



**United Nations
University**

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Scottish Association for Marine Science and United Nations University Sign Memorandum of Understanding to Foster Water Science

World First for Scottish Marine Research

Oban, Scotland/Tokyo, Japan, 11 January 2013 — Today the United Nations University (UNU) and the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) signed a Memorandum of Understanding making SAMS the first marine research institute to become an associated institution of the UNU.

The deal has been welcomed by Scotland's Education Secretary Michael Russell, who described it as highlighting the "international recognition" of Scottish marine science.

UNU and SAMS, which have collaborated previously on projects, will work together to promote research, postgraduate training and the spread of knowledge on coastal and marine resource management, safe water provisioning and water health, focusing especially on the challenges faced by developing nations. The agreement was signed by the Rector of UNU, Professor Konrad Osterwalder, and SAMS Director Professor Laurence Mee.

Professor Osterwalder said: "It is about time to build strong alliances to foster research and education in water-related topics, especially the connection between water and safety, water and health. Science plays a vital role in developing indicators to identify and to address water challenges that affect so many people around the globe. We have been working successfully with SAMS in several research projects and are looking forward to strengthen our cooperation with such a renowned institution."

Professor Mee said: "Being the first UNU Associated Institution for marine science is a huge honour for SAMS and for Scotland as a whole. It gives us global recognition for our 126 years of innovation in this field. This is a fantastic opportunity to help develop a new cadre of scientists across the world who are keen to develop science for sustainable use of the marine environment."

Education Secretary Michael Russell said: "This Memorandum of Understanding is terrific news and represents a world first for Scotland. It means SAMS is the first marine research institute anywhere to become associated with the academic arm of the United Nations and builds on more than a century of innovation in the waters off the west of Scotland."

"It underlines the international recognition of Scottish marine science, and the esteem in which Scottish research is held throughout the rest of the world. Even more importantly, it allows our marine scientists to help address some of the most pressing environmental issues faced by developing nations. Using Scottish academic expertise in this way will be a hallmark of the progress that this Memorandum of Understanding will bring, and I look forward to seeing it in action."

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The United Nations University was founded some 40 years ago as the academic arm of the United Nations. Its mandate is to support the United Nations and its Member States through research, postgraduate education and capacity building and to serve as a think tank for the United Nations system. UNU is a global university, with its headquarters in Tokyo, Japan, and 15 institutes and programmes located throughout the world. Around 200 students are currently enrolled in its seven master's and PhD programs. The focus of UNU's work is on pressing global problems that are of concern to the UN rather than along the lines of traditional academic disciplines.

Like UNU, SAMS has a vision and mission to increase knowledge and stewardship of the marine environment. It is an independent institution with a 126-year tradition of research, education and outreach. Based on the west coast of Scotland, it is one of the UK's leading oceanographic institutions, rich in research and education expertise, with an extensive list of national and international collaborative projects. It is a founding partner of the University of the Highlands and Islands, an institution that delivers undergraduate and postgraduate education through a network of colleges across Scotland extending to remote rural and island communities.

SAMS has an international profile with about 160 staff who deliver academic and applied research programmes, highly regarded bachelor's and master's degree courses, and maintain a postgraduate school.

As part of an interdisciplinary team, SAMS has been providing expertise on large marine ecosystems and open ocean ecosystems to the UNU's Institute for Water, Environment and Health (UNU-INWEH). Due to end soon, this three-year project was funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). It has been consolidating information generated by about 200 International Waters (IW) projects implemented by GEF. These projects reviewed sustainable management of shared trans-boundary water systems. The collaboration has been a good forerunner to the latest and more significant association between UNU and SAMS.

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