Stories from the Sea: Linking Ocean and Human Health

Dr. Easkey Britton, NUI Galway

13th March, 2019
Seas, Oceans and Public Health in Europe (SOPHIE)

SOPHIE is a 2.5 year EU H2020 funded CSA project that aims to establish a Strategic Research Agenda for Oceans and Human Health (OHH) in Europe.

The primary action of WP3 of the SOPHIE project is to engage and listen to a broad mix of people, from different backgrounds and disciplines across Europe, to define future Oceans and Human Health research priorities.

https://youtu.be/RjC4iO_E6PM
Online Ocean & Human Health Conversation

**Trigger Q:** “What, in your opinion, are the top priorities for protecting public health and the health of the marine environment for a sustainable future?”
Illustrated ‘word cloud’ summary of 673 OHH priorities
Ocean & Human Health Conversations
Ocean & Human Health Conversations

4. Voting for Top OHH Calls to Action

- Now you get a set of red sticky dots. For each of the sticky dots, place it on ONE call to action from each of the reviewed categories.

- Select actions based on the following criteria:
  A) Will have a high impact.
  B) The call to action is feasible.
  C) Can be rolled out in a reasonable time-frame.
  D) There are people who could champion the action.
OHH pathways and interrelationships

- Reduce GHG Emissions (18)
- Pollution (22)
- Understanding Oceans (25)
- Access to and Experience of Blue Space (1)
- Stakeholder Engagement (6)
- Reframe the Blue Economy (16)

OHH Governance (13)
- Human Health Benefits from Oceans (2)
- Marine Protected Areas (9)

Protecting Ocean Health (10)

- Monitoring and Measurement (12)
We Are Ocean

https://vimeo.com/273877162
Blue care: a systematic review of blue space interventions for health and wellbeing

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Summary
There is increasing interest in the potential use of outdoor water environments, or blue space, in the promotion of human health and wellbeing. However, therapeutic nature-based practices are currently outpacing policy and the evidence base for health or wellbeing benefits of therapeutic interventions within blue space has not been systematically assessed. This systematic review aims to address the gap in understanding the impacts of blue space within existing interventions for targeted individuals. A systematic review was carried out, searching Google Scholar, SCOPUS, PubMed, etc.

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Access to and experiences of blue space
Human health benefits from the ocean
Illustrated ‘word cloud’ summary from interview with surf therapy practitioners, Donegal.
“[Being in the ocean] can showcase the beauty of our differences by allowing us to be truly who we are when we surrender to the playfulness of waves and wave-riding.”

- Shirin Gerami
Welcome Wave

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TDzxYR03v7k
Illustrated ‘word cloud’ summary from interview with sea swimming practitioners,
Can Beach Cleans Do More Than Clean-Up Litter? Comparing Beach Cleans to Other Coastal Activities

Kayleigh J. Wyles, Sabine Pahl, Matthew Holland, more...

First Published May 19, 2016 | Research Article | https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916516649412

Abstract

Coastal visits not only provide psychological benefits but can also contribute to the accumulation of rubbish. Volunteer beach cleans help address this issue, but may only have limited, local impact. Consequently, it is important to study any broader benefits associated with beach cleans. This article examines the well-being and educational value of beach cleans, as well as their impacts on individuals’ behavioral intentions. We conducted an experimental study that allocated students (n = 90) to a beach cleaning, rock pooling, or walking activity. All three coastal activities were associated with positive mood and pro-environmental intentions. Beach cleaning and rock pooling were associated with higher marine awareness. The unique impacts of beach cleaning were that they were rated as most meaningful but linked to lower restorativeness ratings of the environment compared with the other activities. This research highlights the interplay between environment and activities, raising questions for future research on the complexities of person-environment interactions.
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Thank you for taking this journey with me.

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