



**BLUE MARINE  
FOUNDATION**



**2021 REVIEW**

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## BLUE's mission

Our ocean is in crisis. Marine ecosystems are under pressure from a range of threats including climate change, acidification, agricultural pollution, ocean noise and plastic. But arguably the greatest threat of all is overfishing because if we strip the ocean of life, it will lose resilience to other threats and can no longer provide the vital function of stabilising our climate.

Blue Marine Foundation (BLUE) is working to protect and restore life in the ocean, which is critical if the world is to ward off runaway climate change. The complex web of marine life enables the ocean to absorb around a third of the world's carbon dioxide and produce as much as half our oxygen. A healthy ocean is also key to the sustainable development of human society, particularly for the billions of people who depend on seafood for protein and are most exposed to the negative impacts of climate change.

BLUE's mission is to see at least 30 per cent of the world's ocean under effective protection by 2030 and the other 70 per cent managed in a responsible way.

1 Credit: Henley Spiers

2 Credit: Alex Hofford/  
Greenpeace.

3 Credit: Jayne Jenkins /  
Ocean Image Bank.

4 Credit: James Bowden.

5 Credit: Henley Spiers.

6 Credit: Alex Hofford/  
Greenpeace.

7 Credit: Henley Spiers.

8 Credit: Jeff Hester.

9 Credit: Beth Taylor



Credit: Henley Spiers.

# BLUE's strategy

BLUE works using a combination of top-down intervention to improve governance of our seas and bottom-up project delivery to help local communities who are at the front line of ocean conservation.

BLUE works in any area of the world where its intervention can deliver tangible and rapid results. We work in partnership with international NGOs on policy and with local communities and NGOs in our project locations. We use innovative media to raise awareness and policy and legal interventions to galvanise change. We understand that financial solutions are often needed, and use our networks to raise funding which we deploy where it will have the greatest impact.

We have identified the following strategic interventions as the most effective way to achieve our mission:

## BLUE'S KEY STRATEGIC INTERVENTIONS:



### SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

Ensuring the protection of at least 30 per cent of the ocean by 2030.



### TACKLING UNSUSTAINABLE FISHING

Shining a light on overfishing and other forms of overextraction.



### PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING

Proving that low-impact fishing benefits marine life, local fishers and communities.



### RESTORING MARINE LIFE

Reviving and protecting threatened species to restore biodiversity and help sequester carbon.



### CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH SEA

Enhancing ocean understanding across generations.

# BLUE'S key achievements 2010-2021

## 2010

BLUE, with support from the Bertarelli Foundation, brokered a deal to enable the creation of what was then the largest marine protected area (MPA) in the world around Chagos in the Indian Ocean.

## 2012

BLUE partnered with the government of Belize and the Bertarelli Foundation to protect the Turneffe Atoll in Belize, an area rich in biodiversity and CO<sub>2</sub>-absorbing mangroves.

2012 Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve project begins with fishermen from the four ports in Lyme Bay.

## 2015

BLUE and the Great British Oceans coalition secured a UK Government manifesto commitment to create a "Blue Belt" around all 14 UK overseas territories (UKOTs), hailed as "the greatest conservation commitment by any government ever".

The Great British Oceans coalition, of which BLUE is an active part, secured a UK government commitment to create the world's largest marine reserve around Pitcairn in the Pacific.

BLUE launched Reserve Seafood – an innovative label to celebrate the success of sustainable fishing in Lyme Bay and help fishers earn more from their catch.

BLUE's research on sea bass resulted in EU-wide measures to protect the stock.

## 2016

2016 Sir Alan Duncan commits to protecting 4 million sq kms of the Blue Belt in September 2016, as the government's fulfilment of the manifesto commitment in 2015 campaigned for by BLUE and the Great British Oceans coalition.

## 2017

BLUE, as part of the Great British Oceans coalition, secured an even stronger manifesto commitment from the UK Government ahead of the June 2017 election to protect over four million square kilometres of ocean around the UK overseas territories.

Broodstock oysters in BLUE's Solent Oyster Restoration Project spawned, releasing millions of larvae into the Solent.

BLUE spearheaded a social media campaign to encourage the public to tweet and email their MPs, resulting in 285 MPs from eight political parties signing up to the Blue Belt Charter by the end of 2018.



## 2018

The UK Government announced a target of 30 per cent of the world's oceans protected by 2030, aligning with BLUE's long-term strategy.

