

INTRODUCTION TO THE DEEP-OCEAN STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE

In 2013, the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative (DOSI) was formed in response to a realisation that not only was the deep ocean barely considered in environmental policymaking, but also that there was no channel through which to offer policymakers evidence-based knowledge to inform their decisions. Since then, DOSI has grown into an influential and respected global community of over 4,000 people, of which 1,500 are active voluntary members who provide pertinent, unbiased and impartial information about the deep ocean where needed.

DOSI's policy-engagement activities are financed by philanthropic donors administered by the University of Southampton and Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

OPERATING AT THE SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE

The science-policy interface is a space where scientific knowledge meets policymaking, involving interactions, knowledge exchange, and co-creation between scientists, policymakers, and other stakeholders to address complex societal challenges by ensuring evidence informs decisions for better governance and solutions.

DOSI, like other organisations that operate at that interface – known as Boundary Organisations – translates complex deep-sea research into actionable narratives by integrating diverse knowledge, societal values, ethics, and public engagement. This involves the nurturing of long-term relationships with fellow stakeholders, and using clear, unbiased communication to inform the development of effective and sustainable management tools for the common good.

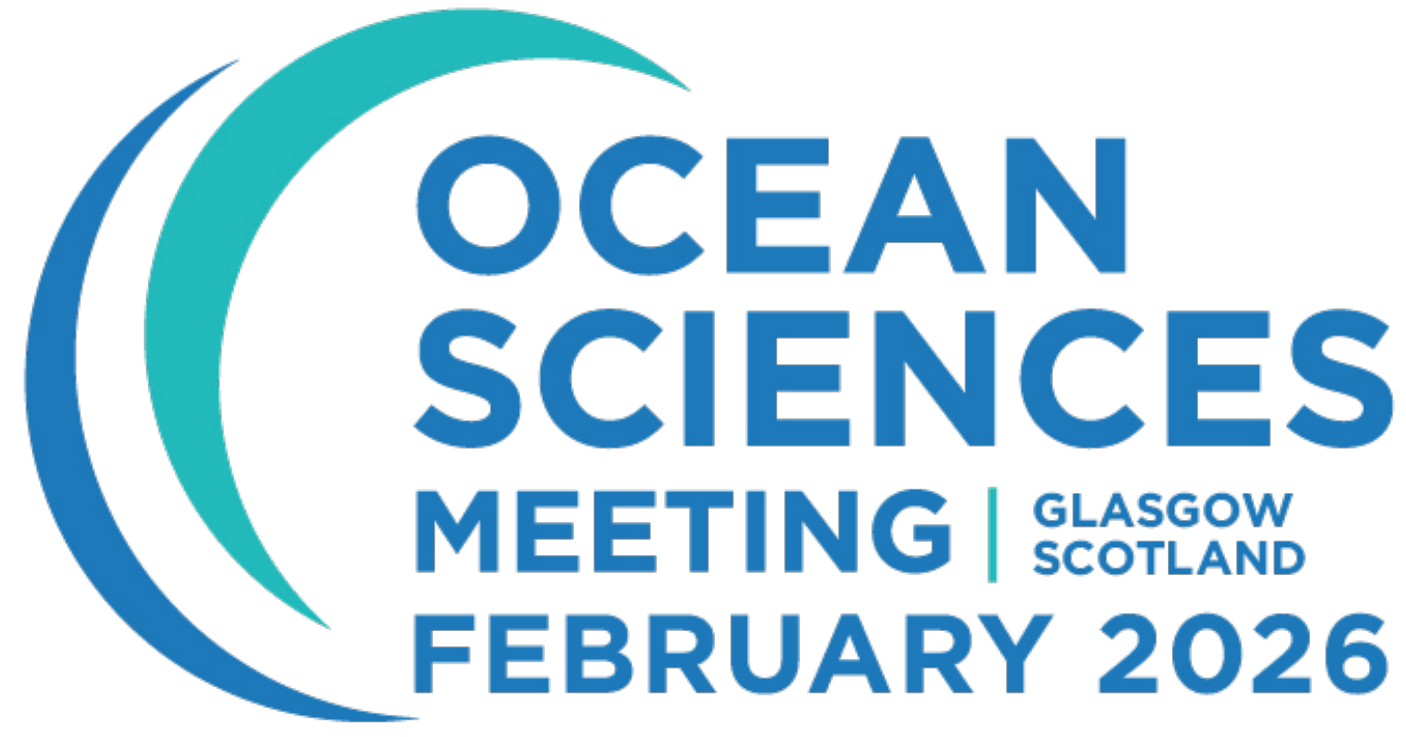
Having attained Observer status at various international ocean governance bodies, DOSI offers its members mentorship and opportunities to participate in delivering evidence-based knowledge to inform negotiations at intergovernmental policymaking fora.



