

A Special Place and Special Time: South African Offshore Coral Reefs



By Zoleka Filander, MSc, University of Cape Town and PhD candidate at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

The South African coastline is 1,554 miles long and has an Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) that covers over 40,000 square miles. The Law of the Sea Convention grants to each country special rights within their respective EEZs regarding the exploration and use of marine resources for food, minerals, and energy production from water and wind.

South Africa's EEZ encompasses two distinct oceans -- the Atlantic and Indian oceans -- and is influenced by two critically important features-- the cold Benguela upwelling and the warm Agulhas current. The resulting variety of habitats ensures that South Africa is home to enormous diversity in marine organisms, amongst the highest diversity in marine species per unit area globally.

Moreover the region has been relatively poorly studied to date and new species are reported regularly. During this talk, Zoleka will walk you through the uniqueness of South Africa and share with you some recent advancements in the country's offshore marine research.

Join us for this free
lecture
Thursday, August 10th
7pm -8pm
FSUCML Auditorium
Refreshments Available
Before Lecture
Open to the Public



About The Speaker:

Zoleka Filander is a Benthic Ecologist with the South African Department of Environmental Affairs and is a PhD candidate at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. She has been engaged in a project called, "Deep Secrets" - a collaboration among multiple South African institutions to characterize deep water coral ecosystems of the region for the very first time. She is particularly interested in Marine Spatial Planning to help ensure that benthic ecosystems are protected. Finally, she sees herself as a role model and hopes to help increase the number of Black female scientists in South Africa.



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