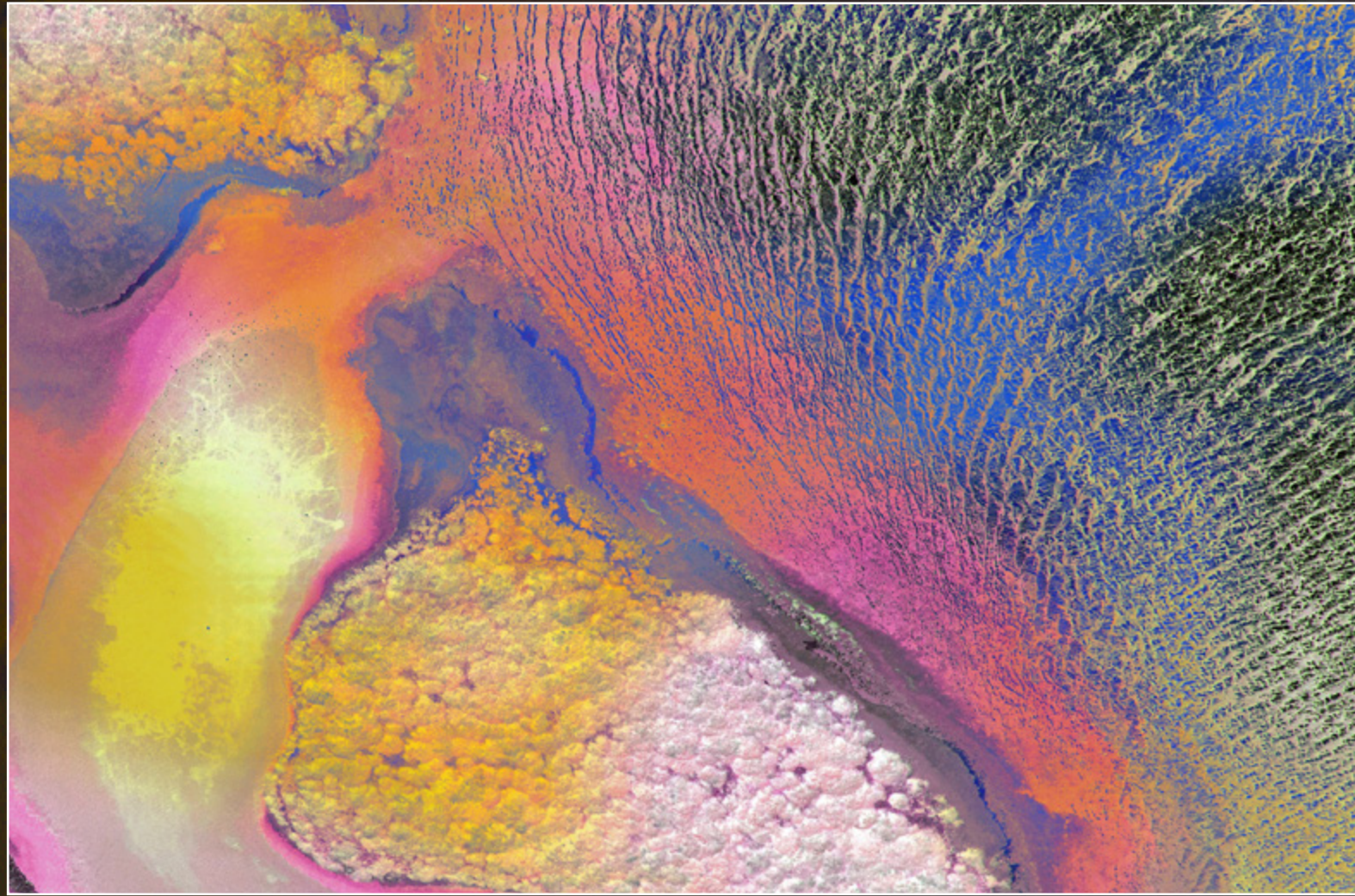


Earshot is the world's first not-for-profit organisation producing audio investigations for human rights and environmental advocacy. Using cutting-edge audio forensic analysis techniques, Earshot adds a crucial but often overlooked dimension to open-source investigations. While image and spatial analysis have become widespread over the last few years, until now half of the story has remained untold on the soundtrack.



## Michal Kučerák, Petra Linhartová, Fiona Middleton, TBA21–Academy

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The TBA21–Academy digital team works within the research line Ecologies of Technologies, exploring technology as an integral part of planetary life rather than a domain separate from nature. Drawing on technodiversity, the team investigates how digital, cultural, and material technologies shape ecological relations and imaginaries across diverse contexts. By bridging digital practice, global learning communities, and applied ecological research, the team activates TBA21–Academy’s digital heritage as a living space for study, experimentation, and mediation.



# Journeys

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Along with participation in the sessions, TBA21–Academy is commissioning texts to enrich the curriculum by adding other perspectives to the featured topics. We encourage applicants to draw connections with case studies within their own geographies, and to be mindful of their situatedness to avoid appropriating the knowledge of other communities.

