

International Council for the Exploration of the Sea

Conseil International pour l'Exploration de la Mer



SIECS

exploring underneath the waves



AUGUST 2025 EDITION

An Introduction to SIIECS and your way in

Interesting research findings of our ECS at ICES

SIIECS Newsletter



Dear ECS,

Welcome to your SIIECS Newsletter!

In this last edition of the year, we are excited to share with you the most recent updates covering various topics relevant ECS within the SIIECS community. In this issue, you'll find a wealth of valuable information, ranging from interesting research findings of colleagues to upcoming events and opportunities.

August 2025



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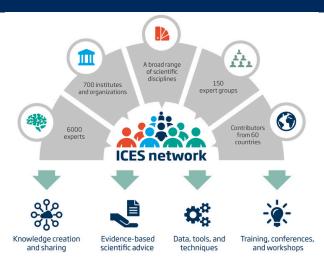
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WHO ARE WE?





Welcome to the world of ICES—the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea! At the heart of global marine science collaboration, ICES brings together early career scientists and experts from diverse backgrounds under the Strategic Initiative on Integration of Early Career Scientists (SIIECS). As an intergovernmental organization, ICES focuses on advancing our scientific understanding of marine ecosystems. Its mission extends to providing essential advice on the sustainable use of our seas, ensuring that decisions affecting marine resources are grounded in robust scientific research. Through fostering interdisciplinary collaborations and promoting inclusivity, ICES stands as a beacon for scientists keen on navigating the depths of marine science and contributing to the shared goal of responsible ocean stewardship.





SIIECS is for anyone who identifies as an early career scientist (ECS) and who wants to be involved in ICES activities. <u>Join us!</u>

SIIECS aims to make ICES more visible and accessible to early career scientists from various disciplines and backgrounds. The activities of SIIECS will improve the inclusion of ECS in ICES work and help ECS contribute to the overall goals of the organization. The initiative will also participate in ongoing efforts to enhance equity, diversity and inclusion in ICES.

Bridging Science and Policy



An Interview with Cristina Canella, Early Career Researcher in Marine Governance

Written by J. S. Moss

It was a crisp winter morning in Copenhagen, Cristina sits at her desk in the International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES), poring over maps of the Maldives. The archipelago, a string of coral atolls in the Indian Ocean, is one of the world's most vulnerable regions to climate change.

For Cristina however, it's also the focus of her PhD research, exploring how to protect marine ecosystems whilst respecting the needs and utilising the knowledge of local communities. Cristina's short and varied career so far, has taken her from the majestic, but rapidly disappearing glaciers of the Andes to the clear blue tropics where ocean warming and acidification threaten economy and ecosystem alike;

Along the way Cristina has walked the halls of power for maritime law and decision-making in both New York and Copenhagen. This diverse range of interests and experiences has led to her current research focusing on the intersection of marine science, policy, and international law, specifically examining Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Other Effective areabased Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Maldives. In this interview, Cristina shares her journey, insights, and the challenges of navigating the complex world of marine governance.



Cristina's academic journey so far is perhaps a lesson in the importance of keeping an open mind and embracing interdisciplinary exploration. Beginning in the environmental sciences, with a thesis on glaciology focusing on analysing snow cores from the Illimani Glacier in Bolivia. Before shifting gears to undergo a master's in marine science, where she studied a range of disciplines, from biology and chemistry to international law and maritime geopolitics. Due to this range of courses, she "became acutely aware of the gap between legal frameworks and the integration of scientific evidence,". Her MSc thesis on the sustainability of Atlantic bluefin tuna fisheries further developed this notion by highlighting the role public opinion can have in influencing policymakers, particularly in Italy. These experiences solidified her belief in the need for stronger scientific voices in environmental outreach as well as decision-making.







Bridging Science, Policy, and Equity

Cristina's current PhD research focuses on the legal aspects of establishing MPAs and OECMs in the Maldives, a Small Island Developing State (SIDS). Her work is part of a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Milano-Bicocca and the Maldivian Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, and Technology. Through this collaboration, Cristina is helping to develop new MPAs/OECMs while ensuring that local communities are actively involved in the decision-making process. So really what is the difference between an MPA & an OECM?

"The key distinction between MPAs and OECMs is that OECMs integrate conservation outcomes into broader governance frameworks," Cristina explains. "This makes them particularly valuable in areas where traditional or multi-use management can deliver lasting biodiversity benefits while respecting local and cultural priorities." For more information on the distinctions between MPAs & OECMs see this article by WWF.