Azerbaijan declared the first Marine Protected Area (MPA) in the Caspian Sea, the largest inland body of water on the planet. The new MPA will seek to protect six significant marine species on the brink of extinction.

## 2019

BLUE published its ground-breaking four-year Potting Study, commissioned by Defra, which evidences sustainable potting levels in Lyme Bay as a model for crab and lobster management UK-wide.

Following BLUE's #StopElectricFishing campaign, undertaken in collaboration with Bloom Association, the European Parliament's Committee on Fisheries voted to ban electric pulse fishing in EU waters.

With support from BLUE, 100 per cent of the waters around Ascension Island were designated a marine reserve, creating what was at the time the largest fully protected marine reserve in the Atlantic, an area nearly the size of France.

## 2020

Following a threat of legal action from BLUE, the UK Government brought forward a consultation on the future of fishing in offshore marine protected areas, starting with the Dogger Bank, with the option of closing protected areas to fishing.

BLUE secured a £2m donation from long-term supporter Peter Lürssen to establish an endowment fund for the Ascension Island community in support of their vision to establish an MPA.

The Tristan da Cunha community designated 687,000 sq km of their territorial waters as a no-take zone. Led by RSPB and National Geographic Pristine Seas, BLUE supported the project in partnership with Becht Family Charitable Trust.

Following pressure from BLUE, on 1 January 2021 the UK Government announced an immediate ban on all electric pulse trawling and fishing in UK waters.

## 2021

Destructive bottom trawling banned in four offshore areas, following threat of legal action by BLUE.

A byelaw, supported by Sir David Attenborough and BLUE through the Help Our Kelp coalition, protected 300 square kilometres of seabed off the Sussex coast from damaging trawl fishing.

The Scottish government announced an emergency marine protected area to protect the critically endangered flapper-skate egg site near the Isle of Skye after pressure from a recent campaign supported by BLUE.

St Helena fisheries legislation was adopted including a ban on destructive fishing methods.

BLUE placed thousands of oysters into the sea to create the Solent's first oyster restoration reef in Langstone Harbour.

BLUE and our partners have been gathering supporting evidence and building consensus for marine protection in Laamu for nearly seven years. In December 2021, the team celebrated as the Maldivian Government designated six new protected areas, encompassing coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass meadows.

1 Muckle Flugga, UK view. Credit: Henley Spiers

2 Hula Skirt Siphonophore in a thick zooplankton bloom. Credit: Henley Spiers



"The climate crisis and the biodiversity crisis are, really and truly, inextricably linked. We not only need to solve the climate crisis in order to protect nature, we also must protect nature in order to solve the climate crisis."

AL GORE, SPEAKING AT COP26 IN GLASGOW

# Reflections on 2021

It has taken more than 30 years for the world to get round to realising that the largest part of our planet, the ocean, offers potential solutions to climate change, as well as being passively affected by it. Happily, 2021 was the year when potential "nature-based solutions" in the sea began to be talked about with urgency – in the margins of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, which held one of its most historic meetings in Glasgow.

To set the mood for the meeting, BLUE commissioned an installation in the central café at COP26, called The Sea We Breathe, which made the point that the time has come to talk about the carbon mitigation potential not only of coastal seagrass, saltmarsh and mangroves, which are partly included in the treaty, but also of the "forests of the sea," the plants and animals on the seabed itself which can be disturbed by human activity. That striking installation started many conversations over the two weeks of the conference and for many will be one of their lasting memories.

There is still so much more work to be done to include nature-based solutions in the climate treaty – as Al Gore reminded the conference. A scientific paper in 'Nature' in March, by Enric Sala et al, spelled out the potential "triple bottom line" that could derive from protecting biodiversity, boosting the yield of fisheries and securing marine carbon stocks from human activities. That paper also estimated that trawling, alone out of many human activities that disturb seabed carbon, could be having similar global impact as the aviation industry.

To include emissions of carbon from the sea in the world's inventories and score them against national contributions, vastly more scientific work is needed. To that end, BLUE secured a five-year, multi-million pound

international research programme, co-ordinated by Exeter University, to nail down what is happening to carbon throughout the whole seascape, not just at the coasts.

This new research programme was a continuation of a very successful Blue Carbon conference earlier this year and of a study of the potential of blue carbon already in train under Professor Callum Roberts at Exeter. BLUE also commissioned – with a group of other NGOs – a study of how much carbon lies at the bottom of the English North Sea: it is a lot.

