Blue Finance 2026

Delivered by OCF

PROGRAMME

Financing marine and coastal nature recovery

Wednesday 11 November 2026
One Birdcage Walk, Westminster, London

THE DAY IN FOUR TRACKS

- **A** Scaling the market
- **B** Blended finance and catalytic capital
- **D** Procurement, disclosure and influence
- **C** The last mile

Ocean and Coastal Futures

Organised by Ocean and Coastal Futures

Financing marine and coastal nature recovery

Wednesday 11 November 2026 · One Birdcage Walk, Westminster, London

The investment case for the ocean is made. The live question is why capital is not moving at the pace the coast needs, and how it reaches the places where recovery actually happens. **Blue Finance 2026 puts the people who allocate capital in the same room as the people who deliver in the water,** for one day, to work on that question.

This year the programme focuses on UK waters. Speakers from Australia, and from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development's work in the Baltic and Mediterranean regions, bring experience from markets that are further ahead, as examples to test against the UK position. Around 200 delegates are expected from finance, government, project delivery, research and NGOs.

The day is organised around four tracks. Each opens with short presentations from people with a model, evidence or an international comparison to set out, followed by a chaired discussion. Each track sets out one question it aims to answer.

The day at a glance

Timings and content subject to change

08:30	Registration, coffee and exhibition
09:30	Welcome, and ministerial address from the Welsh Government
09:45	Keynote: The Crown Estate
10:00	● **Track A** Scaling the market At 11:00, within the track, a two-minute silence for Armistice Day
11:15	Coffee
11:45	● **Track B** Blended finance and catalytic capital
12:45	● **Track D** Procurement, disclosure and influence
13:20	Lunch
14:15	● **Track C** The last mile In parallel, Council Room: **Saltmarsh and coastal risk** workshop (places limited)
15:20	Comfort break / room changeover
15:40	Report back from the saltmarsh workshop
15:45	Closing panel: what has to change for the money to move?
16:35	Close
16:40	Networking reception, to 17:30

SPONSORS

THE CROWN ESTATE

CRONFA MARINE FUND CYMRU

Why now

The UK's marine nature markets are being designed now, and money is starting to move before the rules are settled. Offshore wind developers now have a route to pay for environmental compensation, and marine net gain is still being developed. The Crown Estate and Crown Estate Scotland have both backed a roadmap for high-integrity marine natural capital markets. Wales is developing a nature finance strategy, and the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026 made rural affairs and coastal communities an area of competence for strategic authorities. Choices made over the next two years will decide how these markets work and who they reach. Blue Finance 2026 brings together the people making those choices while they can still be shaped.

The conclusions of the day will be published in a short report after the conference, and the programme leaves time in every break to meet investors, funders, developers and project leads.

Opening

08:30	**Registration**	Coffee and exhibition
09:30	**Welcome** 15 min	**David Tudor**, Ocean and Coastal Futures **Llŷr Gruffydd MS**, Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Welsh Government (video address)
09:45	**Keynote** 15 min	**Andreas Arvanitakis**, The Crown Estate

TRACK A · 10:00 TO 11:15

Scaling the market

Building investable natural capital markets for marine nature

The UK has the parts of a marine nature market: seabed landowners mapping where restoration is possible, codes and standards in development, developers facing new obligations, and investors looking for projects. What it lacks is a market in which ready projects and willing capital reliably meet.

The track opens with lessons from Australia, where carbon and nature markets are further developed and legal design has shaped what buyers trust. The panel then brings together the people who own the seabed, measure the outcomes, invest the money and carry the obligations, and asks what each needs from the others. Buyers will only pay at scale for outcomes they can verify, so market integrity and verification run through the discussion.

THE QUESTION

What stops ready projects and willing capital from meeting in UK waters, and who can change that?

