

Rebecca Lahl

Co-Lead Programme Area 5 Societal Impact
Head of Office for Knowledge Exchange (OKE)
Director Germany, International Ocean Institute (IOI)

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Born: October 1st 1988, nationality: German

I am a passionate knowledge broker, trainer and facilitator working at the interface of science, policy and society, with a focus on knowledge exchange, transdisciplinary collaboration and societal impact. I thrive on bringing people, knowledge and diverse perspectives together, creating spaces where new ideas emerge, partnerships grow and collective solutions take shape through stakeholder engagement, co-design and participatory processes, while also contributing to research and scientific outputs in a meaningful way.

Thematic expertise:

- Human–nature interactions and social-ecological systems
- Marine and coastal governance, focus marine protected areas (MPAs)
- Societal impact of research
- Marine litter

Methodological and strategic expertise

- Knowledge exchange and science–policy–society interfaces
- Co-design and transdisciplinary research
- Stakeholder engagement and participatory processes
- Workshop design, facilitation and training
- Strategic partnerships and international collaboration
- Societal impact and impact-oriented research

Academic Qualification

10/2012 – 12/2015 **M. Sc. Integrated Natural Resource Management** Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin.

10/2009 – 02/2013 **B. Sc. Umweltwissenschaften** Carl von Ossietzky Universität, Oldenburg.

Professional Experience

Since 01/2024 **Co-Lead Programme Area 5 Societal Impact**
Since 08/2019 **Head of the Office for Knowledge Exchange (OKE)**
Leibniz Centre for Tropical Marine Research (ZMT), Bremen, Germany
Supporting ZMT staff in knowledge exchange and transdisciplinary research, developing new formats for knowledge exchange, actor engagement, training and consulting including editorial of ZMT's Policy Brief Series.

11/2016 – 07/2019 **Advisor Marine Conservation**
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), Sector Project Marine Conservation and Sector Project Implementing the Biodiversity Convention, Bonn. Development and coordination of the initiative MeerWissen in Afrika (African-German Partners for Ocean Knowledge), policy advisor for the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Developing and facilitating a format for co-design workshops and science-policy trainings.

- 01/2014 – 05/2016 **Research assistant**
BZL Kommunikation und Projektsteuerung GmbH, Oyten
 Consulting service on Biodiversity management in cemeteries (Wiener Stadtwerke) and Reduction of marine litter (GIZ)
- 09/2013 – 05/2015 **Student assistant and intern** *Alfred-Wegener-Institut für Polar- und Meeresforschung (AWI), Bremerhaven*: Advisor at the Planning Group for a CCAMLR Marine Protected Area in the Weddell Sea, Antarctica.
- 12/2012 – 04/2013 **Student assistant and intern** *Bundestagsfraktion Bündnis 90/Die Grünen, Berlin*: Organization of a nationwide info tour about bioenergy and land-use.
- 04/2012 – 07/2012
- 09/2011 – 12/2011 **Intern** *Centro de Investigación Científica de Yucatán (CICY), Mérida, Mexico*: Mangrove and epiphyte mapping in the Ría Celestún Biosphere Reserve.

Recent Projects

- 2025-2027 **Co-Lead**, Higher Education Partnership for a Sustainable Blue Economy (STABLE) (EU-ASEAN, DAAD, Nuffic)
- 2022-2025 **Lead**, Development and Implementation of Co-Design Training and Mentoring for Ocean Decade Actions (IOC/UNESCO)
- 2022-2024 **Co-Lead**, Partnership project to support the development of an information management strategy for the Nairobi Convention and partners (WIO-IMS) (GIZ/BMZ)
- 2021-2024 **Co-Lead**, Temporary Permanence (TemPe) – Innovative and flexible knowledge transfer of current socially relevant topics in permanent exhibitions (BMBF)
- 2021-2024 **Lead**, PARTICipatory monitoring, Assessment and visualization of climate change vulnerability in coastal WETlands of Peru for decision-making in Ecosystem-based adaptation (PARAWET-Peru) (GIZ/IKI)
- 2019-2022 **Lead**, Western Indian Ocean Governance Exchange Network (WIOGEN) (GIZ/BMZ)

Organisation of international conferences (selection)

- 08/2026 **Scientific Committee Member**, ECSA 61: Bridging the gap between science and policy in estuarine and coastal marine biodiversity: the way forward
- 11/2025 **Facilitator**, Co-Design Kick-Off Workshop FUTURO (Future West African Marine Ecosystem)
- Since 11/2022 **Seminar co-host**, IOI Summer School on Co-Design and Impact
- 10/2021 **Conference host**, virtual WIOGEN Ocean Governance Conference and Science-Policy Event with 350 participants, with WIOJMS Special Issue
- 07/2018 **Seminar host**, Biodiversity conservation for human wellbeing, Internationale Naturschutzakademie (INA), Vilm
- 06/2016 **Seminar co-host**, Marine Biodiversity Conservation and Fisheries Management (GIZ), INA, Vilm

Professional Activities and Memberships

Since 12/2024	Co-Spokesperson , Arbeitskreis Transfer, Leibniz Gemeinschaft
Since 11/2024	Director Germany , International Ocean Institute (IOI)
Since 11/2022	Group of Experts on Capacity Development (GE-CD), IOC/UNESCO; Co-Chair Working Group for the Implementation Plan for the IOC Capacity Development Strategy 2023-2030
Since 09/2019	Trainer and facilitator for trainings and workshops on co-design or knowledge exchange
01/2021-03/2022	Working Group Anticipating and Transforming Coastal Futures, German Committee Future Earth (DKN)
04/2013 – 04/2014	Scholarship (Deutschlandstipendium) in the category Sustainability and global justice, IRI THESys (Integrative Research Institute for Transformations of Human-Environment Systems, Berlin)

Selected publications

- Lahl, R., et al. (2026). ECSA 61 Policy Brief: Science for Sustainable Estuarine and Coastal Environments. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22126573>
- Celliers, L., et al. (2026). New rationalities, inner logic, and hope for sustainable future coasts. *Global Sustainability*, 9, e2.
- Lahl, R., et al. (2025). Third-generation biodegradable plastics – A complementary strategy to tackle the marine litter problem. *Sustainable Chemistry and Pharmacy*, 44, 101925.
- Zhang, J., et al. (2024). Co-design capacity development for the UN Ocean Decade. *Frontiers in Ocean Sustainability*, 2, 1252087.
- Lahl, R., Ferse, S., & Bleischwitz, R. (2023). Reflecting on a research institute's role as a tool for ocean science diplomacy—ZMT's mission to collaborate. In V. Ittekkot & J. K. Baweja (Eds.), *Science, Technology and Innovation Diplomacy in Developing Countries: Perceptions and Practice* (pp. 311–328). Springer Nature. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-6802-0_20
- Granados, J., et al. (2023). Implementing blockchain technologies in PES schemes: Tools and opportunities. ZMT Policy Brief. <https://doi.org/10.21244/zmt.2023.005>
- Granados, J., et al. (2023). Implementing climate change adaptation projects in local communities: Adapting to existing institutions and making them matter. ZMT Policy Brief. <https://doi.org/10.21244/zmt.2023.003>
- Ferse, S., Fujitani, M., & Lahl, R. (2022). Planning and conducting co-design in collaborative marine research projects – A guidance.