We are on course to get the management of the oceans into the climate treaty but – chilling thought – it took seven years to include coastal wetlands. There is a huge global task to be undertaken, but if successful, it could, at last, place a proper value on leaving the ocean floor undisturbed. Valuing protection of the ocean more highly than its destruction is the holy grail for BLUE, and we will pursue it relentlessly.



**Charles Clover**  
Executive Director,  
Blue Marine  
Foundation



**Clare Brook**  
CEO,  
Blue Marine  
Foundation

Mating Velvet Swimming crab, Northumberland.  
Credit: Henley Spiers.

# Reflections on 2021



Arlo Brady,  
Chairman,  
Blue Marine  
Foundation

As we move into our second decade, BLUE continues to go from strength to strength. Set against a global backdrop of uncertainty, challenge and adversity – largely stemming from the Covid-19 pandemic – the organisation has had a terrifically successful year, by any conventional metric or measure. That said, BLUE is not about growth, it's about impact, and we are proud to say that we have also progressed in that department. 2021 was our most effective year ever, and that impact is a credit to our amazing staff and supporters and their boundless energy, enthusiasm and commitment. The crisis in our ocean may seem overwhelming at times, but it is solvable, and we know just the people for the job.



Chris Gorell Barnes,  
Trustee and  
co-founder,  
Blue Marine  
Foundation

BLUE has performed remarkably through the pandemic and become stronger than ever. The world seems to have finally woken up to the critical role the ocean plays in solving the climate crisis. The team has landed some extraordinary new supporters and unlocked some powerful new initiatives. Our increasing focus on blue carbon, and its role in marine conservation, could transform how the oceans are valued and protected in the future.

It's an incredibly exciting time to be leading in marine conservation and we could not be more proud of the growing BLUE team and their success. We would like to thank all our wonderful partners who enable us to do such incredible and vital work. We are really encouraged by the huge increase in support from the business community, and look forward to 2022 with confidence that we will accomplish even more together.



George Duffield,  
Trustee and  
co-founder,  
Blue Marine  
Foundation



# 2021 in brief

## Bottom trawling at Dogger Bank

UK pledges to ban bottom trawling and dredging in 14,030 sq. kms of UK waters, including the Dogger Bank, following legal action by BLUE

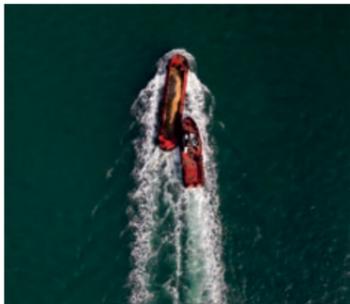


## Flapper skate

The Scottish government announced an emergency Marine Protected Area (MPA) to protect the critically endangered flapper skate egg site near the Isle of Skye after pressure from a recent campaign supported by BLUE.

## Kelp byelaw

A byelaw, supported by Sir David Attenborough and BLUE through the Help Our Kelp coalition, protected 300 square kilometres of seabed off the Sussex coast from damaging trawl fishing.



## BBC - The One Show

As seen on TV, BLUE placed thousands of oysters into the sea to create the Solent's first oyster restoration reef in Langstone Harbour.



## Ascension

Ascension Island MPA management plan published following MPA designation in 2019.

## Laamu Atoll designated as Mission Blue Hope Spot

The designation highlights Laamu's unique marine ecosystems, the services they provide and the incredible five and a half years of work by BLUE and Maldives Underwater Initiative partners.

