

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **COAST Ocean Hub Names Interim Board of Directors to Pursue Pacific Canada's Blue Economy Potential**

The newly formed Centre for Ocean Applied Sustainable Technologies (COAST) has announced its Acting CEO and Board of Directors for the South-Island-based ocean and marine innovation hub. COAST will pursue solutions to ocean and marine sector challenges and help local companies access opportunities in the \$1.5 trillion global blue economy, which is estimated to reach \$3-trillion by 2030.

The interim Board of Directors for COAST is:

**Acting CEO**, Craig Norris

**Board President**, Ken Armour, BC Public Servant, Retired

**Board Vice-President**, David Fissel, Senior Scientist, ASL Environmental Sciences

**Board Treasurer**, Emilie de Rosenroll, CEO, South Island Prosperity Partnership

**Board Secretary**, Lisa Helps, Mayor, City of Victoria

**Director**, Captain Jamie Marshall, Vice President, Shipbuilding and Innovation, BC Ferries

**Director**, Michael Whalley, President, Babcock Canada Inc

**Director**, Alex Rueben, Executive Director, Association of British Columbia Marine Industries

**Director**, Donald Grant, Executive Director, Ocean Startup Project

**Director**, Julie Angus, CEO and Co-founder, Open Ocean Robotics

**Director**, Kate Moran, President and CEO, Ocean Networks Canada

**Director**, Justin Manley, President, Just Innovation Inc.

**Director**, Chief Gordon Planes, T'Sou-ke First Nation

**Director**, Anthony Utley, President, Raven Marine

**Director**, Rick Rasmussen, Industry Fellow & Lecturer, UC Berkeley

**Director**, Melody Pardoe, Chief Engagement Officer, Canada's Ocean Supercluster

“The West Coast has so much potential, but we have traditionally lagged behind the Maritimes when it comes to developing our ocean and marine innovation space,” says Craig Norris, Acting CEO of COAST. “But with more than

200 ocean and marine companies in our region, we now have a groundswell of talent, expertise and energy determined to make our region — and Pacific Canada — a significant player for these growing industries.”

“COAST is a direct response to input from the ocean and marine sectors to develop the South Island as a centre of excellence in ocean and science technology, including environmental and climate-change solutions,” says Emilie de Rosenroll, CEO of South Island Prosperity Partnership (SIPP). “Our Rising Economy Taskforce noted that diversification is critical to the future of our region: COAST is a major response to that recommendation.”

SIPP, which will incubate the hub through its launch and startup phase, is one of the founding members of COAST along with [Ocean Networks Canada](#), the [Association of BC Marine Industries](#) (ABCMI) and the [City of Victoria](#).

“From developing new technologies to commercializing products and services and scaling up into new national and international markets, COAST creates a hub for collaboration that will benefit us all,” says Alex Rueben, Executive Director, ABCMI.

The 10-year strategic plan for COAST, funded by \$100,000 of support from Western Economic Diversification Canada and \$20,000 from the City of Victoria, sets the following targets to be achieved by 2030:

- transforming 50 established Canadian companies through new growth in high-tech ocean opportunities and developing 50 new start-ups and scale-ups in the ocean economy in Pacific Canada
- developing 1,000 new high-value jobs in the region (with 100 of those jobs in the first three years)
- creating a nation-wide venture fund with \$250-million assets under management to support the ocean tech economy.

According to Norris, the next steps for COAST include engaging all levels of government and industry in funding commitments and securing a physical location, as detailed in the December 2020 report, [Business Case for an Ocean Futures Hub & Cluster on Southern Vancouver Island](#).

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**For further information and to set up interviews, please contact:**

Kerry Slavens, Director of PR and Engagement, South Island Prosperity Partnership

Text/Mobile: 250-516-0152

Email: [kslavens@southislandprosperity.ca](mailto:kslavens@southislandprosperity.ca)