Parachute science can be defined as a practice where foreign researchers extract data from marginalized regions without collaborating equitably with local experts, echoing the exploitative legacy of colonial science, which weaponized research to consolidate power over colonized lands and peoples. As Scientific American notes, this dynamic persists today, side-lining local knowledge and reinforcing global inequities in who benefits from scientific work.

Cristina is acutely aware of these challenges in her Maldivian research. "I cannot fully ensure that my work avoids perpetuating the dynamics of parachute science," she admits. "This assurance must come from the Maldivian experts and the community themselves." To address this, she emphasizes local engagement, partnering with Maldivian scientists to adapt global frameworks to the archipelago's cultural and ecological nuances—from tailoring marine conservation strategies to respecting artisanal fishing livelihoods.





Maldives 26 October 2023 – Young people and children called on policymakers to include them in stronger policies to tackle the impact of climate-induced disasters on children and communities in Maldives.

The Law of the Sea: A Rulebook for Ocean Governance

Cristina's work is deeply rooted in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which she compared to a rulebook for ocean governance. "Just as Dungeons and Dragons has a rulebook that guides how the game is played, UNCLOS provides the foundational framework on States' rights and obligations regarding the oceans, seas and natural resources," she says.

However, UNCLOS, which came into force in 1994, was drafted at a time when climate change was not a primary concern. "We now have to interpret UNCLOS in a modern context, considering climate change as a threat to the marine environment," Cristina explains.

Deep-Sea Mining: A Precautionary Approach

One of the most pressing issues in marine governance today is deep-sea mining. Cristina is deeply concerned about the potential environmental impacts, especially on vulnerable marine ecosystems. "We already know the effects of overexploitation of natural resources on land," she says. "Why would we repeat the same mistakes in the ocean?"

Cristina advocates for a precautionary approach, emphasizing that we should not proceed with deep-sea mining until we fully understand its impacts. The development of new industrial sectors can also bring forward new and unforeseen challenges. Whilst the economic benefits of deep-sea mining are often touted, Cristina points to the potential economic downsides for SIDS such as the Maldives that rely on pristine waters/ecosystems for there tourism industry; and the uncertainty that such mining practices may bring to the sector.



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Marine Science

As a member of SIIECS (Strategic Initiative on the Integration of Early Career Scientists), Cristina is also passionate about promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in marine science. Recently attending ICES' first meeting on Diversity, Equity, and Equality, where she was inspired by the commitment to creating an inclusive environment for all scientists.

"Diverse viewpoints lead to more comprehensive solutions to global challenges," Cristina says. "When individuals feel valued, respected and free to respect their ideas without fear of prejudice, its creates an environment that fosters innovation and collaboration."

Looking Ahead: Empowering Early Career Researchers

When asked what advice she'd offer Early Career Researchers (ECRs) contemplating a career shift, Cristinatinged with a hint of the imposter syndrome (that many ECRs have) - emphasised the importance of "staying curious and follow your instincts."

ords that resonate in an era of rapid automation and Aldriven disruption to the workplace. Alongside this, perhaps it is also worth remembering "What you learn is never a waste of time," she insisted whilst reflecting on her own journey from glaciology to marine biology and now policy advocacy. Though these fields seem worlds apart, she's repeatedly drawn on seemingly niche expertise in other areas of her work. This, she says, proves that curiosity and self-compassion—not rigid specialization—are the keys to navigating uncertain career paths. "You can't be 100% sure where you'll end up," she admitted, "but every skill you gather becomes a tool for something new."

As Cristina continues her work at the intersection of science and policy, she remains committed to empowering local communities and fostering equitable partnerships. "The success of my research depends not just on my intentions, but on the effectiveness of my collaboration with Maldivian experts and the trust we build together," she says.





Maldives 17 October 2009 - To draw global attention to the urgent threat of rising carbon emissions, President Mohamed Nasheed once held a cabinet meeting beneath the ocean's surface, symbolizing the existential risks faced by his low-lying island nation. (AP Photo/Mohammed Seeneen)

If you would like to reach out to Cristina and discuss anything further with her<u>, she can be contacted on LinkedIn</u> or via email at = c.canella@campus.unimib.it

This article is part of the SIIECS Newsletter, dedicated to showcasing the work of early career researchers in marine science. To learn more about SIIECS, visit our site

ICES HOT NEWS

FROM BENTHOS TO PELAGICS

CLICK HERE FOR MORE OF THE LATESTS FROM ICES



A MILESTONE FOR **BENTHIC BIODIVERSITY** DATA

What happens when huge artificial structures in the sea become thriving homes for marine life? A pioneering new scientific resource mapping ocean life on artificial structures is helping us find out.

