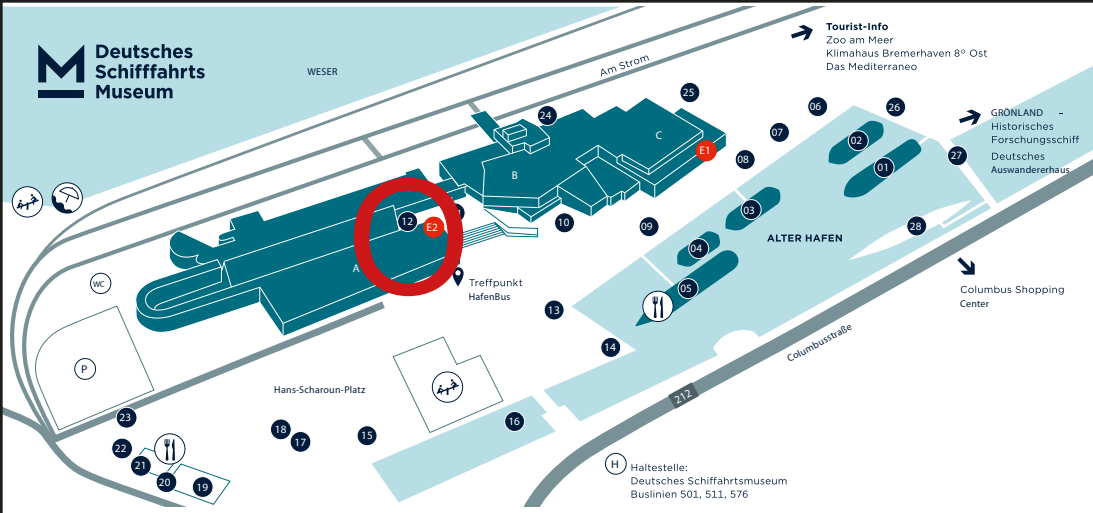




Planetary Waters - A Challenge Between Abstraction and Empathy

The intertwined crises of climate change and biodiversity loss urge us to incorporate a planetary perspective into our thinking and actions more than ever before. The conference “Planetary Waters” addresses this challenge by examining water in its many forms—oceans, seas, inland waters, and wetlands—through interdisciplinary dialogues that balance abstraction with empathy.

Key questions include: How can the complex effects of climate change on the hydrosphere be made accessible to diverse audiences? Can the humanities and museum exhibitions integrate a planetary perspective while conveying local dimensions in an engaging and empathetic manner? What role can visualization techniques play in this process?

The conference brings together scholars, science communicators, curators, and artists drawing on Blue Humanities to explore human-water relationships while advancing three central goals: deepening the planetary dimension in the humanities, fostering interdisciplinary approaches to water studies, and developing innovative public communication strategies.

This conference is generously funded by the German Maritime Museum / Leibniz-Institute for Maritime History (DSM) and the German Research Foundation (DFG) through an International Scientific Events grant. The event is organized in collaboration with THE NEW INSTITUTE Center for Environmental Humanities (NICHE), the UNESCO Chair on Water Heritage and Sustainable Development at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, and the Munich Science Communication Lab at the Deutsches Museum. This conference has been endorsed as an Ocean Decade Activity.

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

 Ca' Foscari
University
of Venice

**THE NEW
INSTITUTE**

Centre for Environmental
Humanities (NICHE)
at Ca' Foscari
University of Venice

Deutsches Museum




unesco
Chair
Water Heritage
and Sustainable
Development

**MUNICHSCIENCE
COMMUNICATIONLAB**

Conference **PLANETARY WATERS**

A Challenge Between ABSTRACTION and EMPATHY

22–24 October 2025

German Maritime Museum /
Leibniz Institute for Maritime History (DSM)
Bremerhaven, Germany

Organized by:
Katrin Kleemann, German Maritime Museum / Leibniz Institute for Maritime
History, Bremerhaven, Germany

Noemi Quagliati, THE NEW INSTITUTE Center for Environmental Humanities
(NICHE) / Department of Philosophy and Cultural Heritage, Ca' Foscari
University, Venice, Italy

Fabienne Will, Deutsches Museum / Munich Science Communication Lab,
Munich, Germany



Conference Program

Wednesday, 22 October 2025

13:30-13:40 **Ruth Schilling** (DSM, Bremerhaven), *Welcome*

13:40-14:00 **Katrin Kleemann, Noemi Quagliati, & Fabienne Will**, *Introduction*