10:00	**Presentation** 10 min	**Professor Justine Bell-James**, University of Queensland Lessons from Australia's carbon and nature markets
10:10	**Presentation** 10 min	**Beth Siddons**, Howell Marine Consulting Enabling conditions for a UK marine natural capital market
10:20	**Questions** 10 min	Questions to both presenters
10:30	**Panel** 45 min	Chair: **Eoin Murray**, Rebalance Earth • **Mike Spain**, Crown Estate Scotland • **Gus Fordyce**, National Oceanography Centre • **Jennifer Godwin**, Seabed User and Developer Group • **Gemma Bedford**, BNP Paribas The panel pauses at 11:00 for a two-minute silence for Armistice Day.
11:15	**Break** 30 min	Coffee and exhibition

TRACK B · 11:45 TO 12:45

Blended finance and catalytic capital

How public, philanthropic and concessional money is used to bring private capital in

Most marine and coastal restoration cannot yet stand on private returns alone. Blended finance uses public, philanthropic and concessional money to carry the risks private investors will not, so that their capital can follow. The approach is established in development finance and in other geographies. The question for the UK is what transfers.

The track opens with the EBRD's experience of building markets in the Baltic and Mediterranean regions. The panel then tests it against UK practice:

- a water company investing in catchment and coastal outcomes, including its work at Southend and Great Yarmouth;
- the view from a global financial group on what it takes for private capital to commit;
- Wales's approach to pooling nature investment through Marine Fund Cymru;
- how government is shaping the market through its nature finance strategy.

THE QUESTION

Which uses of public and philanthropic money bring private capital in rather than replacing it, and what would it take to use them in UK waters?

11:45	**Framing address** 10 min	**Adonai Herrera-Martínez**, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) Building markets for marine nature: the EBRD's experience in the Baltic and Mediterranean regions Followed by questions.
12:00	**Panel** 45 min	Chair: **Olivia Rendón**, Plymouth Marine Laboratory • **Jonathan Glerum**, Anglian Water • **Sudip Hazra**, First Sentier MUFG Sustainable Investment Institute • **Gareth Cunningham**, Marine Conservation Society • **Jon Boswell**, Defra

TRACK D · 12:45 TO 13:20

Procurement, disclosure and influence

Financing prevention, not just repair

Most discussion of blue finance is about paying to restore what has been lost. This track looks at the levers that reduce harm in the first place, and at companies paying for nature in their own supply chains: corporate buying power, disclosure regimes and investor influence.

The Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) framework is changing what companies report about their impacts and dependencies on nature, including the ocean, and what investors can ask of them. Valerie Pinkerton, who leads TNFD engagement at the Green Finance Institute, sets out what disclosure is beginning to change in seafood and other supply chains. Oliver Tanqueray, who leads CDP's ocean programme, follows with the first ocean-related data disclosed by companies through CDP, from the 2026 cycle. Wietse van der Werf of the Sea Ranger Service then shows what it looks like when companies act, through the partnerships in which Tesco and Nestlé Purina fund marine restoration that his organisation delivers.

THE QUESTION

What makes companies pay for nature in their supply chains, and how can disclosure and buying power change what happens in the water?

12:45	**Presentation** 10 min	**Valerie Pinkerton**, Green Finance Institute What nature disclosure is changing in supply chains
12:55	**Presentation** 10 min	**Oliver Tanqueray**, CDP Foundation What companies are disclosing about the ocean: first insights from CDP's 2026 cycle
13:05	**Presentation** 10 min	**Wietse van der Werf**, Sea Ranger Service How we work with Tesco and Nestlé Purina to fund marine restoration
13:15	**Q&A** 5 min	Chair: **David Tudor**, Ocean and Coastal Futures Questions to all three speakers.
13:20	**Lunch** 55 min	Lunch and exhibition

TRACK C · 14:15 TO 15:20 · AUDITORIUM

The last mile

Getting finance to communities and the coast

Capital accumulates at the top, while the people who deliver recovery work at a scale finance is not built to serve. A community group or a local authority may need tens or hundreds of thousands of pounds, where many institutional investors will not consider deals of that size, and due diligence costs much the same whatever the size of the deal. The routes most often proposed are aggregation, intermediaries and public bodies acting as counterparties, and few of these yet exist at sea.