Presentation and description of the database BISAR developed by the ICES Working Group on Marine Benthal and Renewable **Energy Developments** (WGMBRED)

Find the access to the full article and the plans here: READ MORE 💉



REDUCING SHARK AND RAY BYCATCH

How can fishers and scientists work together to reduce bycatch impacts on sharks and rays? In the latest Editor's some fishers were initially Choice article, learn how collaboration with Spanish tropical tuna fishers led to safer, faster release tools now adopted globally.

The study was built on more than a decade of regular engagement between the authors

and Spanish purse seine fishers through sustainability workshops and research projects. Although hesitant to share information, trust developed over time. As environmental awareness grew, so did the willingness of fishers to adopt new practices.

Find the access to the full article and the plans here: READ MORE.

HOT OFF THE PRESS



This month, we'll share 2 publications associated with SIIECS members, our SIIECS and ICES networks, and other ECR groups

Looking for more publications?

Find them on ICES website here



Latest publications:



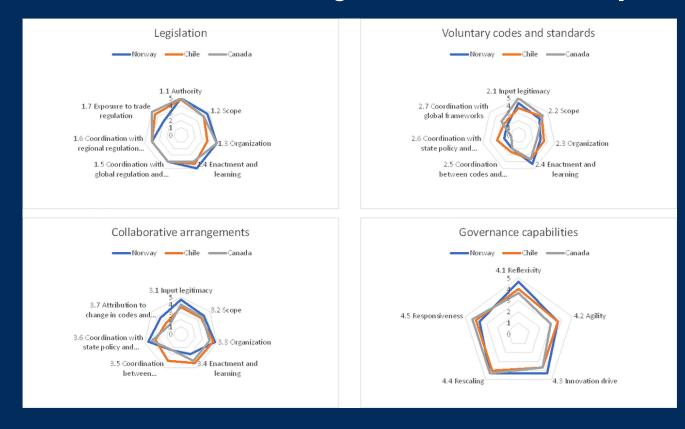
Aquaculture Governance Indicators: A diagnostic framework for steering towards sustainability

Toonen et al., 2025. PLOS Sustainability and Transformation



Scale-dependent effects of biodiversity and stability on marine ecosystem dynamics Flensborg et al. , 2025. *Ecography*

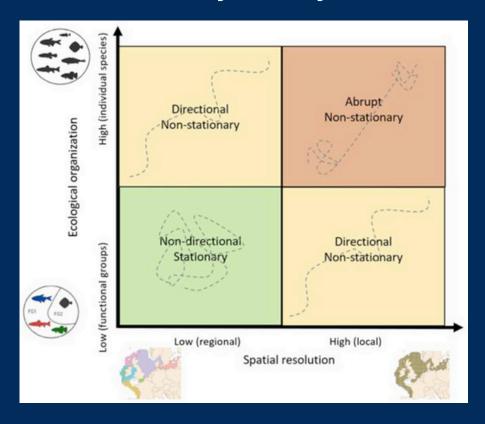
Aquaculture Governance Indicators: A diagnostic framework for steering towards sustainability



The Aquaculture Governance Indicators (AGI) provide an interactive and comprehensive view on the sustainable governance of the aquaculture sector. There is a range of policies and tools to guide and steer the sustainability of the rapidly expanding sector, but many of these state and private mechanisms focus on only farm performance and legal/standard compliance, and set out technical criteria for improvement. This means there are limited insights in, on the one hand, the ways in which collaborations between both private and public actors affect the sustainability of the sector, and, on the other, their ability to influence course of action and contribute to change. Together, the 26 AGI form an integrated diagnostic framework for assessing governance performance in any given country.

In this paper, the authors showcase the AGI framework through the case of disease management in three salmon producing countries (Norway, Chile and Canada). While overall strong in legislation and state-industry collaboration, we found that limited coordination and civil society engagement hamper strategic action for addressing systematic risks. Actionable insights from the AGI can help to identify strengths and weaknesses in aquaculture governance, and thereby provide input for a conversation about gaps and improvement between government, industry, civil society organizations and researchers.