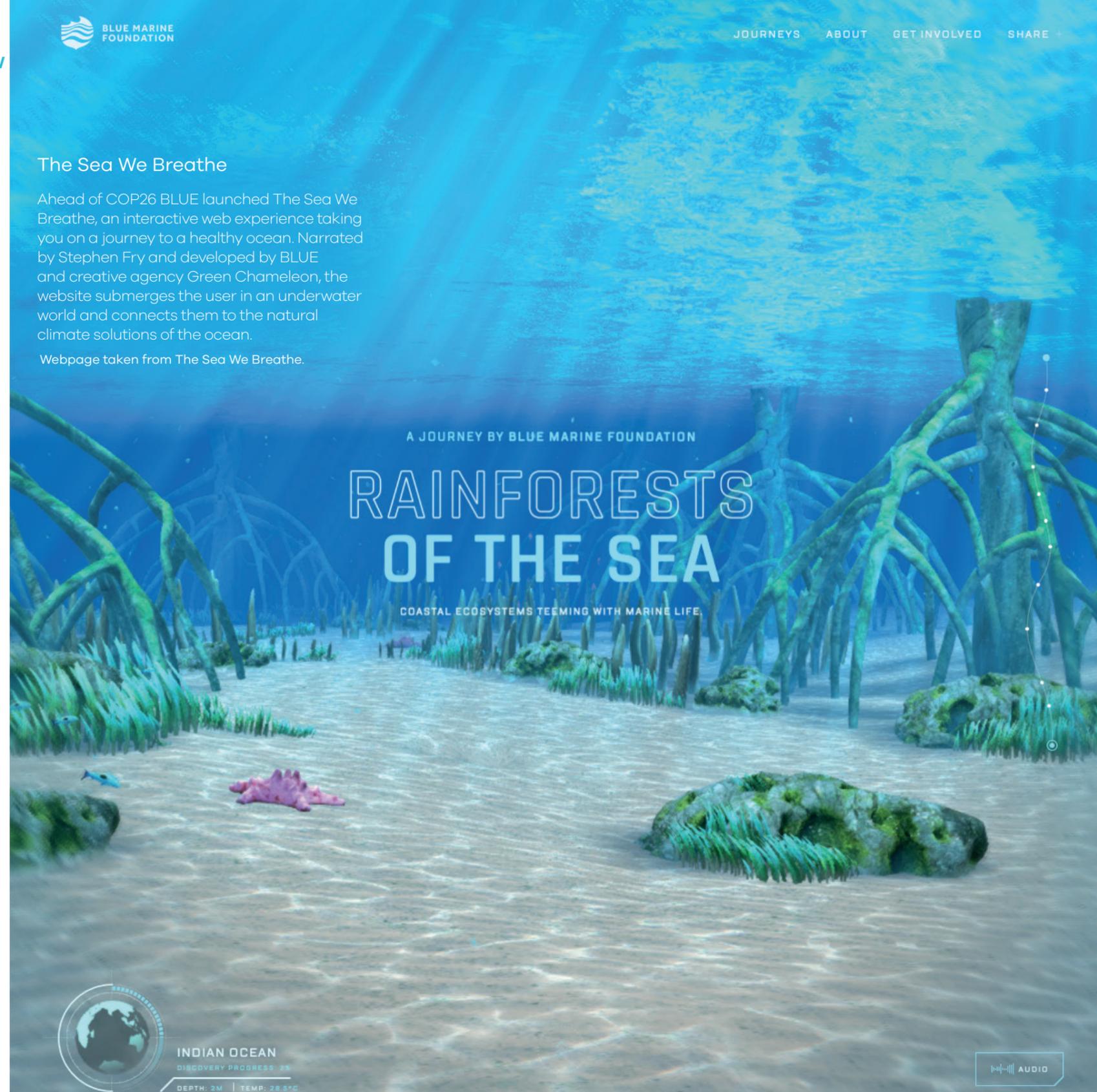
## Vision for National Marine Parks

BLUE released its vision for National Marine Parks across the UK to help conserve fragile marine habitats and connect people with more of Britain's natural heritage.

## The Sea We Breathe

Ahead of COP26 BLUE launched The Sea We Breathe, an interactive web experience taking you on a journey to a healthy ocean. Narrated by Stephen Fry and developed by BLUE and creative agency Green Chameleon, the website submerges the user in an underwater world and connects them to the natural climate solutions of the ocean.

Webpage taken from The Sea We Breathe.



INDIAN OCEAN  
DISCOVERY PROGRESS: 25  
DEPTH: 2M | TEMP: 28.5°C



## Blue Carbon Conference

BLUE held a Blue Carbon conference bringing together leading blue carbon experts to share progress and set ambition ahead of COP26.

## Grouper Management plan

The Maldives announced a Grouper Fishery Management Plan to protect the most valued grouper species.

## Wild Oysters

The Wild Oyster project has restored 4000 native oysters across restoration sites in England, Scotland and Wales in an aim to restore Britain's seas to health.



## COP26

BLUE attended COP26 in Glasgow to champion ocean health as a critical asset in the fight against climate change.



## Save our Sharks

Shark fishing ban remained in the Maldives following the successful #SaveOurSharks campaign supported by BLUE and 113 other local and international organisations.



