



2021-2030 United Nations Decade  
of Ocean Science  
for Sustainable Development

today  
we have

# INTERNATIONAL JUDGES IVE BY THE SEA

2026

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH  
PHOTO AND FILM CONTEST



eur@cear YOLA  
YOUTH OCEAN LEADERSHIP & ADVOCACY



The Baltic Sea  
Cultural Centre  
in Gdańsk

Cultural Institution  
of Pomorskie Self-Government



# Timberlyn Duncan



She is a coastal research assistant at the coastal studies institute in the Outer Banks of the United States. There, she and her team are integrating a climate justice framework to understand the introduction of carbon dioxide removal, a new climate mitigation technology. She is working towards a master's degree in marine science at North Carolina University. Her research focuses on climate mitigation responses from coastal communities across the Outer Banks. Her previous research examined anthropogenic influences on the coastline and impacts there on marine ecosystems. She has also spent the past five years teaching, both formally and informally, serving as an educator in local aquariums on educational outreach teams and in the local school district.

In addition, she initiated her own educational outreach and research literacy project for minority youth. The Manny Project was created to amplify the voices of minority children interested in the ocean and its conservation. Her efforts engage youth and address disparities in access, education, and opportunity for those historically excluded from marine spaces. She also engages in participatory science with her community. This encourages citizen science work and data representation.

# Daria Ezgeta-Balić



She is a Senior Research Associate at the Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries, Split, Croatia, where she has worked in the Fisheries Science Laboratory since 2007. She holds a PhD in Applied Marine Science. Her research focuses on various aspects of marine bivalves' biology and ecology. More recently, she has expanded her work to marine trophic ecology and demersal fisheries. She has authored 40 papers in ISI-indexed peer-reviewed journals.

In addition to her scientific work, she is deeply dedicated to science communication and ocean literacy. She actively engages with children and young people to raise awareness about the ocean's crucial role in sustaining life on Earth. She has organized and led numerous workshops, lectures, and exhibitions showcasing children's and students' art related to the ocean. In recognition of her efforts to increase ocean literacy among both children and the general public, she was awarded the National Annual Award for Science Popularization in 2022 by the Croatian Ministry of Science and Education. She is also an active member of the European Marine Board Communication Panel and its steering committee, as well as a member of the EuroGOOS Ocean Literacy Working Group.

# Carina Braun



She is social media creator at Rostock Zoo. Therefore she organizes and creates exhibitions and takes photos of the zoo animals for signs, posters or social media posts, and a lot more.

Carina is interested in photography since school days, when she got her first real camera, a Canon EOS 500D. Some of her photos were also exhibited in Rostock Zoo (e.g. the one of the polar bear in the picture).

As a "children of the coast" -- born in Kiel, grown up and living in Rostock -- there is a natural relation to the ocean, in special to the Baltic sea. Further she is interested in nature and their conservation in general.

## Theano Dandari



She's a hobbyist photographer, a marine biology enthusiast, and a recreational SCUBA diver, currently working as a Promotion and Communication Manager for Cretaquarium. In her line of work, she gets to combine her love for sea life and her passion for photography with her background in digital marketing and customer relations.

She began experimenting with digital photography in 2017 at the Hellenic Photographic Society of Crete, and since then, she has been the main photographer for Cretaquarium while also participating in photo exhibitions.

## María del Carmen García-Martínez



She is a researcher at the Spanish Institute of Oceanography (IEO-CSIC), where she currently serves as a Tenured Scientist, after spending three and a half years in management roles—first as Director of the Málaga Oceanographic Center, being the first woman to hold this position, and later as Director General of the Spanish Institute of Oceanography. She is an Academician of the Málaga Academy of Sciences and has been recognized, among other honors, with the Gold Medal of the Ateneo of Málaga. Recently, she was selected as one of the 100 Women Champions in the Blue Economy. She has participated in and led numerous research projects funded by the Spanish Institute of Oceanography, the Regional Government of Andalusia, the European Community, and the National R&D&I Plan. She has authored over a hundred publications in high-impact journals, several books, technical reports, and has attended and presented work at numerous international conferences. Her research lines are: climate change, monitoring and the influence of environmental factors on the trophic chain.

She has always developed a sense of responsibility in making science knowledge available to the general public, being the chair of the European Marine Board Communications Panel from spring 2021 to spring 2024. She has always developed a sense of responsibility in making science knowledge available to the general public, being the chair of the European Marine Board Communications Panel from spring 2021 to spring 2024.

## Iwona Gin



She is Head of International Relations at Nausicaa, National Sea Experience Centre in France. She holds Master's degrees in Business Management and Administration, International Relations, Intercultural Cooperation and Applied Linguistics. She has developed, managed and supervised marine science communication projects funded by the European Commission (Horizon 2020, Interreg, EMFF, private foundations): H2O:Source2Sea, Blue Nights, Valgorize, Aqua-Lit, Sumaris, Marina, Sea for Society, Accent, Choose the Right Fish campaign and Ocean Info Pack. Iwona has also been in charge of the international non-profit organisation World Ocean Network, European partnerships, the Youth4Ocean Forum, international conferences and expert group meetings, including participatory workshops, learning labs and the Blue Planet Forum. Her expertise is mainly in stakeholder engagement and general public empowerment to inspire a behavioral change for sustainable management of the oceans and seas.

