

INTERNATIONAL JUNIOR CONFERENCE entitled **WHERE THE WORLD IS HEADING 2026**

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE



Katarzyna Borowiak-Dzwonkowska **Gdynia Aquarium NMFRI**



I've been in love with the Ocean since I was a child so as an adult I graduated from the University of Gdansk (Oceanography, specializing in marine biology) and the University of Biological Sciences in Lublin (Analytical Laboratory in Environmental Protection). I always wanted to work with children as well, so I did the Postgraduate Pedagogical Studies. Today I am a marine educator, so my duties are: give marine lectures and workshops to pupils, organize educational events for the Gdynia Aquarium guests, finally, prepare applications for financing eco-educational projects, then launch and coordinate them. The Gdynia Aquarium is located in the close vicinity of southern shores of the Baltic Sea, in the northern part of Poland / Europe. I have been working here for 12 years now.

Timberlyn Duncan **Manny The Manateenager**



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.

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Tomasz Kijewski
IO PAN

Member of the CORE team at the Institute of Oceanology of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Sopot. Tomasz has a PhD in biology, specializing in marine fauna genetics. He is involved in educational activities, taking part or co-organizing numerous festivals and science picnics, as well as workshops and lectures for young people and adults.



Aleksandra Koroza
IO PAN

An Oceanographer at Polish Academy of Sciences in the Climate and Ocean Research and Education Laboratory. Her work is mainly in Ocean Literacy and climate change education. She has a deep interest in marine biology subjects such as marine environment protection as well as Cetology. She has also a great passion for Data Science, more specifically for the usage of software such as R and platform GitHub for better data management and increasing data repeatability and reproducibility.



Gabriela Kotkowska
Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)

Before joining Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), I worked as a journalist and editor for various culinary and travel magazines. I collaborated with publications such as Kuchnia, Podróże, Traveler, Wielki Błękit and Kontynenty.

A significant part of my professional life was spent in Tanzania, specifically on Zanzibar, where my partner and I first managed the Sunshine Hotel (now Sunshine Azure), and later the Dive Point diving center. I also tried my hand as a Guest Relations Manager and Food & Beverages Manager.

After nearly ten years on this tropical island, I returned to Poland, where I found an exciting professional opportunity at the (MSC).

Water has always been my favorite element. I love diving and have been fortunate enough to explore the underwater oceanic landscapes of Indonesia, the Philippines, Tanzania, Egypt, Malaysia, as well as lakes in Poland, Austria, and Switzerland.

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Izabela Kotyńska-Zielińska **Today We Have**



I'm the founder of Today We Have and the creator of the I live by the Sea project. I'm passionate about helping people understand how important the ocean is to our lives — even if we live far away from it. My background is in political science, history, and education, and I truly believe that learning never ends. That's why I love creating projects and workshops that connect young people from all over the world through science, storytelling, and creativity. My life motto is a quote by Oscar Wilde: "You can never be overdressed or overeducated."

Over the years, I've worked on lots of exciting international projects and events — from ocean exhibitions in New York and Paris to workshops across Europe. I'm proud that I live by the Sea became an official partner of the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and even won the EU4Ocean Sky Blue Award for spreading ocean knowledge. I also co-created The Ocean: A Non-Textbook, which won an award for being one of the best science communication projects in Poland. When I'm not talking about the ocean, you'll probably find me in the kitchen — I love cooking dishes from around the world, especially Japanese food! My dream? To go to Tokyo and taste sushi made by the legendary Jiro Ono.

Would you like me to make it sound a bit more professional yet still youth-friendly (for use on a website or mentor profile)?