## The Limit

As a member of the Our Seas coalition, BLUE supported the premier of The Limit, a short documentary film produced by the coalition about restoring the connection between Scotland's communities and marine life.

# Our projects



# The UK Overseas Territories

The UK Overseas Territories represent some of the most important eco-regions in the world, covering the Atlantic, Mediterranean, Caribbean, Pacific, Indian and Southern Oceans. The islands and huge tracts of ocean that surround them harbour globally important populations of many marine species, from sharks to turtles, seabirds to endangered black corals, and a wide range of creatures found nowhere else on earth.

The UK Government's Blue Belt Programme, of which BLUE has been a partner since the outset, continued delivering high quality marine research, management advice, education, outreach and enforcement throughout 2021. More than four million square kilometres of ocean across the UK Overseas Territories are now protected within Marine Protected Areas under this programme. BLUE worked with the UK Government and NGO partners in the GB Oceans coalition to secure continued UK Government financial support for the Blue Belt Programme. We will work to ensure that increased amounts of funding reach the territories themselves.

# Ascension Island



The UK Overseas Territory of Ascension lies mid-way between Brazil and Africa, just south of the equator. The island is the peak of a vast undersea volcano and is only 10 kilometres across, but its exclusive economic zone extends out 200 nautical miles covering 445,000 square kilometres, an area nearly the size of France. Straddling the Mid-Atlantic Ridge, these waters harbour globally significant marine biodiversity and are a hotspot for large predators, including sharks, tuna, swordfish and some of the largest recorded Atlantic blue marlin. Thousands of green turtles nest each year on Ascension's Long Beach, and the island has a major colony of seabirds including its own unique frigate bird.

In 2019, the island community designated one of one of the largest no-take marine protected areas in the Atlantic inside Ascension's exclusive economic zone. As a result, this unique marine ecosystem is now fully protected from the destructive long-line fishing which is prevalent in the Atlantic. It is also closed to deep-sea mining, were the area ever to be targeted for rare minerals.



ASCENSION ISLAND'S ECONOMIC EXCLUSIVE ZONE (EEZ) IS NEARLY THE SIZE OF SPAIN.

- 1 Cleaner shrimp on broadband moray eel. Credit: Judith Brown.
- 2 Diving in Ascension's pristine waters. Credit: Judith Brown.
- 3 Hydroids on an Ascension rocky reef. Credit: Judith Brown.



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



TACKLING UNSUSTAINABLE FISHING



BLUE has been supporting Ascension through grants for years, but has now established a £2 million endowment fund, the Ascension Island Marine Protected Area Conservation Trust (or AIMPACT fund). This will provide income in perpetuity for community, education, environment and heritage projects on the island.

BLUE is promoting global and on-island recognition of the marine protected area through media and education outreach. BLUE ambassador HRH Princess Eugenie is highly supportive of Ascension and wrote the introduction to a book celebrating the marine life of Ascension by Dr Judith Brown, former head of conservation on Ascension

- 4 The Marine Life of Ascension coffee table book.
- 5 Endemic Ascension frigate bird nesting on the rocky coastline. Credit: Judith Brown.
- 6 Blackbar soldierfish. Credit: Judith Brown.

**£2m**  
Secured for an endowment fund

and now BLUE Senior Projects Manager. The book features more than 250 underwater images of incredible fauna and flora that flourish in Ascension's inshore waters, including endemic fish and corals found nowhere else on Earth.

Following on-island consultation and stakeholder input, the Ascension MPA Management Plan (2021-2026) has been published, setting out the high standards of management for the protected area. BLUE has helped secure continued UK Government financial support for the Blue Belt Programme, and is enthusiastic about the potential for Ascension's waters to be a focus of future scientific study.

# Saint Helena



The remote island of St Helena hosts a magnificent array of marine life, including many species found nowhere else on earth. It is thought to be one of the few places in the world where mature whale sharks come to mate. Its 444,916 square kilometre sustainable-use marine protected area allows low-impact pole-and-line tuna fishing and accredited marine tourism, but destructive fishing such as long-lining is banned.

BLUE has been working since 2017 with the St Helena National Trust to help build and maintain support for the marine protected area within the local 'Saint' community, while establishing St Helena as a globally recognised centre of scientific research. St Helena is one of the few places in the world where whale sharks breed, and the marine team continues to carry out world-leading whale shark research, using deep tags capable of withstanding depths up to 6000m and using satellite tags and drones to establish where the whale sharks need most protection. The island is now recognised as one of the most important whale shark aggregation sites in the world.