# Andreea-Stefania Ionascu



She is a psychologist, youth worker, and travel enthusiast. She has spent the last 20 years working in Romanian NGOs for causes she believes in. She enjoys being around people of all ages in various contexts and has developed a strong passion for education and nature over time. She dedicates her work to improving the quality of non-formal education, promoting volunteering, and developing new and creative ways to address challenges in her field. She loves what she does and strongly believes that education is the foundation of society and a driving force for change towards a better world.

## Izabela Kotynska-Zielinska



She is a founder of the Today We Have, a coordinator of the I live by the Sea Project and an Ocean Literacy Educator and Comunicator.

Izabela is an author and co-author of workshops, exhibitions and popular science events, which have been realized internationally, in e.g. New York, Brussels, Rostock, Lisbon, Paris and Warsaw, among others. Her work has been presented at various international conferences.

She is and has been involved in many national and international projects Ocean of Changing, Ocean@Home, EARTHgames4EyoUth, SHORE, YOLA I live by the Sea Project, workshops for children and young people on the broadly understood marine environment, climate and arctic changes. Izabela created the I Live by the Sea Project and has run it since 2015. Her goal is to educate kids and teenagers all over the world to realize that We all live by the Sea, no matter where we live next to the beach or far away in the mountains, we still have a great impact on it.

Her motto: You can never be overdressed or overeducated - Oscar Wilde.

## Yolanda Koulouri



She is a marine biologist currently working as a Senior Researcher at the Institute of Marine Biology, Biotechnology & Aquaculture (IMBBC) of the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research (HCMR) in Crete. Her experience working on research projects, scientific publications and special editions is related to issues of marine benthic biodiversity and ecology, coastal zone management, artificial reefs technology for recreational diving parks, and last but not least Ocean Literacy. As a member of the European Marine Science Educators Association (EMSEA), she has contributed to the design and development of the Mediterranean Sea Literacy. As a co-chair of the Working Group on Ocean Literacy of European Global Ocean Observing System (EuroGOOS), she has participated in publishing a policy brief document on Ocean Literacy. She is also the representative of HCMR for EU4Ocean Platform supporting the EU Blue Schools Network. She is the coordinator of BlueMinds4Teachers, one of the 3 winning projects of EU4Ocean challenge of 2023, aiming at strengthen skills in Ocean Literacy. She is currently the CEO of HCMR spin-off company Artificial Reef Innovative Applications (ARIA).

## **Małgorzata Mnich-Kamińska**



She is a creative photographer, project manager, and economist with experience in event management, innovative projects, and marketing. She specializes in management, communication, and relationship building. A passionate psycho-dietitian and herbalist who loves a healthy lifestyle, nature, and the power of nature. Adaptable, flexible, and always ready for new challenges! Privately, proud mother and a happy cat owner.

## **Eero Yli-Vakkuri**



He is a Helsinki based performance artist, whose work focuses on public spaces and post-nature intersections. In the past they made annoying street interventions which made people uncomfortable, presently they are advancing sustainable development through campaigns, workshops and artistic presentations. Related to the sea and waters they collaborate with artists Tea Andreoletti to produce speculative mineral waters. As a part of a recent process led by curator Anna Mitus for the Instytut Kultury Miejskiej, the artists prepared a synthetic sea water "Wypij Morze!" (Drink Sea!) for consumption. The recipe of Wypij Morze! was planned in an exchange with Institute of Oceanology PAN scientists.

## **Tymon Zielinski**



He is a leader of the Climate and Ocean Research and Education Unit at IO PAN, where he has a position of an associate professor and director of the Ph.D. program. Tymon has published over 80 research papers. Since 2016, Tymon is a member of the UN Group of experts of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment. Tymon has been involved in many research and educational projects focused on climate change issues in the marine environment. He has organized numerous meetings workshops and conferences and has been a PI in a number of national and international projects. Tymon, since the beginning of his career has been involved in educational activities, both in formal and non-formal teaching.

He has organized and/or lectured during numerous non-formal educational events, such as Science Fairs, workshops, exhibitions for general public, etc.

## **Margherita Zorgno**



She graduated in Marine Ecology and Resources Management in The Netherlands and since then she has been following her passion, the ocean. She is currently a member of the EU co-funded Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership Secretariat, working as a Project Officer at the Italian Ministry of Universities and Research. She has started her career in Indonesia, contributing to a local NGO project aimed at enhancing traceability in the tuna market chain. She then joined the Dutch NGO Goodfish Foundation working on a sustainable seafood guide for consumers and retailers in the country. After working in a programme focused on the management of Pelagos Sanctuary for Marine Mammals in the Ligurian Sea, she moved to Portugal, where she worked as Science Officer in EurOcean, implementing European marine projects and services, especially related to communication, stakeholder engagement, and outreach. She advocates for Ocean Literacy as a tool to empower citizens to protect the ocean, integrating this belief into both her professional and personal life.

## **Małgorzata Żywicka**



She is an oceanographer with a specialization in marine biology. Since 2006, an employee of the Gdynia Aquarium Education Center of the National Marine Fisheries Research Institute. The co-author of exhibitions, nature workshops for children and adults, organizer of specialist training courses and information campaigns for the protection of wildlife. Since 2010, coordinator of the student internship program and volunteering for the Gdynia Aquarium. From 2020, a member of the European Marine Science Educators Association (EMSEA).