

Scientist in the Spotlight

Kolisa Yola Sinyanya

Oceanographer

Kolisa Yola Sinyanya is a South African oceanographer at the University of Cape Town. Oceanography is the study of the physical, chemical, and biological features of the ocean, including the ocean's ancient history, its current condition, and its future.

Her area of interest is learning about the **microbes**, like bacteria or microscopic animals, in the ocean.

One of the remarkable things she has done in the course of her work is studying how the Agulhas Current in the south-west Indian Ocean takes up the carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and help keep the planet cool.



Kolisa is fascinated by the things she discovers, like new **strains** of bacteria, and by revealing secrets about the understudied ocean regions of the world. Most of her days consist of contributing to this research either in the form of analysing her data or writing up the discoveries. As an oceanographer, Kolisa also spends time taking water samples from the middle of the ocean on large research ships. She admits that the extra preparation for this field work can be quite challenging. On the days that she can get away, she **collaborates** with other scientists and gives talks about her work.

According to her, a good scientist should never give up on understanding things work in the face of hardships and always be inquisitive about why things are the way they are. She also believes that scientists should discuss their findings and discoveries with the wider community in an effective and understandable way.

Being a non-traditional scientist has led to increased exposure for her work and that makes it easier to communicate the important lessons learned from studying the oceans. She feels that people should be taught more about the role of the ocean in our ecosystem and the effect it has on global warming and climate change **mitigation**. Kolisa encourages us more attention to the environment and to practise things that will make the world a better place to live in.



Activity

Use the scientist's profile to answer the following questions:

1. What is the scientist's job?

2. Briefly describe what the scientist does in a typical day.

3. What skills do they need for this job?

4. What do you think is the most interesting part of their job?

5. Describe how this job links with the science you have learned in this unit

6. State the definition of any words in **bold**.