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



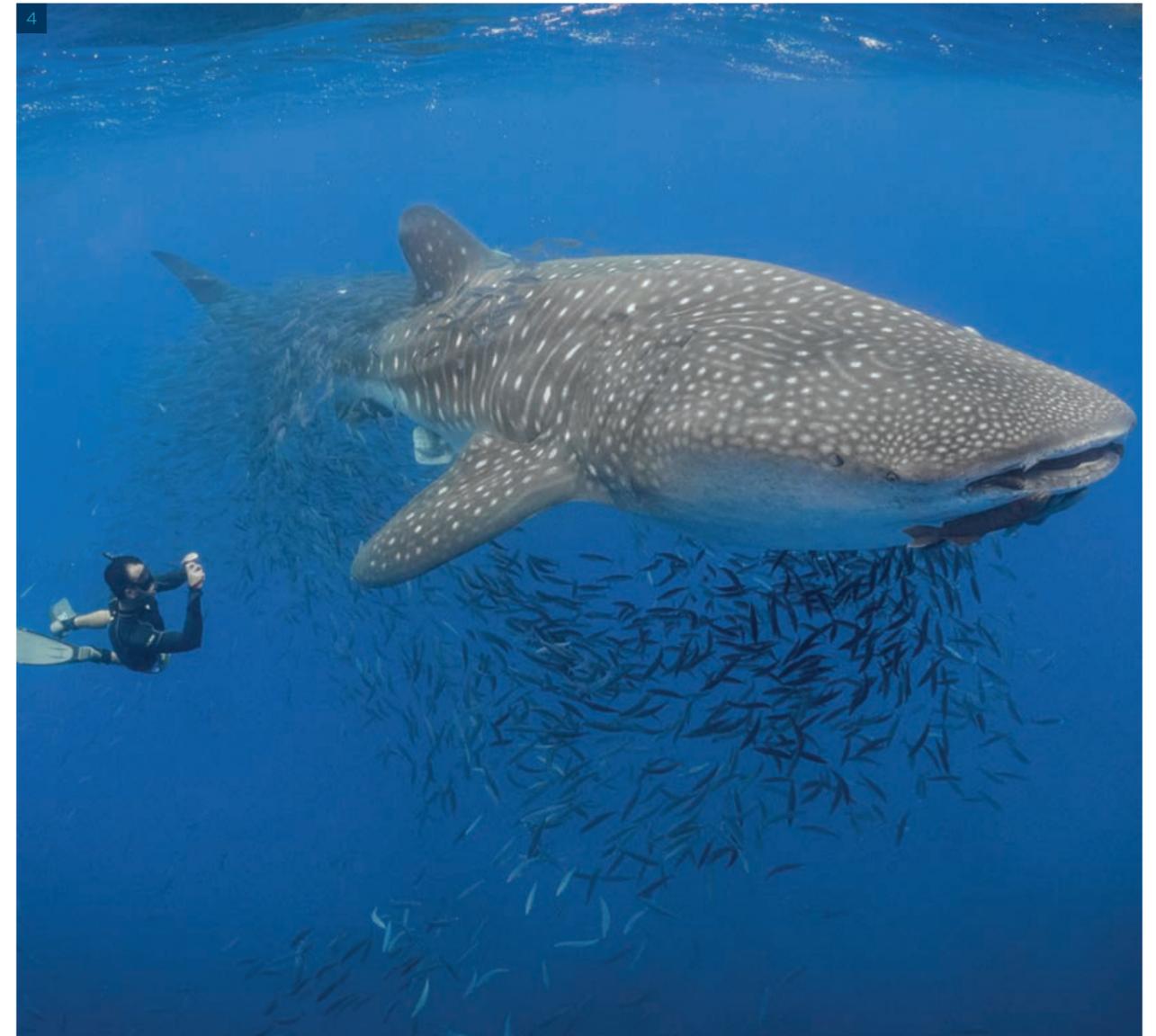
TACKLING UNSUSTAINABLE FISHING



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH SEA



SAINT HELENA'S ECONOMIC EXCLUSIVE ZONE (EEZ) IS NEARLY THE SIZE OF FRANCE.