Scale-dependent effects of biodiversity and stability on marine ecosystem dynamics



The global biodiversity loss is causing abrupt shifts in the structure and functioning of ecosystems with severe ecological and socio-economic consequences. Therefore, improving our understanding of ecosystem dynamics and regime shifts, as well as the stabilizing role of biodiversity across multiple scales is needed.

In this publication, the authors investigate the temporal dynamics and stability of marine ecosystems using high-resolution monitoring data on fish species composition, abundances and traits throughout European Seas. More specifically, we quantify and compare the direction and magnitude of community change at multiple spatial scales and levels of biological organization. Our results show less variability in community trajectories at larger spatial scales and higher levels of biological organization. The main underlying processes providing stability are statistical averaging arising from a larger pool of species, while at smaller spatial scales stability also emerge from functional complementarity channeled through the distribution of species traits within functional groups.







Next seminar series event will be held on **12 August 2025.** This online seminar is a special addition in the run up to the ICES ASC in September. It will involve a special panel giving advice on the grading system for this years posters and presentations.

Your attendance matters!

Help ECS give an unforgettable presentation and get a memorable experience. Q&A and feedbacks are welcome after each participant rehearses their presentation.

Session on: 12 August, 13:00 - 14:00 CET







Pooja Tiwari

Modelling the Impact of Bottowm Trawling
on Air-Sea CO2 flux in the North Sea





Kars Hüsken
Bridging the gap: integrating EBSA criteria
into cumulative impact assessments for
ecosystem-based marine spatial planing



Another seminar series is planned for the **14th October 2025,** send your application for training your presentation skills.

Apply Now

BEING AN ECS KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT ASC

After being selected as a key note speaker at the ASC by SIIECS, Llúcia Mascorda-Cabré is currently preparing her presentation, while also juggling her scientific work at the University of Plymouth

We sat down for a one-on-one chat to talk about the event and everything around it. Expect an honest, inspiring, and helpful conversation!

1. Let's dive right in, how are you feeling about being a keynote speaker and how's your presentation coming along?

Honestly, I am nervous about the whole thing. Being a keynote speaker is a big deal, and while I am stepping back from my work for a short time, it's still in the back of my mind. It feels a bit overwhelming.

I'm used to short presentations or long lectures with backand-forth interaction, but a keynote is different. It's just you, talking for almost one hour in front of a big, full room. That's pretty terrifying when you think about it!

I really want the presentation to be good, engaging, and interesting for everyone in the room. I know it can't just be an extended version of my usual talks. To prepare, I reached out to my former supervisor and my current PI. They gave me great ideas on how to frame my research, break it down into a few key points, and how to guide the audience through the story I want to tell. I've also asked a few friends to help with feedback—and I'll probably reach out to SIIECS as well. But for now, I'm still working out the structure and approach.





2. This is definitely a milestone in your scientific career. Given such a role, what do you hope the audience — and you —mwill take away from this presentation?

Three things come to mind. First, I really hope I can get my message across clearly—so that people actually remember it when they go home, even months later. Second, I want both ECS and more established figures in science (and beyond) to feel satisfied with the presentation. Like they've learned something, or connected with it in some way. And third, this might sound a bit bold, but I want to make an impact. Not just for the sake of science, but for my career. Being an ECS keynote speaker, and doing it well, is a rare opportunity to connect with people, not only as a scientist, but also as a person. I'd love if some people thought, "Hey, I'd like to work with her," or felt comfortable reaching out for more info because I came across as approachable and trustworthy.

3. If we broaden up the question, what are your expectations for the ASC this year?

I'm genuinely looking forward to it. This will actually be my fourth time attending ASC!

The first time, I felt like a fish out of water. But by the second time, I had a much better sense of what to expect, and I could connect with way more people. The third one, in Newcastle, was great—I got to catch up with former colleagues, meet other attendees again, and finally meet the SIIECS team in person, which was lovely. One thing I really enjoy is seeing how the themes evolve each year, and how ICES shifts its reflections and priorities through these conferences. For this fourth edition, I'm especially excited to see the work coming out of the ECS community. There's been such a push to give Early Career Scientists space to engage, build, and shape their own research paths.

Because ASC happens every year, it also gives a chance to follow up on science and projects—so much can change in just 12 months. Honestly, it feels a bit like a family reunion each time. In the best way.

