Supplementary Materials

Supplementary Materials 1: Positionality statement

Scholars engaged in social science research should assess how their own positioning might contribute to their interpretations of people's lived experiences, since researchers are not separate from the social processes they study (Holmes, 2020). Relevant positioning includes personal characteristics such as gender, race, affiliation, age, sexual orientation, immigration status, personal experiences, linguistic tradition, beliefs, biases, preferences, and theoretical, political, and ideological stances (Holmes, 2020). Based on best practice, we provide a positionality and reflexive statement (Moon and Blackman, 2014; Secules et al., 2021).

This article was written by four women in marine science, all early to mid-career researchers. Three were born in Asia (the Philippines, Malaysia, and Sri Lanka) and are working in their home country (CJFA, KI, RJ). However, two (CJFA and RJ) are working remotely for an international organization (UNSW, Australia). One was born in Europe (the United Kingdom) and is residing in a country different from their birthplace (Australia). The team works across the natural and social sciences, with disciplinary backgrounds in economics, marine and environmental science, transdisciplinary waste and pollution research, and marine social science, and all of us have undertaken interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research.

We approach this topic assuming the following: (i) women's underrepresentation reflects structural rather than individual barriers, (ii) addressing these challenges requires action from individuals, institutions, and funders alike, (iii) positionality shapes how expertise is received independent of its quality, (iv) lived experience is a legitimate basis for guidance, and (v) empowerment takes many legitimate forms rather than one (implicitly Western) model (Manning, 2021). These beliefs reflect our particular perspective and may differ from how other groups, sectors, communities, or governments understand these challenges. We also recognise the limits of our standpoint. We write as early to mid-career researchers who have so far remained in the field and cannot speak for the many women whose circumstances led them to leave it. Our experiences are concentrated in Asia-Pacific, Australian, and European contexts and may not transfer to other Global Majority settings. As an all-women team writing about women, and with three of us affiliated with a single research-intensive Global Minority institution, our account reflects a particular and partial vantage point, and institutional affiliation can itself shape how research is accessed and received, a dynamic this article examines.