

The European Marine Science Educators Association (EMSEA), providing learning opportunities and resources for teachers

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Why should teachers learn more about ocean sciences?

If teachers have little to no knowledge regarding to ocean science principles and no awareness of the challenges the ocean and coasts are facing, can we expect them to teach students effectively? Teachers and environmental educators are thus important agents for the ocean. But an effective educational transformation depends upon how motivated, capable and supported our science teachers and educators in coastal centres or aquaria are. So it is critical to pay close attention to how we engage each one of them to develop a long lasting and caring attitude towards the marine and coastal environment.

The European Marine Science Educators Association (www.EMSEA.eu) is dedicated to provide such opportunities by co-organising multiday conferences for professional development throughout Europe, starting with the First Conference on Ocean Literacy in Bruges, 2012 and the EMSEA-conference taking place in Plymouth (UK) in 2013. With these conferences EMSEA strives to establish meaningful relationships between educators and members of the ocean science community and to facilitate the exchange of best practices in marine education. Europe has much to offer in terms of valuable marine projects and educational materials, but the efforts are often poorly visible, and thus seldom used by others.

During the EMSEA-conference in Plymouth (2013), co-organised by the Marine Biological Association (MBA), both new and experienced teachers and educators from all over Europe will have the opportunity to share ideas, experiences and resources, network and to participate in interesting scientific lectures and excursions along the beautiful Devon coast. Investing in collaborations with teachers and educators will no doubt have considerable currency for many years to come.