

The logo for the National Oceanography Centre, featuring a square with a white top half and a blue bottom half, with the text "National Oceanography Centre" in black on the blue background.

National
Oceanography
Centre

BIODIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION

- OPERATOR IMPACTS -

Ella Darlington

I'M NOT A LAWYER... OR A POLICY MAKER

... I AM A CRUISE SCHEDULER

AIMS OF BBNJ?

The agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction ([BBNJ Agreement](#)), also known as the “Treaty of the High Seas”, is key to:

- protect the ocean
- promote equity and fairness
- tackle environmental degradation
- fight climate change
- prevent biodiversity loss in the high seas

OBJECTIVES OF BBNJ

Under the overall objective of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ) for the present and in the long-term, through effective implementation of the relevant provisions of the Convention and further international cooperation and coordination, the BBNJ Agreement addresses four main issues:

- Sets up a procedure to establish **large-scale marine protected areas** in the high seas. This facilitates the achievement of the target to effectively conserve and manage 30% of land and sea by 2030, which was agreed in December 2022 within the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#).
- Establishes the **sharing of benefits from marine genetic resources (MGR)**.
- Contains **clear rules to conduct environmental impact assessments**, with the right checks and balances, before human activities take place in the high seas.
- Foresees **capacity building and the transfer of marine technology** between the Parties.

TIMELINES



After a decade of talks and negotiations...

- 19 June 2023 the Agreement was adopted by consensus at the 5th BBNJ Intergovernmental Conference in New York.
- 20 September 2023 the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, signed the BBNJ Agreement on behalf of the EU.
- The Agreement is open for signature from 20 September 2023 and remains open for signature until **20 September 2025**
- "This Agreement shall enter into force **120 days after the date of deposit of the sixtieth** instrument of ratification, approval, acceptance or accession"
- **January 18th 2026** at the latest
- Currently 7 ratifications to date: Belize, Chile, Mauritius, Micronesia, Monaco, Palau and Seychelles
- ... 53 to go...