This track hears from the places where the work happens: local authorities developing new ways to value and finance coastal nature, a council-led seagrass token in Plymouth Sound, a community-led marine protected area on Arran, and restoration at Studland Bay. The discussion asks each of them what they need, what kind of money, and from whom.

THE QUESTION

What would it take for finance to reach the organisations delivering recovery on the coast, at the scale they work at?

14:15	**Presentation** 8 min	**Kat Deeney**, Plymouth City Council The Seagrass Token: from pilot to scale in Plymouth Sound
14:23	**Presentation** 8 min	**Áine Purcell-Milton**, Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST) Financing a community-led marine protected area
14:31	**Presentation** 8 min	**David Brown**, National Trust Purbeck Estate Restoring Studland Bay seagrass meadows
14:39	**Presentation** 8 min	**Beccy MacDonald-Lofts**, Freelancer and LGA Coastal SIG Emerging frameworks to enable investment on the coast
14:47	**Discussion** 33 min	Chair: **Kat Bruce**, Protected Areas Foundation • **Kat Deeney**, Plymouth City Council • **Áine Purcell-Milton**, COAST • **David Brown**, National Trust Purbeck Estate • **Beccy MacDonald-Lofts**, Freelancer and LGA Coastal SIG

WORKSHOP · COUNCIL ROOM, IN PARALLEL WITH TRACK C

Saltmarsh and coastal risk: who pays, and how do we go to scale?

Convened by Athena Blue, The Crown Estate and UKCEH · Facilitator: Kirsty Schneeberger MBE

Saltmarsh can reduce flood and erosion risk, support wildlife and fisheries, and help protect coastal infrastructure. Building on the UK Saltmarsh Finance Day at Rochester, this workshop asks:

- how those who benefit from restored saltmarsh (insurers, water companies, infrastructure owners and flood authorities) can recognise and pay for that value;
- how to build up from project-by-project funding to an investment strategy at national scale, with a flagship portfolio;
- how to build in benefit to local communities.

The session runs in five parts: (1) the ecology and the opportunity map; (2) projects in the water; (3) risk-holder perspectives, including insurance; (4) a facilitated discussion on the route to scale; (5) capturing conclusions for the report back.

Kirsty Schneeberger reports the conclusions to the main conference at 15:40. **Places are limited, and delegates will be given information to select this workshop in advance.**

THE QUESTION

Can those who carry coastal risk pay for the saltmarsh that reduces it, and what would it take to do this at national scale?

15:20	**Comfort break / room changeover** 20 min	Track C and the saltmarsh workshop both close, and delegates move to the auditorium.

Report back

Auditorium

15:40	**Report back** 5 min	**Kirsty Schneeberger MBE**, Athena Blue Conclusions from the saltmarsh and coastal risk workshop

CLOSING PANEL · 15:45 TO 16:35 · AUDITORIUM

What has to change for the money to move?

The closing panel takes the day's discussion to one practical question: what has to change, and who has to change it, for private capital to reach marine and coastal recovery at scale? The panel brings three perspectives:

- how public funding decisions and devolution shape whether private investment follows, including rural affairs and coastal communities becoming an area of competence for strategic authorities under the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Act 2026;
- how marine protected areas can be funded over the long term;
- what a commercial shellfish venture needs from investors and government to grow.

THE QUESTION

What has to change, in policy, public funding and the market, for private capital to reach marine and coastal recovery at scale?

15:45	**Panel** 50 min	Chair: **Liam McAleese**, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation • **Christopher Kerr**, Davitt Jones Bould • **Belinda Bramley**, Protected Areas Foundation • **Sarah Holmyard**, Offshore Shellfish
16:35	**Close** 5 min	**David Tudor**, Ocean and Coastal Futures
16:40	**Networking reception** 50 min	A chance to follow up conversations from the day, to 17:30

Practical information

Timing. Registration opens at 08:30. The conference runs from 09:30 to 16:40, followed by a networking reception until 17:30.

