

UC SANTA BARBARA

# THE *Current*

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## **Lecture on Ocean Health to be Held at UCSB's National Center For Ecological Analysis and Synthesis**

Ben Halpern, director of UC Santa Barbara's Center for Marine Assessment and Planning (CMAP), will give a lecture titled "How Healthy Are our Oceans?" on Thursday, December 13, from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. The lecture will be held in the basement auditorium of the Balboa building at 735 State Street.

The talk is part of a series called "Science for Everyone!" It is hosted by UC Santa Barbara's National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS). The event is free and open to the public and will be webcast live.

Halpern was lead author of a recent article in the journal *Nature* that evaluated ocean health. Using a comprehensive new index designed to assess the benefits of healthy oceans to people, the research team evaluated the ecological, social, economic, and political conditions for every coastal country in the world. Their findings show that the global ocean scores 60 out of 100 overall on the Ocean Health Index. Individual country scores range widely, from 36 to 86. The highest-scoring locations included densely populated, highly developed nations such as Germany, as well as uninhabited islands, such as Jarvis Island in the Pacific.

In addition to serving as director of CMAP, Halpern is a research biologist with UCSB's Marine Science Institute. He is also coordinator of a large NCEAS project on

ecosystem-based management of coastal marine systems, and is a lead scientist for the Ocean Health Index project. Much of his research addresses issues related to coastal and marine spatial planning, including cumulative impact and ecosystem service tradeoff assessments.

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