BLUE and the St Helena National Trust promote the marine protected area internationally and on-island by filming the remarkable marine life, including a novel film of 'bait balls' of fish swarming in a tightly packed spherical formation around a whale shark. While surveying for whale sharks, the team spotted a leatherback turtle – the largest species of turtle and one which had not been reported before in St Helena's waters.

Effective MPA management requires sound policies and legislation. With BLUE's and Saint Helena National Trust's input,

the Saint Helena Government has updated and strengthened its marine management policies and fisheries legislation, including the prohibition of unsustainable fishing and ending the dumping of inorganic waste.

BLUE has also been building local capacity through marine internships, education and training to develop marine conservation skills and experience on the island. Whale shark festivals, educational 'makerzines' and virtual reality headsets help increase knowledge and pride in the extraordinary life which surrounds St Helena.

1 Saint Helena. Credit Danny Copeland.

2 Beth Taylor talks to young Saints at Bone Shark Festival on St Helena. Credit: Danny Copeland.

3 Shoal of endemic St Helena butterflyfish. Credit: Danny Copeland.

4 Researcher capturing new record of bait ball of fish around a whale shark. Credit: Beth Taylor.

# The high seas

Nearly two thirds of the ocean lies beyond national jurisdiction. These vast areas contain a wealth of marine life which plays a vital part in regulating the planet's temperature. For most of history, this fragile world has lain unseen, beyond the reach of human influence or harm. But now, even the remotest and deepest places in the sea are under threat, as human activity destroys habitats before we have a chance to explore and understand them. These extraordinary places, which serve such a vital biological function, are among the least protected ecosystems in the world.



# Areas beyond national jurisdiction

The high seas account for 43 per cent of the world's surface. From vast expanses of open water teeming with huge shoals of baitfish pursued by marlin, swordfish and tuna to the seaweed-infused Sargasso Sea, the high seas are full of life. However, the high seas face huge pressures threatening the unique species and ecosystems that live there.

The fourth and final Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction negotiations that were due to happen at the UN in April 2020, were again postponed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. The UN General Assembly has suggested that the parties meet again in early 2022, with a March date proposed.

In the interim, BLUE has continued to build the case for high-seas marine protected areas. We have supported the High Seas Alliance to develop a shortlist of priority sites for protection. During 2022, BLUE aims to work with coastal states (Namibia, Angola and South Africa) to put forward the case for the Walvis Ridge in the southern Atlantic Ocean to be considered as a high-seas marine protected area. This targeted report will be launched ahead of the fourth (and hopefully final) BBNJ Negotiations. BLUE also plans to support the High Seas Alliance to communicate a short list of priority sites for protection, using a short digital film.



**43%**  
of the world's surface is covered by the high seas.

1 High seas Credit: Pexels Clem Onojeghhuo.

2 Credit George Karbus.

3 Credit George Karbus.



# Fish Aggregating Devices

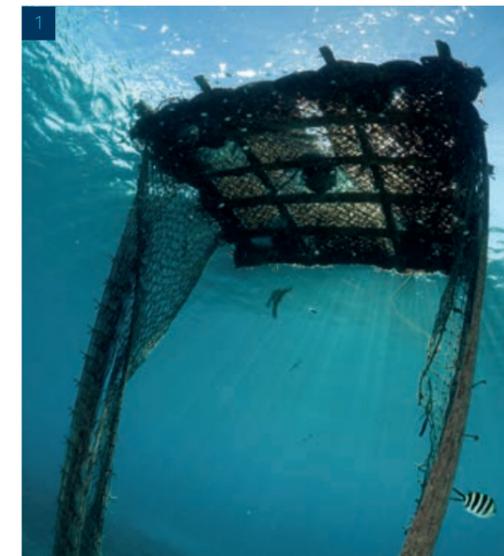
Across the world's oceans, tens of thousands of drifting fish aggregating devices (FADs) are deployed in purse seine tuna fisheries each year. The use of FADs is coming under increasing scrutiny for its high levels of bycatch of endangered, threatened and protected marine species, its potentially harmful impacts on tuna stocks, and its contribution to ocean pollution and the associated threats to fragile marine habitats.

In May 2021, BLUE hosted a FAD symposium featuring a panel of fourteen leading experts. The symposium highlighted the growing controversy surrounding drifting FAD use, including how they may constitute illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing if they drift on an unauthorized basis into neighbouring exclusive economic zones, marine protected areas or other closed fishing sites.