DOSI beginnings
Mexico City 2013



DOSI at the International
Seabed Authority
Assembly, Kingston



DOSI

DEEP-OCEAN STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE

The Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative: Advancing deep-ocean science in policy

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THE DOSI MISSION

DOSI integrates scientific and humanistic knowledge to inform deep-ocean policy, governance, and stewardship by engaging with policymakers, cultivating capacity and diplomacy, and creating community. It promotes sustainable management, provides accessible evidence for policymakers, empowers knowledge-holders, builds awareness, develops future ocean leaders, and strengthens deep-ocean management capacity worldwide.

GET INVOLVED

DOSI welcomes everyone who wishes to engage with its work. It particularly welcomes early-career ocean professionals (ECOPs) as the deep-ocean stewards of the future. Engagement is free, so why not subscribe to the weekly DOSI newsletter (via QR code, right) and take things from there?

Think Deep!



DOSI ACHIEVEMENTS

Since its inception, DOSI has grown to become the trusted 'go-to' provider of impartial evidence-based knowledge on matters pertaining to the sustainability of deep ocean ecosystems.

Through close collaboration with scientists, lawyers, policymakers and knowledge-holders, inroads have been made to the negotiations during the Climate Change COPs regarding ocean deoxygenation and impacts of marine carbon dioxide removal, as well as shaping the deep-sea mining code during Assembly meetings of the International Seabed Authority.

The importance of the deep ocean has also been highlighted during negotiations to develop a new plastics treaty and the BBNJ Agreement, in addition to proposing protocols on how to ethically and equitably handle marine genetic samples from areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Environmental indicators to assess progress towards achieving 2030 goals under the Convention on Biological Diversity's Global Biodiversity Framework are being tested and refined to be applicable to the deep ocean, while efforts to map deep-sea life – the Challenger 150 programme – have been endorsed by the UN Ocean Decade.



Promoting a sustainable approach to fisheries management and to offshore energy development through robust impact assessments, particularly in the exclusive economic zones of less developed countries, has been an active front for DOSI, as both industries expand ever deeper into the ocean.



All of the above and more has been delivered through the timely provision of targeted Policy Briefs, Information Sheets, formal interventions and Side Events, as well as by public dissemination channels such as podcasts, videos, webinars and promotion on social media (scan QR code, left).



The recognition just over a decade ago of the dearth of deep-ocean references in ocean governance discussions, as well as the absence of a medium through which to inject knowledge about the deep ocean into those discussions, led to the formation, by a group of concerned experts, of the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative (DOSI). Since its inception in 2013, DOSI has championed the consideration of deep-ocean knowledge in intergovernmental ocean governance and environmental management negotiations. It has done so by supplying timely, pertinent, accessible, independent and impartial science-based deep-sea knowledge to negotiating stakeholders. Such knowledge is gleaned from DOSI's global network of deep-ocean experts – comprising scientists, lawyers, policymakers, economists and other knowledge holders – who voluntarily work together towards the achievement of DOSI's mission. The purpose of this presentation is to showcase how DOSI has finetuned its operation to maximise its usefulness, influence and impact at key intergovernmental environmental governance processes, such as those dealing with climate change (UNFCCC), biodiversity conservation (CBD), seabed protection/exploitation (ISA) and High Seas governance (BBNJ), amongst others. In return for its members voluntary efforts, DOSI cultivates capacity, diplomacy and a strong sense of community amongst its members, enabling and creating precious opportunities for career development at the science-policy interface.

DOSI STRUCTURE

DOSI's work is organised into topic-specific Working Groups that address contemporary issues of concern for the deep ocean, such as the new Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Agreement, offshore energy, climate change, deep-seabed mining, deep-sea ecology, fisheries, marine genetic resources and pollution. There are also Task Forces addressing matters that cut across Working Groups, such as biodiversity conservation and art, science and policy. Short-term Focus Groups are formed as necessary to progress discrete pieces of work.

Membership of a DOSI Working Group or Task Force is free and voluntary, and the work of each group is organised by appointed group leads.

Guidance on DOSI activities and direction is provided by a Steering Committee, overseen by an independent Advisory Board.

Day-to-day coordination and communication of DOSI activities is conducted by a DOSI Office led by the Executive Director.

DOSI activities are supported by:



DOSI is hosted by:



Detail from FIVE VULNERABLE DEEP-OCEAN ECOSYSTEMS, created for DOSI by Tanya Young