14:00-15:30 **Conceptualizing and Narrating Human-Water Relations in Times of Disaster**

Chair: **Anja Binkofski** (DSM, Bremerhaven)

Anna Barcz (Polish Academy of Sciences), *Major Danube Floods in the 19th Century Europe: The Phenomenon of Travelogues*

Victoria Mummelthai (FU Berlin), *Drowned Cities, Sunken Empires: Submerged Memory and Environmental Justice in Dishonored and Bioshock Infinite*

Silja Klepp (Kiel University), *The Politics of Coastal Erosion in Sicily: Concrete Infrastructures and the Economy of Disaster*

Miles Powell & Dolly Jørgensen (RCC Munich, University of Stavanger), *White Bears, Blank Spaces: How Polar Bear Imagery Eroded Regional Specificity in Climate Change Discourses*

15:30-16:00 Coffee Break

16:00-17:30 **Planetary Crisis and Underwater Heritage**

Chair: **Brooke Grasberger** (DSM, Bremerhaven)

Jamie Allen et al. (Critical Media Lab Basel), *Sunk Costs*

Tülin Fidan & Sven Bergmann (DSM, Bremerhaven), *Learning to See Through the Deep: Visualizing the Legacy of Dumped Munitions*

Anthea Oestreicher (Zurich University of Arts), *Breathing Inverted Spaces: Exchanges in Plankton-Human Relations*

Judith Riemer (Deutsche Fotothek Dresden), *Under Water: Strategies of Eco-critical Visualisation in Artists' Photo Books*

17:30-18:00 Coffee Break

18:00-20:00 **Public Keynote and Reception**

Elda Miramontes (MARUM - Center for Marine Environmental Sciences, University of Bremen),

Plastic Pollution from the Coast to the Deep Sea

The keynote takes place in person at the DSM and live via Zoom:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85342013908>

Thursday, 23 October 2025

9:00-11:00 **Workshop**

Christian Schwägerl (RiffReporter), *Lessons from Wetlands Journalism Projects*

Sonia Levy (Royal College of Art, London), *Extractive Epistemologies of the Sea: A Discursive Workshop*

11:00-11:30 Coffee Break

11:30-13:00 **Consuming Waters: Global (Hi)Stories Between Extractivism and Activism**

Chair: **Solomon Sebuliba** (DSM, Bremerhaven and University of the Balearic Islands)

Eike-Christian Heine & Agathe Four-Moret (University of Stavanger, Nantes University), *From Sea as Resource to Climate Afterthought: Reframing Environmental History in Stavanger's Petroleum Museum*

Julia Schade (Ruhr-Universität Bochum), *"Don't extract it, don't consume it." Decolonial Ecologies and Liquid Dramaturgies*

Stephen Okpдах (University of Warwick), *Indigenous Performativity and Hydro-Justice in the Global South*

13:00-14:30 Lunch

14:30-16:00 **Linking Abstraction and Empathy: Exploring Waters through Arts and Sciences**

Chair: **Renée Hoogland** (DSM, Bremerhaven and University of Southampton)

Lesley Pleasant (University of Evansville), *Scaling Water Perspectives*

Katharine Anderson (York University, Toronto), *Atlantic Elements*

Inka Koch & Angharad Dean (University of Tübingen), *Into the Wild: Fragile Alpine Water and Biodiversity Through Lenses of Art & Science in a Transdisciplinary University Course*

Fantina Madricardo et al. (Institute for Marine Sciences Venice), *Re-Connecting to the Venice Lagoon Natural and Cultural Heritage Through Science and Art*

16:00-16:30 Coffee Break

16:30-17:30 Museum Tour

18:30 Dinner

Friday, 24 October 2025

9:00-10:00 **Keynote**

Anne Hemkendreis (University of Stavanger),

Acoustic Empathy: Experiencing Loss in the Submarine

10:00-11:30 **Curating Waters — Problems, Potentials, Perspectives**

Chair: **Amandine Colson** (DSM, Bremerhaven)

Elis Jones (TU Munich), *Ocean Health and Ocean Metabolism: Dangers and Opportunities*

Regine Ehleiter (Witten/Herdecke University), *Curating Planetary: Tidal Petics, Global Infrastructures*

Claudia Garradas & Alice Semedo (CITCEM, University of Porto), *The Memory of Water: Curating Absence and Empathy in Maritime Museums*

11:30-12:00 Coffee Break

12:00-13:30 Final Discussion and Conclusion