Remembrance. At 11:00 the conference will observe a two-minute silence for Armistice Day.

Rooms. The afternoon runs in two rooms. Track C is in the auditorium; the saltmarsh workshop runs in parallel in the Council Room, and delegates will be given information to select it in advance.

Who is in the room. Investors, nature finance specialists, development finance, foundations and the advisers who structure deals; government departments, regulators, project developers and coastal partnerships; researchers, NGOs and corporate buyers.

Report. A short report on the day's conclusions will be published after the conference.

Status. Timings and content, including speakers and titles, are subject to change.

ORGANISED BY

Ocean and Coastal Futures

SPONSORS

THE CROWN ESTATE

CRONFA MARINE FUND CYMRU

SUPPORTING ORGANISATIONS

UKSIF
UK Sustainable Investment and Finance Association

Ecosystems Knowledge Network

Organised by Ocean and Coastal Futures
coastal-futures.net/blue-finance-26

Contact
conference@coastms.co.uk

Speakers

Listed alphabetically by surname. Further speakers, including chairs, will be added as they are confirmed.



KEYNOTE

Andreas Arvanitakis
Director of Nature Opportunities, The Crown Estate
Keynote



TRACK A

Gemma Bedford
BNP Paribas
Panellist



TRACK A

Professor Justine Bell-James
University of Queensland
Presentation



TRACK B

Jon Boswell
Head of Nature Finance Strategy, Defra
Panellist



CLOSING PANEL

Belinda Bramley
Protected Areas Foundation
Panellist



TRACK C

David Brown
Restore Nature Delivery Manager, National Trust Purbeck Estate
Presentation and discussion



TRACK C

Kat Bruce
Protected Areas Foundation
Chair



TRACK B

Gareth Cunningham
Marine Conservation Society
Panellist



TRACK C

Kat Deeney
Plymouth City Council
Presentation and discussion



TRACK A

Gus Fordyce
National Oceanography Centre
Panellist



TRACK B

Jonathan Glerum
Anglian Water
Panellist



TRACK A

Jennifer Godwin
Seabed User and Developer Group
Panellist



OPENING

Llŷr Gruffydd MS
Cabinet Minister for Rural Resilience and Sustainability, Welsh Government
Video address



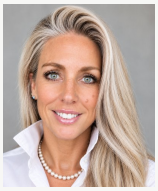
TRACK B

Sudip Hazra
First Sentier MUFG Sustainable Investment Institute
Panellist



TRACK B

Adonai Herrera-Martínez
Director, Environment and Sustainability, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
Framing address



CLOSING PANEL

Sarah Holmyard
Offshore Shellfish
Panellist



CLOSING PANEL

Christopher Kerr
Head of ESG, Davitt Jones Bould
Panellist



TRACK C

Beccy MacDonald-Lofts
Freelancer and LGA Coastal SIG
Presentation and discussion



CLOSING PANEL

Liam McAleese
Director of Natural World Programme, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation
Chair



TRACK A

Eoin Murray
Rebalance Earth
Chair



TRACK D

Valerie Pinkerton
Green Finance Institute
Presentation



TRACK C

Áine Purcell-Milton
Community of Arran Seabed Trust (COAST)
Presentation and discussion

OR
PHOTO

TRACK B

Olivia Rendón
Plymouth Marine Laboratory
Chair



WORKSHOP

Kirsty Schneeberger MBE
Founder and CEO, Athena Blue
Workshop facilitator and report back



TRACK A

Beth Siddons
Head of Ocean Finance, Howell Marine Consulting
Presentation



TRACK A

Mike Spain
Crown Estate Scotland
Panellist



TRACK D

Oliver Tanqueray
Head of Ocean, CDP Foundation
Presentation



OPENING

David Tudor
Chief Executive, Ocean and Coastal Futures
Host



TRACK D

Wietse van der Werf
Founder and CEO, Sea Ranger Service
Presentation