Department of Ocean Sciences (OCE) Bi-Weekly Newsletter

August 17, 2026

OCE Announcements

- A new research project entitled "Improved Models for Surface Lagrangian Prediction for Naval Search and Rescue Missions" by **Tamay Ozgokmen** is funded by the Office of Naval Research (ONR). The project is in collaboration with Prof. Pierre Lermusiaux at MIT as well as some observational groups and has been motivated by seamen risking getting lost sea in overseas wars recently. This research project builds on the 6-year machine learning applications in physical oceanography MURI (Multi University Research Initiatives by Department of Defense competitions) led by MIT and DARPA's (Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency) Oceans of Things program which aimed to build 50,000 multi-sensor drifters for Pentagon by bringing together software and hardware expertise from academia and private corporations (both were projects participated by Ozgokmen).

OCE Publications

- The "*State of the Climate in 2025*" report was published in AMS Bulletin of the American Meteorological Society with **Shane Elipot** and **Philip Tuchen** as contributing authors in the "Global Oceans" chapter. Shane Elipot is a co-author of the "AMOC and heat transport" section, while Philip Tuchen is a co-author of the "Surface currents" section. The report is based on contributions from scientists around the world. It provides a detailed update on global climate indicators, notable weather events, and other data collected by environmental monitoring stations and instruments located on land, water, ice, and space. It is published annually: https://journals.ametsoc.org/view/journals/bams/107/8/BAMS-D-26-0100.1.xml?tab_body=pdf

- A study of the first 3D+1 life-cycle ocean sampling of a submesoscale eddy is published in JPO. These observations were taken as part of a 2022 CALYPSO-DRI ONR cruise in the western Mediterranean Sea using a combination of CODE, CARTHE, SVP and new multi-level WHOI drifters sampling all the way down to 50-m depth simultaneously with the surface drifters. This unique data set and analysis is part of the PhD thesis of a student by Irina Rypina, who is a former graduate of RSMAES, and a senior scientist in the Physical Oceanography Department at WHOI. The 5-week long international cruise was carried out during the pandemic with participation by **Tamay Ozgokmen** and **Cedric Guigand** as well as with onshore data management support by **Edward Ryan**. https://journals.ametsoc.org/view/journals/phoc/56/2/JPO-D-24-0075.1.xml This paper is the last one of the 13 journal publications that were enabled by the ~200 CARTHE drifters released during the CALYPSO experimental program.

OCE New Students / Hires / Farewells

Please welcome **Dr. Qingwen Zhong**, a new member of the Beal Lab working in MSC238. Qingwen earned their PhD in January 2026 from the University of Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing, working with supervisors Gengxin Chen (South China Sea Institution of Oceanology) and Peter Brandt (GEOMAR, Germany) on “Equatorial Intermediate Current Variability and Relation to Climate Modes”. Qingwen is joining a team of researchers at UM and WHOI exploring how sea level in Miami and the Bahamas is related to oceanic variability and change in Florida Straits.

Media Presence and Outreach Activities

- **Mari Bif** participated in the *Tidal Floods* podcast to talk about ecosystem resiliency during warming oceans, especially due to this potentially very strong El Niño. The podcast can be found on YouTube.

Meetings / Conferences / Workshops / Seminars

- **Mari Bif** is in Seattle organizing the BGC Float Data and Science Workshop, funded by the NSF- Global Ocean Biogeochemistry Array (GO-BGC) program. The workshop will take place on August 17-21, at the University of Washington. Several early-careers from the Rosenstiel School, NOAA-AOML and CIMAS are participating.

