



Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee vzw  
Flanders Marine Institute

# VACANCY

## Researcher socio-economic factors and consequences of Blue Economy developments

### SITUATION

For 20 years, the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) has been strengthening the accumulation of marine knowledge and the excellence of marine scientific research in Flanders. VLIZ is a coordination and information platform, a focal point for marine and coastal research, which also serves as an international contact point for marine science. Important activities are national and international networking, information and data management, scientific communication for policy and industry, education and the general public, and logistical support of marine research. Since 2017, the institute also initiates, promotes and executes innovative and multidisciplinary marine research, and this at the service of, in collaboration with or complementary to Flemish and international marine research groups.

To strengthen its research capacity, VLIZ is hiring 14 new colleagues in its Research Department. Join our multidisciplinary team in Oostende at the Belgian coast and be part of a new wave of marine research in Flanders. You will work in a unique institute in which your science will be supported by state-of-the-art data systems and services, research infrastructure, science communication and an extensive marine library. Moreover, VLIZ is part of a wide network of Belgian and international marine research groups, offering many opportunities for scientific collaboration.

In addition to these open positions, VLIZ sets up a recruitment reserve for potential temporary jobs. Opportunities may arise for the following profiles: ecological modeler, environmental data analyst/modeler with experience in R, marine biologist/taxonomist, marine geologist. Candidates with such a profile are encouraged to make a spontaneous application.

*For each function, VLIZ considers enthusiastic involvement, open servitude, excellent professionalism and integrity as important characteristics.*

### RESEARCHER SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AND CONSEQUENCES OF BLUE ECONOMY DEVELOPMENTS

Today and in the past, a maritime economy and consequentially a maritime society has developed in Flanders. This includes the evolution of the maritime sector and the sociological aspects of coastal societies and maritime labour. A central research question in this context is which socio-economic aspects of marine ecosystem services and maritime economy have and are being developed and how this evolution contributes to a changing image of the relation between humans and the sea.

This frames in a broader economic research VLIZ wants to pursue, to investigate the societal aspects of the blue economy now as well as in the past, in terms of coastal employment and its socio-economic impact for Flanders. Initially we will start with a data driven subproject on fishery data from the 20th century, after which a second phase will focus on the socio-economic aspects of blue tourism. In a later stage, this research can be directed towards other specific sectors of the blue economy.

A first research question is which social, societal, cultural and biological aspects determined the economic value of fisheries from the Belgian part of the North Sea during the 20th century. VLIZ has a unique data set of fisheries, standardized from 1929, with monthly prices and landings of fish species, sometimes even per length class. These data can be matched to changing consumption patterns throughout time and changes in the organization of fishery, resulting in a long-term vision on patterns and developments steering the fishery sector in Flemish ports. Other questions may concern the meaning of landings for the local societies (food provision, touristic offer, related economy) and for Flanders (trade, economic value in societal context). Increasing knowledge on the social and economic history of Flemish fisheries will add to shed light on possible future developments.

A second research question relates to the socio-economic impact of blue tourism in Flanders. The aim is to determine a comprehensive economic value of beach and coastal recreation in Flanders, based on data by the provincial touristic knowledge centre, surveys and international valuation techniques for recreational aspects of beach and coast, Other questions pertain to the contributions of different socio-economic groups to the tourist economy during various periods of the year, which activities determine the attraction of the coast to tourists outside the main season and what the socio-economic consequences are for blue tourism. Finally, the impact of coastal tourism on local communities will be investigated.

*To develop this research, VLIZ hires a post-doctoral researcher in the Research Department.*

## MAIN RESPONSIBILITIES

- To build a research line on the socio-economic aspects of maritime sectors, with a focus on Flanders;
- To plan and perform research projects with internal funds;
- To write high quality research papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals;
- To write proposals and prospect for external funding (in collaboration with relevant colleagues at the institute and with external partners) to initiate new socio-economic marine research projects;
- To possibly contribute to socio-economic aspects of research and innovation projects in collaboration with partners from the Blue Economy;
- To supervise MSc and PhD students;
- To contribute to other research projects in the VLIZ research department, to interact and collaborate with colleagues at VLIZ to increase interdisciplinarity in various projects, to give advice on colleagues' research;
- To network at national and international level with other (marine) scientists;
- To present research at national and international conferences;
- To contribute to events organized by the Department or the Institute, such as the VLIZ Marine Science Day;
- To review research proposals, manuscripts and abstracts.

## PROFILE

- PhD in economic sciences with an interest in social science, PhD in social sciences with an interest in economy or equivalent through experience;
- Documented and strong academic track record;
- Expertise with quantitative and qualitative data sets;
- Affinity or experience with marine socio-economic research is a plus;
- Good written and oral English communication skills;
- Knowledge of Dutch is recommended, willingness to learn Dutch is necessary to work with surveys and local data sources;
- Critical and creative;
- Scientifically integer;
- Working independently;
- Strong interpersonal skills, a motivated team player;
- Open minded and taking initiative;
- Documented project writing skills;
- Experience with project management is a plus;
- Documented strong academic track record;
- Willing to learn new skills on a regular basis;
- Willing to work in an international context.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information concerning this vacancy, please contact:

Michiel Vandegehuchte, Research Director VLIZ

- Mail: [michiel.vandegehuchte@vliz.be](mailto:michiel.vandegehuchte@vliz.be)
- Telephone: +32 (0)471 61 22 49

## OUR OFFER

- We offer a challenging job in the dynamic environment of VLIZ
- A contract of three years as post-doc researcher, which can be followed by a tenure track position in case of a positive evaluation, or a contract in a tenure track position, depending on your profile and qualifications. The salary follows the salary scales of scientific personnel in the Flemish Government.
- Fringe benefits: holiday pay, end-of-year bonus, meal vouchers, hospitalization insurance, bike allowance, free public transport for home-work commuting and an attractive holiday arrangement.

## DOES THIS VACANCY APPEAL TO YOU?

Send in your cover letter and CV until May 15<sup>th</sup> 2019 (23:00 CEST):

- By post: Jan Mees, General director VLIZ, InnovOcean site, Wandelaarkaai 7, 8400 Oostende
- By mail: [jobs@vliz.be](mailto:jobs@vliz.be) with subject "05 MSH - Vacancy Socio-Economics"

Contact us by telephone on +32 (0)59 34 21 30.

*VLIZ promotes equality and diversity in the workplace. You will be recruited based on competencies. Qualities of people are decisive, regardless of gender, religion, ethnic origin, age, sexual orientation or any disability.*

## PROCEDURE

Based on the received motivation letters and CVs, a select group of candidates will be invited for a job interview. You will be informed by email. The job interviews take place in the offices of VLIZ.

Employment can start immediately after the selection procedure and ideally not later than 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019.

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