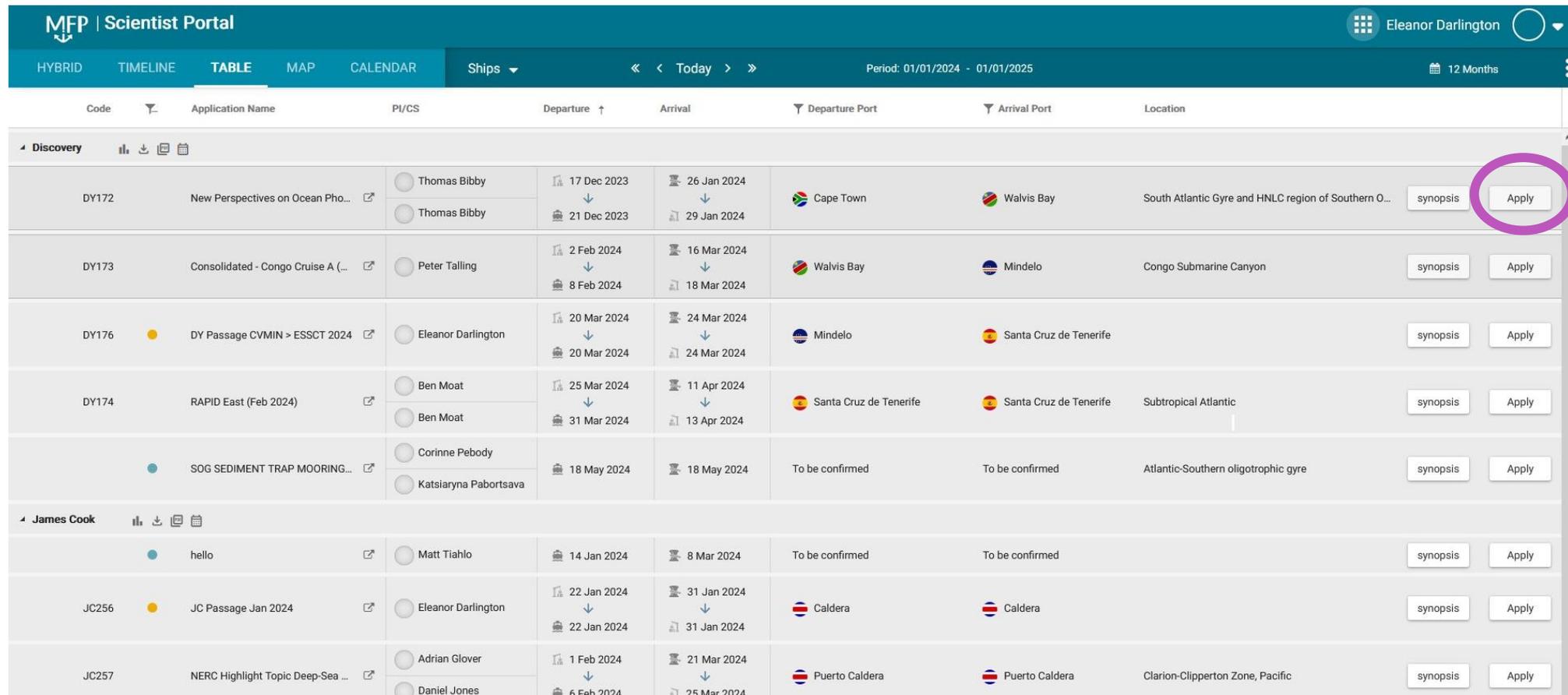
CRUISE PLANNING SCENARIO



- NOC & Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) had a 1 day workshop
- Identified key areas in the cruise planning process where **additional steps** are needed
 - Planning
 - Making opportunities transparent
 - Trying to align with current timelines for diplomatic clearances
 - Delivery
 - Issue of batch identifiers for samples
 - Post-cruise
 - Report submissions
 - Storage of samples

ARTICLES 9 & 10

- Question(s) – how can opportunities be made visible and enabled via cruise planning
- Question(s) – how can opportunities to get involved in activities be enabled via cruise planning, incl. grant proposals



MFP | Scientist Portal

Eleanor Darlington

HYBRID TIMELINE TABLE MAP CALENDAR Ships

Period: 01/01/2024 - 01/01/2025 12 Months

Code	Application Name	PI/CS	Departure	Arrival	Departure Port	Arrival Port	Location		
Discovery									
DY172	New Perspectives on Ocean Pho...	Thomas Bibby Thomas Bibby	17 Dec 2023 21 Dec 2023	26 Jan 2024 29 Jan 2024	Cape Town	Walvis Bay	South Atlantic Gyre and HNLC region of Southern O...	synopsis	Apply
DY173	Consolidated - Congo Cruise A (...)	Peter Talling	2 Feb 2024 8 Feb 2024	16 Mar 2024 18 Mar 2024	Walvis Bay	Mindelo	Congo Submarine Canyon	synopsis	Apply
DY176	DY Passage CVMIN > ESSCT 2024	Eleanor Darlington	20 Mar 2024 20 Mar 2024	24 Mar 2024 24 Mar 2024	Mindelo	Santa Cruz de Tenerife		synopsis	Apply
DY174	RAPID East (Feb 2024)	Ben Moat Ben Moat	25 Mar 2024 31 Mar 2024	11 Apr 2024 13 Apr 2024	Santa Cruz de Tenerife	Santa Cruz de Tenerife	Subtropical Atlantic	synopsis	Apply
	SOG SEDIMENT TRAP MOORING...	Corinne Pebody Katsiaryna Pabortsava	18 May 2024	18 May 2024	To be confirmed	To be confirmed	Atlantic-Southern oligotrophic gyre	synopsis	Apply
James Cook									
	hello	Matt Tiahlo	14 Jan 2024	8 Mar 2024	To be confirmed	To be confirmed		synopsis	Apply
JC256	JC Passage Jan 2024	Eleanor Darlington	22 Jan 2024 22 Jan 2024	31 Jan 2024 31 Jan 2024	Caldera	Caldera		synopsis	Apply
JC257	NERC Highlight Topic Deep-Sea ...	Adrian Glover Daniel Jones	1 Feb 2024 6 Feb 2024	21 Mar 2024 25 Mar 2024	Puerto Caldera	Puerto Caldera	Clarion-Clipperton Zone, Pacific	synopsis	Apply

