

Symposium Title: Ocean Stewardship - Active Earth-Keeping for our Blue Planet

Symposium Topic: The human footprint is now so great that we are in the position of stewards of earth – whether we like it or not. Researchers call on an urgent need for active stewardship of earth systems, yet stewardship is poorly understood and operates on a range of scales, from backyard to planet, individual to institution. Stewardship activities include advocacy, education, preservation, restoration, sustainability, monitoring and compliance and are relevant in topical domains such as citizen science, community engagement, managing human impacts and protected areas. This symposium will bring together researchers and their ideas to progress the stewardship of ocean systems. It aims to integrate social, ecological and economic perspectives to highlight the ways we can actively care for our oceans, for a sustainable future.

Abstract

People, Policy, Place: A New Environmental Stewardship Framework and Indicator

The human footprint on earth is now so great that we are in the position of stewards of nature – whether we like it or not. With increasing calls for effective environmental stewardship, more research is required to understand stewardship behaviour including motivators and outcomes. In this study, we use mixed methods to develop a stewardship framework based on people, policy, place. We propose an indicator for measuring stewardship behaviour and reveal four significant predictors of stewardship. We identify the characteristics of high stewardship people and the values that motivate them. Finally, we propose a strategy for improving environmental stewardship comprising six actions. This study has important implications for the management of social-ecological systems now and in the future.