4. Following up on your experience as an ECs and your engagement with policymaker/regulators/managers, how do see your role contributing to their activities?

That's a tricky one—mainly because the answer really depends on the setting and the context. First off, I think it's important to acknowledge that there are more bridges between science and policy now than there used to be, which is a great step forward!

But the first real challenge is just getting the chance to stand in front of them. Then comes the harder part: speaking their language. And that language changes depending on who you're talking to—whether it's a policymaker, a manager, or someone from industry. The same word can mean very different things to different people, so you need to adapt constantly.

You also need to think beyond science. From what I've experienced, it's essential to have strong visual aids ready, because attention spans are short. You often have just a few minutes to make your point. Ideally, in three minutes, you should be able to say: what you need from them, why it matters, how it affects them, and what they can do with it.

At some point, your ego as a researcher has to take a back seat. Sometimes your communication is great, and your research is relevant to their work, but your project still falls down the priority list. Maybe because they've got more urgent issues on their desk, or simply because your topic isn't in their current agenda.

5. One last question about being an ECS, what barriers are you currently facing, and what tips would you provide to overcome them?

For me, the biggest issue is funding—specifically access to funding, and even more so, long-term funding.

When you're on a two-year contract, deadlines quickly become unrealistic. You're expected to complete a full research project, but about six months before the end, you already have to start applying for the next one. With short-term contracts, your science is always on the move. You carry a lot of unfinished work from one position to the next, and it becomes really hard to ever feel like you've caught up.

On top of that, the expectations around stakeholder engagement and outreach are difficult to meet properly. You just don't have enough time, and it's not sustainable. You try to build relationships with partners, but when the project ends, you vanish from their radar too. And from their perspective, that can feel like a letdown—because they've also invested time and energy into that collaboration. As researchers, we lose a lot from not being able to maintain those connections long term.

As for advice... The most realistic approach I've found is to involve stakeholders early on, during the proposal-writing phase and at the start of the project. That way, you have time to develop the collaboration gradually, within a manageable scope. It helps keep expectations clear and gives your engagement more of a chance to grow meaningfully, even within the time limits.



6. Going back to ICES, how did you get involved with the organisation?

It actually started through my PhD supervisor. I have been involved on the WGMPA and she also was contacted by an ICES working group that was looking for case studies for their OECM guidance, and my PhD research happened to be a good fit. After that initial interaction, the WKBoBICAO asked me to review their scientific report—which later led to me writing a chapter for WKGNSAO scientific report.

As for SIIECS, I first got to know the group during my first ASC attendance. But I only officially joined about a year ago. I still don't fully understand all the layouts within ICES—it's a complex organization—but SIIECS has been super helpful in making sense of it all.

7. Last question, what could we wish you for the near future?

Wish me to continue to challenge myself and the science I do, to grow and hopefully to learn!

Thanks Llúcia, because as the interviewer I was very blown up by these answers!

Find in Page 13, more information on her presentation to come!

ICES AND SIIECS ACTIVITES



SIIECS selected a ECS research to give a keynote talk at the ICES Annual Science Conference 2025:

Llúcia Mascorda-Cabré is a Posdoctoral Researcher a the University of Plymouth (UK) within the School of Biological and Marine Sciences.

Her talk is about: "Ropes to Reefs: A multi-trophic level approach to evidence fish stock and habitat benefits of offshore aquaculture and its connectivity to a nearby MPA to inform management and policy!"

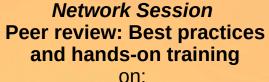
ICES AND SIIECS ACTIVITES



Are you an ECS? Are you attending the ASC? SIIECS members will be present at the event. Meet them in:

Network Session
A self-reflection in Marine
Sciences

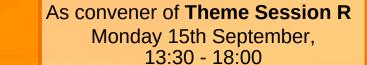
on: Tuesday 16th September, 16:00 - 17:15



Wednesday 17th September, 8:30 - 10:30







Wednesday 17th September, 15:00 - 17:30



JOB AND GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

PhD position at NIOZ

Primary production around off-shore wind farms

4-year position in the Estuarine and Delta Systems Department

Location: Yerseke, Netherlands

Application deadline: 12 September 2025

Take a look here



Postdoc position at SLU

Fish community dynamics under Climate Change

2-year position with possibility of extension. Starting date: 1 October 2025

Location: Uppsala, Sweden

Application deadline: 20 August 2025

Take a look here



Research technician position at MBARI

Position within the Seafloor Processes Lab

Role: support oceanographic research through data collection, visualization, and analysis, and preparation and maintenance of laboratory and field equipment

