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2 December 2025

UCT hosts discussion on improving scientific communication and media reporting on marine resource management issues

3 December 2025 | 14:00-14:30 | Lecture Theatre 2, John Day Building, University Avenue North, UCT Upper Campus

The University of Cape Town's (UCT) departments of [Biological Sciences](#) and [Mathematics and Applied Mathematics](#) will jointly host a discussion session on Improving Scientific Communication and the Media when reporting on Marine Resource Management on Wednesday, 3 December 2025 at the John Day (Zoology) Building on upper campus.

Brief presentations on the topic will be led by UCT's Emeritus Professor Doug Butterworth of the Marine Resource Assessment and Management Group at the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics.

Although initially arising from concerns among scientists about the reporting of the local penguin-fisheries debate and associated litigation earlier this year, the issues involved frequently occur in marine resource management in various contexts locally and worldwide, and the event intends to have a broader focus. There are shortcomings in communication between scientists and the media, and the purpose of this discussion session is to seek to improve this situation locally.

Other presenters will be Dr Mike Bergh, director of OLSPS Marine, which provides a consulting service to a number of South African fishing industry associations; Professor Kevern Cochrane from Rhodes University's Department of Ichthyology, who is previous director of the Food and Agriculture Organisation's resources use and fisheries and aquaculture conservation division; Ms Julia Evans, science writer and journalist, World Climate Foundation, previously with Daily Maverick; and Dr Michael Sissenwine, visiting scholar, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, previously chief science advisor for the US National Marine Fisheries Service and President of the International Council for Exploration of the Sea (ICES).

A panel on suggestions for improvements will be comprised of Dr Johann Augustyn, secretary of SA Deep-Sea Trawling Industry Association who was previously chief director of research at the fisheries branch of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE); Mr David Bryant, member of the Western Cape Provincial Legislature

and Standing Committee on Agriculture, Economic Development and Tourism; Advocate Marius Diemont, specialist in Marine Resources Law and senior consultant at Dawson Edwards and Associates; Dr Jim Ianelli of the fisheries assessment authority, School of Aquatic and Fisheries Sciences, University of Washington, Seattle, USA; and Dr Kim Prochazka, chief director of research and development at the fisheries branch of the DFFE.

Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, Willem Aucamp, will provide a video statement on the discussion topic and future national fisheries research issues for presentation during this session.

- Media interested in attending the event are requested to [RSVP](#).

Ends

Issued by: UCT Communication and Marketing Department

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