

Programme of the symposium to launch the UNESCO Chair in Ocean and Sustainable Coastlines at La Rochelle University (France), from 28 to 30 April 2026

April 28 Reception and opening

5:30 p.m.: Welcome drink at the City Hall of La Rochelle

April 29 Discovery and imagination of the ocean: the universe of the sensible *Discover, imagine, anticipate, protect*

9:00 am: Opening by Gérard Blanchard

9:10 am: Introduction by UNESCO in conjunction with the France Commission of UNESCO

9:10 am: Introductory remarks by Agnès Michelot and Laurent Testut, heads of the UNESCO Chair in Sustainable Coastline

10 a.m.: Messages from partners

Round table 1

10am-11am: **The ocean or the discovery of humanity:
An ocean of sensitivities**

Pilot: Jean-Sébastien Noël, Associate Professor in History, LIENSs

Objective: To analyze the way in which human societies have perceived, represented and explored the ocean through time, mobilizing the sensitive, cultural and scientific dimensions of the relationship to the ocean.

Speakers :

- Camille PARRAIN, geographer, specialist in Atlantic territories and offshore navigation
- Laurent VIDAL, historian, specialist in Atlantic history and the history of Brazil, director of the "Ocean Humanities" Ethnopole
- Michel REDOLFI, composer and sound artist
- François FREY, Spirit of Velox
- Helga Synnevag, Psychologist, Volda University College

Participants :

- Louis Gaucher Primary School, Sainte-Marie de Ré

Round table 2

**11:20-12:30: Ocean Science: (R)Evolution and Revelations:
An ocean of imagination**

Pilot: Cécile Vincent, biologist, CEBC

Objective: To present recent advances in ocean science and related technologies, showing how they are renewing scientific knowledge and opening up new fields of innovation and imagination.

Speakers :

- Françoise Gaill, IPOS, oceanographer
- Claire Hellio, Professor at the University of Brest Occidental,
- Yan Ropert-Coudert (CEBC) La Rochelle University
- Frederike Hanke, Rostock University
- Prof. Noisette, Chaire Unesco on Marine Sciences

12:30pm- 2pm: Lunch

Round table 3

**2pm-3:15pm: Humanity under pressure: coastal societies on alert.
A risky ocean?**

Pilot: Éric Chaumillon, geophysics, sciences of the universe (LIENSs)

Objective: To examine the climate risks affecting coastal areas and coastal societies, by comparing the scientific observation, prevention and adaptation capacities of territories.

Speakers:

- P. Walsh, Professor, Graduate School of Oceanography
Coastal & Ocean Analysis of Sediments and Transport Lab (COASTL), University of Rhode Island
- Dr. Oula AMROUNI, Senior researcher
Coordinator UNESCO IHP FRIEND-Water Mediterranean (MEDFRIEND), Laboratory of Marine Environment, University of Carthage, Tunisia
- Dr. Anna Hurova, Ukrainian Academy of Sciences (to be confirmed)

Participants: Collège Missy, Collège Beauregard, Collège Aliénor d'Aquitaine, Collège de la Tour de Montguyon

Round table 4

3:40-5:20 pm: Vulnerabilities and inequalities: what kind of humanity for tomorrow? An ocean of responsibilities

Piloting: *Bleuenn Guilloux, legal sciences, (LIENSs)*

Objective: To question social, territorial and generational inequalities in the face of the impacts of climate change in coastal areas and to analyse the associated legal, political and ethical responsibilities.

Speakers:

- Nathalie Long, Geographer, CNRS Research Director,
- Cecilia Paradiso, anthropologist, teacher, researcher La Rochelle University
- Tomislav Oroz, Professor Zadar University.
- Yamissa Ouattara, LIENSs, La Rochelle University

Participants: Marcel Pagnol College

5 p.m.: Screening of the film at the Aquarium of La Rochelle: "Women on the front line for the future of the ocean" (*Women action for the ocean*)

April 30

Ocean science at the service of humanity

Decide, repair, plan, imagine

Round table 5

9am-10:30am: Humanity in Action: An Ocean of Capabilities

Pilot: Emilio Bastidas Arteaga, engineering sciences (LASIE)

Objective: To highlight the capacity of companies to act in the face of coastal risks, through technical, legal and governance solutions resulting from research and public action.

Speakers :

- Xavier Bertin, CNRS research director co-leader of the FUTURISK project, Joint Research Center (EU)
- Stéphanie Hourdeau, Senior Lecturer, Insurance Law Specialist
- Cécile Glémain, head of major risks for the city of La Rochelle;
- A PhD student, international master's student "No risk"

Participants: Valin High School in La Rochelle

Round table 6

11am-12:15pm: Future Humanity, Tomorrow's Ocean System: An Ocean Ocean of Possibilities

Pilot: Agnès Michelot, legal sciences (LIENSs)

Objective: To explore prospective approaches to anticipate the future relationship between humanity and the ocean, by mobilizing scientific knowledge, legal frameworks and collective imaginations.

Speakers :

- Laurent Testut, oceanographer at La Rochelle University,
- Julien Viaud, Lecturer in Management Sciences,
- Vivi Marie Lademo Storsletten, Ass. Prof. in Ecological Economy and Ethics, Nord University Business School (Bodo, Norway)

International partners:

- International Centre for Comparative Environmental Law (Prof. Michel Prieur)
- Quebec Institute of International Affairs (Dr. Robinson Tchapmegni)
- Pierre Failler, Professor of Economics, UNESCO Chair in Ocean Governance (UK) (to be confirmed)

Participants: Lycée Merleau Ponty, Lycée du littoral et de la mer de Bourcefranc

12:30 pm: Lunch

2pm-2.45pm : two parallel sessions

-PAMELI drone demonstration at the Espace Encan (public session)

-Round table of international students of La Rochelle University

3:30 p.m.: Statement by the UNESCO Chair on Sustainable Youth Oceans and Coastlines for decision-makers and UNESCO bodies (Merleau-Ponty and Valin high schools, Lycée du Littoral et de la mer, Aliénor d'Aquitaine, Beauregard, Missy, Marcel Pagnol, Tour de Montguyon, La Genette and Sainte-Marie-de-Ré primary schools)

4:30 p.m.: Conclusions Agnès Michelot, Laurent Testut, Gérard Blanchard, UNESCO representative

5 p.m.: Closing of the event