Location: California, USA

Application deadline: 15 September 2025

Take a look here



PhD Position at University of Leeds

Assessing demographic resilience of tropical and temperate reef organisms

Applicant must come with funding/sponsorship

Location: Leeds, UK

Application deadline:
Not indicated

Take a look here



JOB AND GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

Researcher Position at Ifremer

Modelling Of Deep Marine Chemosynthetic Microbial Ecosystems

Fixed position within the Biology and Ecology of Deep-Sea Marine Ecosystems unit

Location: Plouzané, France

Application deadline: 7 September 2025

Take a look here



Researcher Position at Ifremer

Marine ecologist wanted with skills in statistical analysis and modelling and population dynamics

Fixed position within the Channel North SEA Fisheries" unit

Location: Port-en-Bessin-Huppain, France

Application deadline: 7 September 2025

Take a look here



PhD Position at University of Leeda

Physical Oceanography Development Of ADCP Data Processing Methods For Turbulence Characterization

18-month position within the Marine Hydrodynamics Laboratory (LHyMar)

Location: Plouzané, France

Application deadline: 22 August 2025

Take a look here





AGU Ocean Science Meeting - 2025



The Ocean Sciences Meeting (OSM) is the flagship conference for the ocean sciences and the larger ocean-connected community.



22-27 February 2026



Hybrid - Glascow, Scotland





PICES - Navigating Changes in Small Pelagic Fish and Forage Communities: Climate, Ecosystems, and Sustainable Fisheries



SPF-2026 aims to showcase recent advancements in SPF and forage communities research.



4-8 May 2026



La Paz, Mexico





9th International Conference on Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change



This conference deals with the scientific concepts that underpin modern biotechnologies and how innovations can be exploited for the development of products and processes such as biofuels, novel bioactive compounds and waste conversion technologies.



27-28 April 2026



Berlin, Germany







BRAIN-WAVES

Fusion of Food for ears with other formats.

We would like to let you know about some newly released podcasts and videos that we think will capture SIIECS members' interest – we think they are enriching experiences in the diverse and fascinating realms of the marine.



Planet Beyond x UNOC2

Posted on May 2024, Science and solutions for a safe and predicted ocean

Click here to listen





The Marine Biologist

Posted on May 20th, 2025 Interview with Dr B. Steward, scientific consultant on the film Ocean with D. Attenborough

Click here to listen





BRAIN-WAVES

Fusion of Food for ears with other formats.

We would like to let you know about some newly released podcasts and videos that we think will capture SIIECS members' interest – we think they are enriching experiences in the diverse and fascinating realms of the marine.



Seas the day

Posted on February 12th, 2025

Fish Tales, featuring 5 stories.

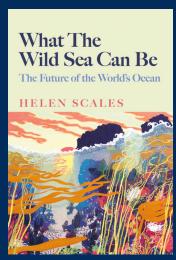
Click here to listen



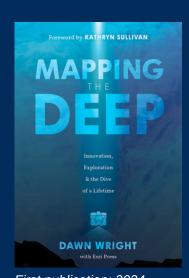
Books from the sea



First publication: 2023



First publication: 2024



First publication: 2024





ICES Newsletter

If you would like to stay up to date with the latest news from ICES (not just the early career scientist stuff!), please subscribe to their online newsletter by sending an email to **news@ices.dk** indicating your interest.

Know someone who might be interested in this?

Feel free to forward this mail to anyone who might be interested in SIIECS activities. They can also sign up for SIIECS via the link on this webpage.

Unsubscribe?

If you would no longer like to receive messages related to the Strategic Initiative on the Integration of Early Career Scientists then please reply to this email with the subject line "Unsubscribe" and we will remove you from the mailing list.

With best regards, SIIECS (the Strategic Initiative on the Integration of Early Career Scientists)

Do you know of any exciting activities or opportunities for ECS? Please send any content you would like to share in the newsletter by emailing **silecs@ices.dk**.

Entries will be included in the following edition.

This newsletter has been produced under the auspices of SIIECS. It is not an ICES product and has not undergone ICES editorial review. The contents do not necessarily represent the view of ICES or the Council