This is a call to OCEAN / UNI participants and ocean comm/uni/ty members who find any of the topics of this coming semester especially resonant and would like to be featured with their writing on Ocean-Archive.org's Journeys page.

See more details and directly [apply via this Google Form](#) no later than February 16, 2026.

Apply



# Recommended References

This list compiles recommended academic papers, books, and projects relevant to exploring the relationship between human societies and marine biodiversity, conservation, policy, and relational values, with a focus on the Mediterranean.

## Academic articles

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These journal articles cover key themes such as relational values, pluralism in conservation, and community engagement.

- Blythe, J. L., et al. (2023). Blue justice: A review of emerging scholarship and resistance movements. *Cambridge Prisms: Coastal Futures*, 1, e15.
- Chan, K. M. A., et al. (2016). Why protect nature? Rethinking values and the environment. *PNAS*, 113(6), 1462-1465.
- Cretella, A., Scherer, C., & Holm, P. (2023). Tasting the ocean: How to increase ocean literacy using seafood heritage with a visceral approach. *Marine Policy*, 149, 105476.
- Foggin, J.M., et al. (2021). Thinking like a mountain: Exploring the potential of relational approaches for transformative nature conservation. *Sustainability*, 13(22), 12884.
- Hayes-Conroy, A., & Hayes-Conroy, J. (2008). Taking back taste: Feminism, food and visceral politics. *Gender, Place and Culture*, 15(5), 461-473.
- Mokos, M., et al. (2020). Mediterranean Sea literacy: when ocean literacy becomes region-specific. *Mediterranean Marine Science*, 21(3), 592-598.
- Moon, K., et al. (2025). Relational commons: an ontological and governance framework beyond protected areas and the boundaries of conservation. *Conservation Letters*, 18(5), e13137.



- Pascual, U., et al. (2021). Biodiversity and the challenge of pluralism. *Nature Sustainability*, 4(7), 567–572.
- Prüse, B., et al. (2024). “From sea to street”: initiating change for stronger connection with our ocean. *ARPHA Proceedings* 6: 67–71.
- Riechers, M., et al. (2022). Reviewing relational values for future research: Insights from the coast. *Ecology and Society*, 27(4), art44.

## Books & essays

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This section provides foundational texts on posthumanism, political ecology, philosophy of biodiversity, and oceanic culture.

- **Abram, D. (1997)** *The Spell of the Sensuous: Perception and Language in a More-than-Human World*. Vintage, and (2010) *Becoming Animal: An Earthly Cosmology*. Pantheon.
- **Casetta, E., & Delord, J. (2018)**. *La biodiversité en question: enjeux philosophiques, éthiques et scientifiques*. Éditions Matériologiques.
- **Casetta, E., Marques da Silva, J., & Vecchi, D. (2019)** *From Assessing to Conserving Biodiversity: Conceptual and practical challenges*. Springer Nature.
- **Escobar, A. (2018)**. *Designs for the pluriverse: Radical interdependence, autonomy, and the making of worlds*. Duke University Press.
- **Haraway, D. (2016)**. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*. Duke University Press.
- **Iovino, S. (2017)**. *Ecocriticism and Italy: Ecology, Resistance, and Liberation*. Bloomsbury Publishing Plc.
- **Maris, V. (2010)**. *Philosophie de la biodiversité: petite éthique pour une nature en péril*. Buchet-Chastel.
- **Mentz, S. (2020)**. *Ocean*. Bloomsbury’s Object Lessons series.
- **Ouassak, F. (2023)**. *Pour une écologie pirate: Et nous serons libres*. La Découverte.
- **Probyn, E. (2016)**. *Eating the Ocean*. Duke University Press.
- **Probyn, E., Johnston, K., & Lee, N. (Eds.). (2020)**. *Sustaining Seas: Oceanic Space and the Politics of Care*. Rowman Littlefield.
- **Ramos, F. (2024)**. *The Artist as Ecologist*. Lund Humphries.
- **Tsing, A. L., Bubandt, N., Gan, E., & Swanson, H. A. (Eds.). (2017)**. *Arts of living on a damaged planet: Ghosts and monsters of the Anthropocene*. University of Minnesota Press.



## Case Studies

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These projects exemplify how digital tools, community action, and art are applied to marine conservation and ocean literacy.

