

# UCT SANCOR Seminar

## By Dr Louise Gammage (UCT)



**Creating 'third' spaces for  
Transdisciplinary governance in  
South African marine systems.**

**Monday, 8 April at 1pm**

**In person:  
UCT Oceanography Seminar Room  
([map](#))**

**Online:  
[RSVP here](#) to receive the link  
a week prior to the talk.**

Dr. Louise Gammage is an inter- and transdisciplinary marine sustainability researcher and is interested in developing transformative methodologies and tools to promote system-based governance in marine systems. Her current research focuses on marine social-ecological systems (SEs) and fisheries in the southern Benguela in South Africa, working collaboratively with South African and International research partners. Louise's research interests include exploring innovative methodologies to address challenges related to scale and decision-making in complex adaptive systems; understanding drivers of change in SEs to improve present and future decision-making; and exploring ways for local stakeholders (such as fishers) to build capacity to enhance well-being while informing governance and policy at the larger decision-making scales. Louise is presently a marine sustainability research fellow at the University of Cape Town with the Marine and Antarctic Research Centre for Innovation and Sustainability (MARIS) and is the co-principal investigator for the Ecosystem-based adaptive capacity through community engagement (Eco-ACE) project.

# Abstract

Governing marine systems are notoriously difficult, given their inherent complexities and uncertainties. In addition, the demands placed on finite resources by converging crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and poverty require that we creatively leverage our vast experience and limited resources to pursue equitable, full-spectrum sustainability in our marine systems. To do so demands that we first consider what is required to create more inclusive and agile governance systems that can better facilitate multi-scalar decision-making grounded in integrated ocean management principles. Transdisciplinarity, including knowledge co-production and co-design, is an inclusive approach that can support more equitable and sustainable management in complex systems by providing the interconnected framing required for solving complex sustainability problems. However, Transdisciplinarity remains challenging to implement, where barriers to implementation include disciplinary and organisational silos and resourcing, which hamper the type of collaboration demanded by effective Transdisciplinarity. In this talk, I explore some of the changes required to promote Transdisciplinarity for equitable and sustainable development pathways in South Africa, highlight some of the progress made in South Africa before proposing ideas for how some of these pathways can be practically implemented in the South African marine governance space. I specifically discuss the potential use of 'third spaces' as the initial co-creating, collaborative space that leverages our vast expertise and limited resources to build a shared understanding, prioritise needs, and implement target management actions.