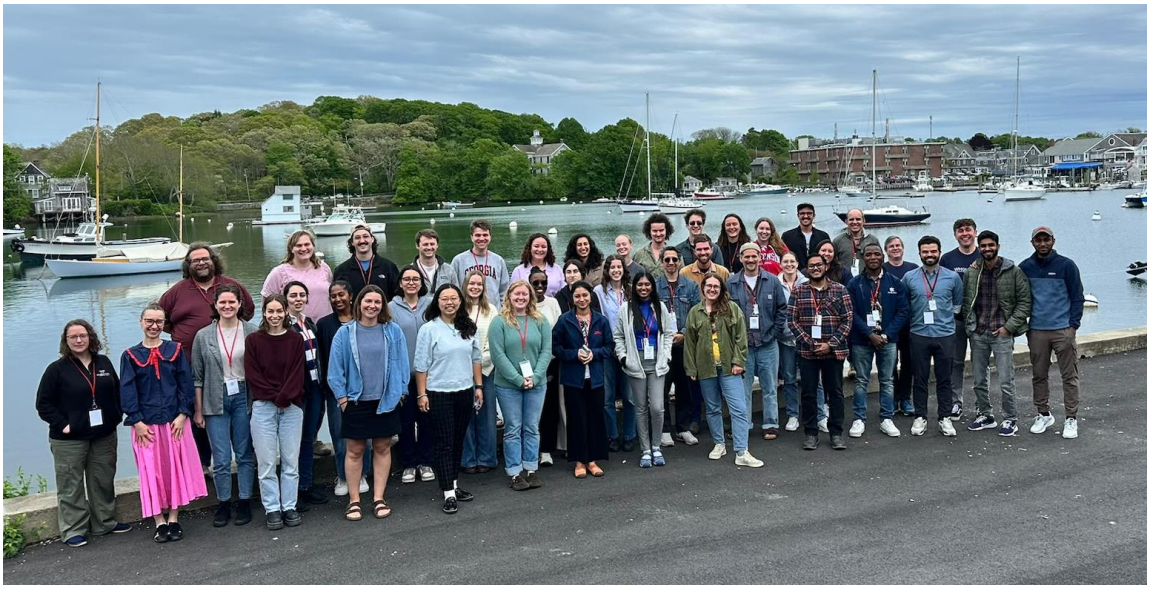
- **Josefina Olascoaga** and Javier Beron-Vera (ATM) will give plenary talks at "Oceanografía en un Clima Cambiante: Procesos Físicos, Biológicos y Pesqueros desde la Teoría, la Observación y la Modelación", in Concepción, Chile.

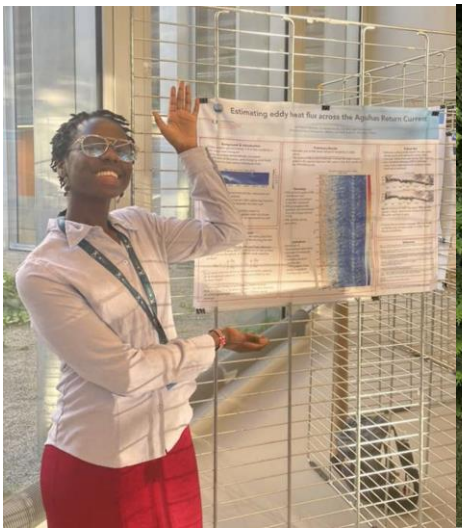
- **Lisa Beal** attended the annual AGU Publications retreat as Editor in Chief of JGR-Oceans in Montreal, Canada. Lisa will be stepping down as EiC at the end of 2026 after six years leading the journal.

- Some current, former, and future **Close Lab** members met at the 2026 Gordon Research Conference on Organic Geochemistry in New Hampshire, August 2-7. Pictured are current Ph.D. students Jason Freisen and Dailen Jeng, former Ph.D. student Paul Wojtal, Hilary Close, and new postdoc Jiawen Li (starting in September).

- **Victoria Pizzini** and **Roland Romeiser** attended the International Geoscience and Remote Sensing Symposium (IGARSS 2026) in Washington, DC, and presented their latest findings regarding the quality of SAR-derived hurricane wind fields and the retrieval of surface current fields from wave patterns in SAR images, respectively.

- **Beal Lab** graduate students **Paloma Cartwright** and **Niko Odhiambo** attended summer schools at WHOI on Cape Cod (top) and Ecole Polytechnique in Paris (bottom left), respectively, while other members--**Nath Dossa, Rachel Sampson, Gui Novelli and Lisa Beal**--attended the Gordon Mixing Conference in Holyoke MA and traveled to University of Rhode Island for a Cape Basin project meeting (bottom right).





Field work

- The **Beal Lab** will spend most of August **aboard RV Walton Smith in Florida Straits** and in the OTECH lab recovering, refurbishing, and redeploying an array of CPIES (short moorings measuring current, pressure, and round-trip travel time for density).

Others

- BIF Lab PhD student **Jomphol (Jom) Lamoonkit** was selected for the Marine Technology Society (MTS) EMERGE Fellowship Program. The fellowship provides mentorship, professional development, and networking opportunities for emerging leaders in ocean technology and engineering. Through the program, Lamoonkit will work with an industry mentor and participate in a cohort of early-career professionals while advancing his PhD research, which integrates marine biogeochemistry and instrumentation development. More info here.