Department of Atmospheric and Oceanographic Sciences
Nelson Mandela University
MSc Biological Oceanography
Population Dynamics of *Calanus agulhensis* in Algoa Bay, South Africa

The South African Environmental Observation Network (NRF-SAEON) Elwandle Coastal Node, in collaboration with the Department of Atmospheric and Oceanographic Sciences, Nelson Mandela University, is seeking a suitable candidate for an MSc in Biological Oceanography to characterise the population dynamics of an ecologically significant calanoid copepod, *Calanus agulhensis*, in the coastal waters of Algoa Bay.

Calanus agulhensis is particularly abundant in the shelf waters of the Eastern Agulhas Bank where peak densities typically associate with upwelling regions. Their population dynamics and general ecology in the shelf region is well studied, less so for coastal waters. The candidate will therefore be challenged with characterising the coastal population dynamics of this species as well as to investigate its spatial and temporal components drawing on historical and newly collected samples from Algoa Bay.

This study forms part of SAEON Elwandle Node's Pelagic Ecosystem Long-term Ecological Research programme (PELTER), which pursues continuous observations of the coastal plankton dynamics in Algoa Bay.

The applicant should have a foundation in the following fields: Oceanography, Marine Biology, Zoology. Good knowledge/experience in microscopy with an aptitude for working at sea, on board coastal crafts, will be advantageous. Comprehensive skills transfer can be expected in the use of instruments, analytical procedures, zooplankton species identification, data analysis, scientific writing and related procedures.

The successful candidate will join a highly motivated team at the SAEON Elwandle Zooplankton Lab, with full support from the research community at the Ocean Sciences Campus, Nelson Mandela University.

Project running costs will be provided by NRF-SAEON Elwandle Node. The successful candidate will, however, be encouraged to independently source funding for a bursary, with assistance from the project supervisors.

Interested candidates must submit to Dr Mfundo Bizani (m.bizani@saeon.nrf.ac.za) by no later than 15 May 2026, the following: 1) motivation letter, 2) CV with two contactable references, and 3) a full academic record.

Project Academic Supervisors: Dr Mfundo Bizani and Dr Shaun H.P. Deyzel