- Blue Humanities Archive (Digital Archive). *Focus:* New narratives around human-water relationships and ecological crisis. <https://bluehumanitiesarchive.com/>
- CREAMARE (Videogame / Institutional Project). *Focus:* Digital communication of underwater cultural heritage; addresses marine health and invasive species. <https://creamare.eu/>
- Go-jelly (EU Project). *Focus:* Developing bio-based solutions for microplastic pollution and jellyfish blooms. <https://www.go-jelly.com/>
- Hydrosex Manifesto (Performative/Art Project). *Focus:* Multispecies perspectives, challenging anthropocentric conservation, and hydrofeminism.
- Ocean Citizen (Marine Restoration Initiative). *Focus:* Public engagement and citizen science in restoring degraded Marine Forests. <https://oceancitizen.eu/>
- Seawilding (Conservation Initiative). *Focus:* Community-led marine rewilding and restoration of keystone species like seagrass and native oysters. <https://www.seawilding2025.org/en>, <https://www.seawilding.org/aboutus>
- The School of Dogger Bank (Research/Art Initiative). *Focus:* Interdisciplinary community centered on the Rewilding Dogger Bank initiative for habitat restoration. <https://www.embassyofthenorthsea.com/school-of-dogger-bank-research/>

**Join us in the Community**

**OCEAN / UNI Archive**



# Critical Ocean Literacy

The methodologies of OCEAN / UNI aim to create spaces of collaborative work, coalitional thinking,<sup>1</sup> and solidarity to generate new pedagogies and ways of researching that go beyond words, grown from feeling. This sensitivity to the oceanic elaborates a critical ocean literacy that extends a factual comprehension of the mutual influence between us and the Ocean, moving deeper into thinking through the Ocean.

Performed individually and collectively, such acts can blend in different kinds of knowledge and release us from coded connections to wander through the Ocean's rhythms, poetry, and biology; through these fluid processes of hybridization we might come to grasp and communicate our ecological crisis.

Learning through sensing, familiarity, and the body can ignite joy and healing, can grow affinity with otherness. Telling stories—and coming together to listen—can access cosmic timescales, can weave motives and planetary movements into the spaces between data points. How do the ways in which we talk to each other, gather, listen, and learn matter and create kinship? By welcoming worldviews originating in different densities and humidities, latitudes and altitudes, perhaps a new critical perspective could arise, one that can tell the story of the fragile interconnectedness of our biosphere, empowering humans and nonhumans to wade toward a space of balanced coexistence.

Learning about the Ocean is the strongest tool we have to protect it: becoming “ocean literate” is not just a way to gather facts, but to reclaim power.

<sup>1</sup> Eva S. Hayward and Adela C. Licona, “Trans~Waters~ Coalitional Thinking on Art + Environment,” *terrain.org*, 2014 <https://www.terrain.org/2014/currents/trans-waters-coalitional-thinking-on-art-and-environment/>



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# Organizers

**TBA21 Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary** is a leading international art and advocacy foundation. Established in 2002 by philanthropist and art patron Francesca Thyssen-Bornemisza, the foundation stewards the **TBA21 Collection** and its outreach activities, which include exhibitions as well as educational and public programming.

TBA21 is based in Madrid, working in association with the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza, and has other important hubs in Venice, Italy, and Portland, Jamaica. All activity at TBA21 is collaborative and fundamentally driven by artists and the belief in art and culture as catalysts for social and environmental transformation and ultimately in the service of a culture of peace, understood as a continuous practice in the affirmation of life, diversity, and coexistence.

**TBA21–Academy** is TBA21's research and advocacy arm, fostering deeper relationships with the Earth's hydrosphere and its extended ecologies through the lens of art to activate new forms of care and collective action. Operating as an incubator for collaborative inquiry, research-based artistic production, and environmental advocacy, the Academy works through exhibitions, commissions, fieldwork, residencies, pedagogical programmes, and assemblies, and catalyses new forms of knowledge emerging from exchanges between art, science, policy, and civic engagement.

**Ocean-Archive.org** is an online platform that investigates the potential of storytelling and transdisciplinary collaboration within and beyond archival practices. It strives to expand critical ocean literacy in a time of great necessity and catalyzes collective action for a living Ocean. The aim of Ocean-Archive.org is to bring together the multitude of voices and journeys around the Ocean and connect those striving to nurture and protect it. With ocean comm/uni/ty, the



platform instigates conversations around the Ocean so that the members can connect and co-create. Designed as a storytelling and pedagogical tool, Ocean-Archive.org translates current knowledge into a shared language that fosters synergy among art, science, policy, and conservation, and enables us to make better decisions for urgently needed policies.

**MEDiverSEAty** is a European Doctoral Network exploring the human dimensions of Mediterranean marine biodiversity. Responding to the gap between existing conservation frameworks and their real-world implementation, the project integrates social, cultural, and economic perspectives into biodiversity research and policy. Focusing on areas such as marine citizen science, maritime spatial planning, and marine heritage, MEDiverSEAty highlights the often-overlooked diversity of cultures, roles, and attitudes shaping human–sea relations. Bringing together partners from six Mediterranean countries, it delivers an interdisciplinary training programme grounded in Ocean Literacy and Marine Biodiversity Conservation.

The MEDiverSEAty project receives funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement ID: 101119700.

**Ars Biologica** is an emerging platform for art, science, and ecological thinking, developing within the framework of the European Capital of Culture 2028 in Budweis, CZ. Ars Biologica is a living laboratory for experimental research, education, and international cooperation. It connects partners from academia, scientific institutions, art organizations, and European partners through a network of projects exploring the relations between technology, human activities, and the environment.