ARTICLE 12 - NOTIFICATION



Project Roles	
PI	Penny Holliday ✎
Chief Scientist	Andrew Gates ✎
Project Manager	Daniel Comben ✎
Review Manager	N.A. ✎
Captain	John Leask ✎
Senior Technician	Nick Rundle ✎

Accept offer	Penny Holliday, Andrew Gates ✓, Anita Flohr	✓ Complete	...	20/02/2024	View
3. CRUISE PLANNING					
Submit diplomatic clearance application	Penny Holliday, Andrew Gates, Anita Flohr, Jane Thompson ✓, Sarah Scanlan	✓ Complete		23/09/2023 23/11/2023	View
Edit Draft Supply Agreement	Penny Holliday, Andrew Gates, Anita Flohr, Daniel Comben ✓	✓ Complete		12/11/2023 16/04/2024	View

- Time to submit intentions to the Clearing House Mechanisms – align with normal MSR / Dip-Clearance request
- Reports to be submitted to the Clearing House Mechanism within one year of collection

Upload summary cruise report	Penny Holliday, Andrew Gates, Anita Flohr	Pending		19/06/2024	
Confirm data submission to BODC	Daniel Comben	Pending		26/06/2024	
Review Post Cruise Assessment		Pending		26/06/2024	
Upload NMF technical reports	Alexander Phillips, Helen Oldridge	Pending		26/06/2024	
Final acceptance of NMF data	Penny Holliday, Andrew Gates	Pending		15/12/2024	
Upload final scientific cruise report	Penny Holliday, Andrew Gates, Anita Flohr	Pending		15/12/2024	
Close project	Daniel Comben	Pending		15/12/2024	

ARTICLE 30 & 31 – ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

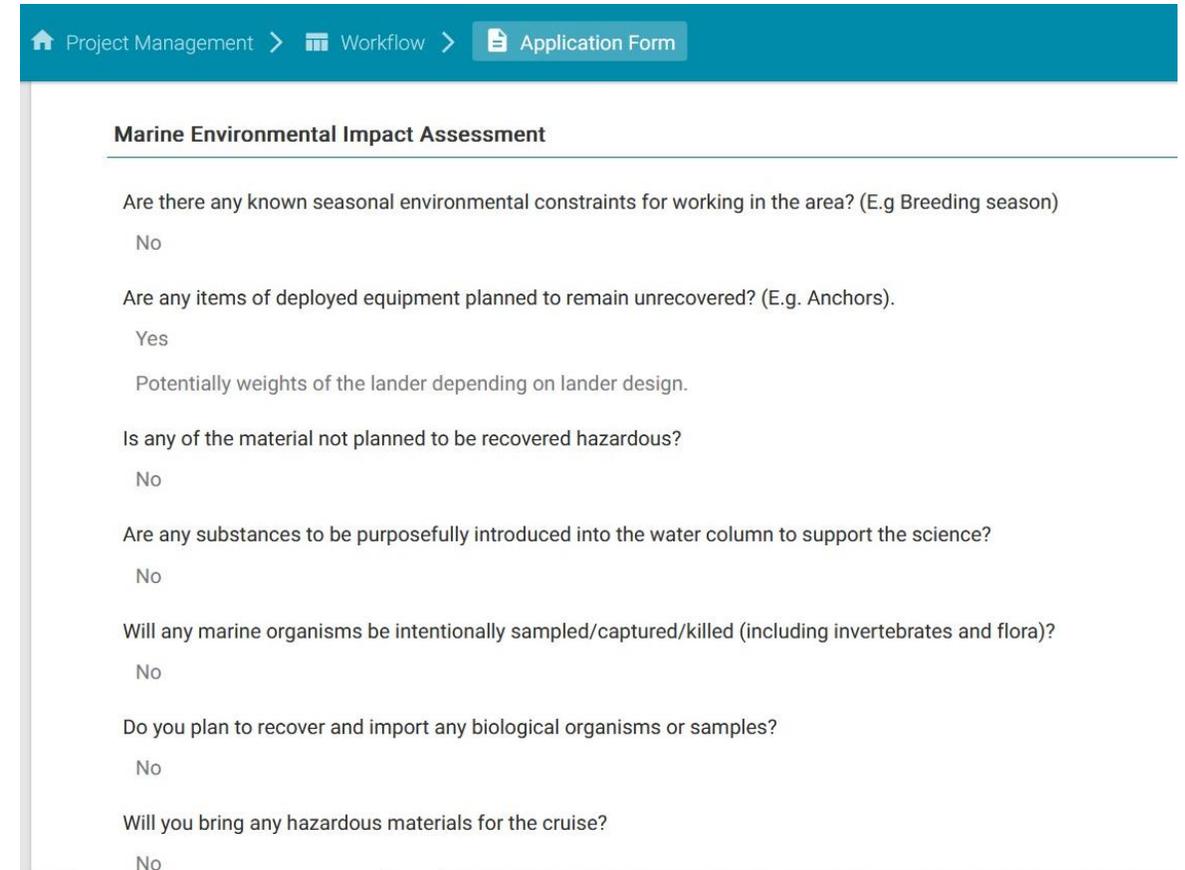
“When a planned activity may have more than a minor or transitory effect on the marine environment, or the effects of the activity are unknown or poorly understood, the Party with jurisdiction or control of the activity shall conduct a screening of the activity under article 31”

