MBARI

ONLINE SEMINAR SERIES

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Rodrigo Beas

Professor, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California

Baja California kelp forests and climate change: Different effects, similar challenges

Predicting changes in the structure and function of ecosystems requires large-scale, long-term studies. Integrating kelp forest data from 469 sites/373 species spanning Alaska, USA, to Baja California, Mexico has revealed that changes in community structure were most evident within the southern and north-central ecoregions. Drivers of change seem different from north to south, with marine heatwaves having a profound effect in Baja California while sea urchins grazing in Central California. This work has been only possible with a sweeping display of international coordination and cooperation of a team of scientists and countless volunteers from 14 different organizations joining forces to document the northward migration of kelp forests due to warming waters. Improving forecasting capacity can enhance our understanding of species shifts and inform better management strategies for sustainability. This is an excellent example of collaboration between researchers, communities, and civil society organizations in the USA and Mexico that can work together to better understand how climate change will impact the kelp forest and, therefore, fisheries and coastal communities in the next 30 years.

Registration for this webinar is required and space is limited. Please RSVP here.