

Institute for Coastal and Marine Research

SEMINAR

In recognition of Earth Day

22

DAY

04

MONTH

26

YEAR

What's that under my beach towel?

Come for a (virtual) walk on the beach to learn about South Africa's unique beach biota, and research that's underway to understand, manage and conserve sandy shores.

On a typical beach in Nelson Mandela Bay, there are about 70 macro-invertebrates crawling in the sand under each beach towel. Even though South African beaches are among the best studied globally, there are numerous undescribed species that are still being discovered, including eight Cirolanid isopods. Insects previously found in the intertidal were generally dismissed as vagrants, but recent observations have shown there's a pygmy mole cricket in South Africa that is a beach specialist. The daily cross-shore migrations undertaken by this tiny species highlight how remarkably beach animals are adapted to survive such dynamic systems. Although beaches provide two-thirds of all types of ecosystem services, and support unique, diverse communities of biota, they are social-ecological systems at increasing risk of collapse. Research in two international projects, *Beaches for Life!* and *TIDELINES*, are building capacity and generating knowledge to help safeguard beaches worldwide.



Linda is a Research Associate at CMR, and a Pew Marine Fellow. She leads the Coast component of the National Biodiversity Assessment, co-chairs the IUCN SSC South African National Special Specialist Group, and sits on several national committees. Her research spans diverse topics in the field of coastal and marine biodiversity assessment, planning, ecology and conservation.



Wednesday, 22 April 2026, 13:00 - 14:00 SAST
Ocean Sciences Campus, B Block, Conference Hall,
Nelson Mandela University

Register for online or in-person:
<https://forms.office.com/r/1SLMWLEEMC>

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