Article 31 – Process for environmental impact assessments

- **Screening.** Parties shall undertake screening, in a timely manner, to determine whether an environmental impact assessment is required in respect of a planned activity under its jurisdiction or control, in accordance with article 30, and make its determination publicly available: [..]
- **Scoping.** Parties shall ensure that key environmental and any associated impacts, such as economic, social, cultural and human health impacts, including potential cumulative impacts and impacts [..] to be included in the environmental impact assessments [..].
- **Impact assessment and evaluation.** Parties shall ensure that the impacts of planned activities including [..] impacts within national jurisdiction are assessed and evaluated using the best available science and scientific information

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENTS - PRESENT

- Brief EIA on the SME form at application stage
- Follow up EIA once programmed, approx. 6 months before
- We have a EIA assessor, who is going to get busier!
- This is not suited to BBNJ...



The screenshot shows a web application interface for the Marine Environmental Impact Assessment. The breadcrumb navigation at the top reads: Project Management > Workflow > Application Form. The main heading is "Marine Environmental Impact Assessment". Below this, there are seven questions, each with a "No" response option visible. The questions are:

- Are there any known seasonal environmental constraints for working in the area? (E.g Breeding season)
No
- Are any items of deployed equipment planned to remain unrecovered? (E.g. Anchors).
Yes
Potentially weights of the lander depending on lander design.
- Is any of the material not planned to be recovered hazardous?
No
- Are any substances to be purposefully introduced into the water column to support the science?
No
- Will any marine organisms be intentionally sampled/captured/killed (including invertebrates and flora)?
No
- Do you plan to recover and import any biological organisms or samples?
No
- Will you bring any hazardous materials for the cruise?
No

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?



- Using the MFP we will:
 - Publicly advertise **funded** projects
 - Enhance the interface to enable more 'tag-on' projects
 - Undertake an EIA once a project is **funded**
 - Feed the EIA findings into scheduling the cruise
 - Submit required BBNJ forms with the MSR / dip-clear requests
 - Require the 'batch identifier' to be located on the MFP for future reference
 - Provide a step to submit cruise reports / sample lists in standardised format to the Clearing House Mechanism

WHAT ARE WE NOT DOING (AS VESSEL OPERATOR)



- Finding long term storage solutions for the Marine Genetic Resource (MGR) samples
- This is being looked at by the archives / Discovery Collection team

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ANYONE ELSE THINKING ABOUT THIS?

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