

PRESS RELEASE:

OCEANS CAN BE PROTECTED WITH ONLINE COMMUNICATION, SAY
CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

by Samantha Oester

St. John's, Newfoundland & Labrador (April 20)—Conservation cannot be successful without effective communication between scientists and non-scientists. At the inaugural [OceansOnline conference](#), marine scientists will meet in order to discuss better ways to reach across boundaries of geography, culture, and background in order to foster marine conservation. The conference will be a full day with emphasis on using the internet as a valuable tool to communicate and conduct research. OceansOnline 2016 will take place on August 4 in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, immediately following the five days of the 4th International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC4).

“The internet is a continuously evolving ecosystem,” described Andrew David Thaler, PhD, one of the plenary speakers for OceansOnline at the Delta Conference Centre in downtown St. John's. “I am looking forward at the way people, platforms, and embedded technologies allow us to not only expand our reach but to integrate online tools directly into the natural world, removing barriers to accessibility and creating transformative tools for ocean outreach.”

Thaler is a deep-sea ecologist and population geneticist who studies the consequences of human impacts on the biodiversity and connectivity of deep-sea hydrothermal vents at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Thaler is editor-in-chief of the popular blog [Southern Fried Science](#), now among the most visited marine science websites in the English language. Easkey Britton, PhD—internationally renowned professional surfer, artist, marine social scientist, and explorer from Ireland—is also speaking as an OceansOnline plenary in its inaugural year. Britton is a co-founder of the non-profit [Waves of Freedom](#), one of the pillars of which is digital storytelling. Waves of Freedom uses the power of surfing as a creative medium for social change and women's empowerment in places like Iran and spear-headed the world's first global Surf + Social Good Summit in Bali.

“It's such an honor to be invited to give a keynote for the inaugural OceansOnline program in St. John's, one of my favorite places strongly connected to Ireland by the sea and our sea-faring, coastal culture and heritage,” Britton stated. “At the core of what I do and what motivates me is exploring how we can create better connections across cultures, better understand each other and the environment. I believe the sea can be a powerful connector to help us achieve this.”

Thaler and Britton will kick off OceansOnline on notes of ocean outreach and social change, continuing the overarching theme of IMCC4—*Making Marine Science Matter*. OceansOnline will be a day of facilitated discussions, workshops, and online tools presentations between science, technology, and conservation professionals from around the globe. In the preceding days, the latest in marine conservation

research and practice will be presented during symposia, focus groups, workshops, and more as part of IMCC4, July 30 - August 3, 2016. To learn more, visit the IMCC4 and OceansOnline [website](#), [Facebook page](#), or follow [#IMCC4](#) on Twitter.

About the International Marine Conservation Congress

The Society for Conservation Biology's International Marine Conservation Congress brings together conservation professionals and students to develop new and powerful tools, further marine conservation science and policy and catalyze change. Organized by the Society's [Marine Section](#), IMCC hosts delegates including marine conservation professionals from every sector of the field around the world, including biological and social sciences, management, policy, planning and communications. Universities, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private foundations, and other organizations from numerous countries will be represented.

Contact

For more information about OceansOnline or IMCC4, please contact:

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