



## Marine biology comes of age

All life on Earth depends on the oceans. How can they satisfy mankind's demands for resources whilst continuing to provide life support for planet earth? The patron of the Marine Biological Association, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, will join a host of distinguished guests to celebrate the marine environment – and the importance of understanding it – at a Royal Charter reception at the Fishmongers' Hall in London.

The Marine Biological Association runs a leading research laboratory in Plymouth and is one of the world's oldest learned societies devoted to the advancement of marine biology. In recognition of its long and eminent history and its status in the field of marine biology, the MBA was awarded a Royal Charter in 2013.

There has never been a time in history when attention has focused so sharply on our need to understand the marine environment. The timing of the award of a Royal Charter to the MBA is significant, and the organisation is preparing to step up to explain why UK marine biology is so important to society.

We know that our lives depend on the sea in many ways but our knowledge of the fundamental workings of life beneath the waves is limited. UK science is at the forefront of marine biological research but must continue to evolve and grow if we are to answer new and pressing questions, for example: how and why do marine animals move and distribute themselves in the sea? How will ocean acidification affect life in the ocean? What is needed to realize the potential of marine organisms for biotechnological and biomedical advances?

Renowned oceanographer, explorer and author Dr Sylvia Earle said "The MBA is an organisation that has done so much in terms of exploring and understanding the ocean; the future is in the hands of those who understand the importance of the blue part of the planet".

Scientists, policy-makers and industry figures will gather at the Fishmongers' Hall in London on Tuesday 11th March at an event to celebrate the oceans, and the contribution that UK marine biology makes to our greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities ahead.

**Ends**

'Every other breath' - 50% of the oxygen we breathe comes from microscopic marine algae

99% of living space on Earth is in the ocean

Up to 40% of the oceans are heavily affected by human activities, including pollution, depleted fisheries and loss of coastal habitats

**Notes for editors:**

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**The Marine Biological Association (MBA)** is a professional body for marine scientists with some 1400 members world-wide. Since 1884 the MBA has established itself as a leading marine biological research organisation contributing to the work of several Nobel Laureates and over 170 Fellows of the Royal Society. In recognition of its long and eminent history and its status within the field of marine biology, the MBA was awarded a Royal Charter in 2013.

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