



PRESS RELEASE

A dedicated online press briefing will be organized on June 3 from 15:00 to 16:00 CEST with authors.

Details and registration will be shared with media in due course.

Please contact us if you are interested in attending.

## **Starfish Barometer 2026 Expands International Scientific Committee Ahead of World Ocean Day Publication**

***The 2026 Starfish Barometer, bringing together 29 experts from 14 countries, will be published on 8 June and presents an integrated view of the Ocean - Humanity system.***

**Cyprus – Paris – Toulouse, 11 May 2026** – The Starfish Barometer, an annual scientific initiative translating the state of the Ocean and its relationship with humanity into accessible insights for decision-makers and society, launches its 2026 edition with an expanded international scientific committee of 29 scientists and experts from 14 countries, helping to better understand and respond to ocean change.

Announced today at [\*Riding the Wave: Advancing the EU Ocean Pact through Science, Innovation and Cooperation\*](#), an official Cyprus EU Presidency conference, the 2026 edition builds on its first release at the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in 2025 and strengthens its role as a recurring global scientific reference.

The full 2026 Starfish Barometer will be published on 8 June (World Oceans Day) in the scientific journal *State of the Planet*, and released publicly online at [starfishbarometer.org](https://starfishbarometer.org)

### **Strengthened scientific foundation**

The 2026 edition is led under a dual governance model combining scientific excellence and operational delivery: Dr. Marina Lévy (CNRS) chairs the Scientific Committee, alongside co-chair Dr. Karina von Schuckmann (Mercator Ocean International), while Pierre Bahurel (Director General, Mercator Ocean International) oversees implementation.

The expanded committee brings together expertise across ecology, marine biology, physical oceanography, climate science, anthropology, economics, engineering, and governance, reflecting the growing interdisciplinary effort to understand the Ocean–Humanity system as an integrated whole.

First introduced at UNOC3 with the support of France’s Ambassador for the Ocean and the Poles, Olivier Poivre d’Arvor, the Starfish Barometer has since been integrated into the *Copernicus Marine Ocean State Report*, reinforcing its role as an annual scientific synthesis bridging



research and policy. The 2026 edition builds on this foundation, with the ambition to anchor the Starfish Barometer as a recurring reference at the interface of science, policy and society.

## **Emerging topics in the 2026 edition**

Structured around five interconnected dimensions - ocean state, human pressures, societal harms, protection efforts, and opportunities for humanity - the Starfish Barometer provides a comprehensive reading of the Ocean–Humanity system.

Rather than a snapshot, the Barometer consolidates and translates the latest peer-reviewed science and major international assessments to reflect how our understanding of the Ocean is evolving over time, highlighting confirmed trends, emerging risks, and areas of progress.

While revisiting key issues identified in 2025, the 2026 edition is introducing new and evolving dimensions of the Ocean–Humanity relationship.

New topics include:

- Continued changes in the cryosphere–ocean system, including declining sea ice extent
- Increasing recognition of societal and economic harms linked to ocean change
- Developments in ocean governance and protection, including fisheries subsidies and illegal fishing
- Risks to the major in-situ ocean observing systems, reducing our capacity to protect the ocean
- Emerging pressures from deep sea mineral resource exploration
- The role of sustainable ocean finance in shaping future pathways

“The Starfish Barometer was born from the need to make science-based ocean knowledge accessible and useful beyond academia. The 2026 edition marks a new step, grounded in a strong international scientific foundation and supported by a growing community of scientists working to track progress and remaining gaps year after year.” **Marina Lévy, Chair of the Scientific Committee.**

“Ocean knowledge is still too often fragmented. The Starfish Barometer brings together peer-reviewed science across disciplines, creating a coherent and accessible picture of how the Ocean and society are evolving together.” **Karina von Schuckmann, Co-Chair of the Scientific Committee**

“The Starfish Barometer reflects the reality that changes in the ocean - physical, ecological, social, and economic - are deeply interconnected. By bringing together scientists from around the world and structuring the Barometer around five dimensions, we provide a robust, internationally informed perspective that policymakers and society can use to track progress, understand emerging risks, and identify opportunities for sustainable action.” **Peter Haugan, branch Lead for *Opportunities for Humanity*, policy director at Institute of Marine**



**Research, Norway and professor at the Geophysical Institute, University of Bergen, Norway.**

“The value of the Starfish Barometer is to make ocean science truly usable. By consolidating and translating peer-reviewed knowledge into accessible, operational formats, from thematic dashboards to its integration into the Copernicus Marine Service Ocean State Report, it turns scientific evidence into actionable insights for policymakers, stakeholders, and society.” **Pierre Bahurel, Director General of Mercator Ocean International.**

The [Starfishbarometer.org](https://starfishbarometer.org) website will go live on June 7 at 23:59 CEST

### **Press information**

**A dedicated online press briefing will be organized on June 3 from 15:00 to 16:00 CEST** with members of the scientific committee, ahead of publication, to present the main messages of the 2026 edition and allow exchanges with authors. Details and registration will be shared with media in due course. **Please contact us if you are interested in attending.**

### **About the Starfish Barometer**

The Starfish Barometer is an annual, science-based initiative providing an accessible overview of the relationship between the Ocean and humanity. Structured around five interconnected dimensions - Ocean state, human pressures, societal harms, protection efforts, and opportunities for humanity - it consolidates and translates authoritative scientific knowledge from peer-reviewed literature and major international assessments. First launched at the United Nations Ocean Conference in 2025, the Starfish Barometer is published annually on World Ocean Day. Its findings are also included in the annual Copernicus Marine Service Ocean State Report, connecting the Barometer to the broader international scientific community monitoring the Ocean.

The production and dissemination of the Starfish Barometer are supported by Mercator Ocean International, the entrusted entity of the Copernicus Marine Service, which provides its operational expertise to transform scientific knowledge into an accessible and actionable tool.

[More information : starfishbarometer.org](https://starfishbarometer.org)

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