Following the symposium, BLUE developed a set of minimum requirements for responsible drifting FAD use, calling for increased transparency and improvements in the construction and operation of drifting fish aggregating devices. Over 120 environmental organisations, fishing groups and retailers have endorsed the list of requirements, including Greenpeace, the International Pole and Line Foundation, the Zoological Society of London, Sainsbury's, Whole Foods, Marks & Spencer, Migros and Woolworths (South Africa).

**120+**  
NGOs and businesses have endorsed BLUE's call for better drifting FAD management

BLUE presented the requirements to the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission's (IOTC's) FAD Working Group in October and will use this momentum to push for the adoption of an improved FAD management plan at the IOTC meeting in mid-2022.



1 A drifting fish aggregating device.

2 A turtle swimming near a drifting FAD. Credit: Alex Hofford/Greenpeace.

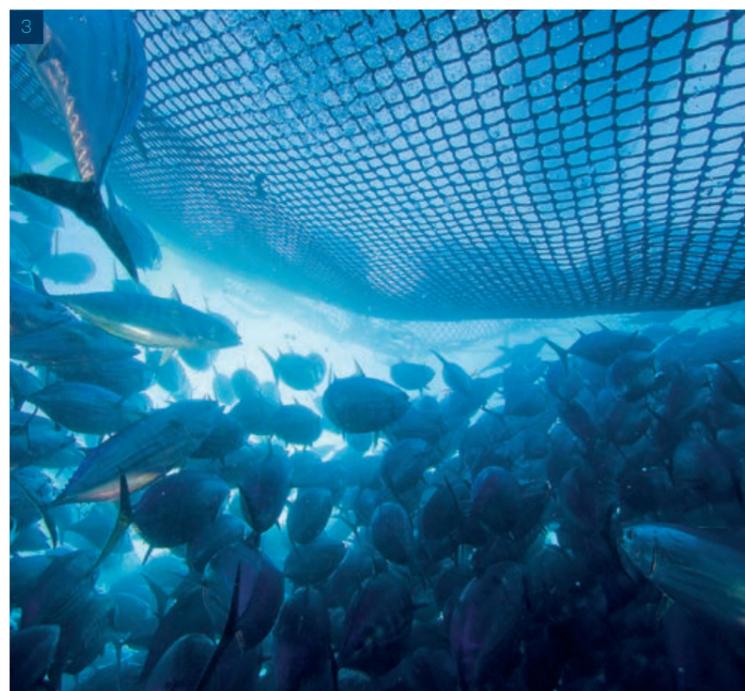
# Tackling overfishing in the Indian Ocean

Despite all regional fisheries management organisation (RFMO) meetings becoming virtual in 2021 BLUE has continued to fight against the overfishing of tropical tuna in the Indian Ocean.

The Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) – the regional intergovernmental body in charge of managing shared, migratory stocks like tuna – held a special session in early 2021 to address the ongoing overfishing of Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna. BLUE attended this meeting and urged IOTC member states to co-operate and put a stop to the overfishing that has been taking place since 2015 by adopting an effective and equitable recovery plan for the globally important stock.

However, no agreement was reached, and we were disappointed to witness the clear refusal to negotiate on the part of the EU and other distant-water fishing nations who chose instead to maintain the status quo at the expense of the stock, the health of the ocean and the wellbeing of vulnerable Indian Ocean coastal communities.

In response, BLUE launched its #TACforTuna social media campaign, highlighting the urgent need for an improved yellowfin tuna stock rebuilding plan and responsible total allowable catch (TAC) at the 25th Session of the IOTC in June 2021. BLUE developed a powerful short film aimed at decision-makers as the centrepiece of the campaign. The film was viewed on social media almost two million times.



Jess Rattle presented detailed catch data simulations to Defra for the two competing yellowfin tuna stock recovery proposals – one tabled by the EU and one by the Maldives and other coastal states. BLUE issued a strong statement in support of the Maldives' proposal and wrote to all other IOTC Heads of Delegation asking them to support it in the interests of equity and conservation. Defra supported BLUE's call for the adoption of the proposal put forward by the Maldives.

Prior to the June meeting, BLUE Investigations also worked with the Guardian newspaper to expose the failure of the EU to safeguard the Indian Ocean yellowfin

**c.2M**  
views of the  
#TACforTuna  
campaign film.

- 1 An industrial purse seine vessel. Credit: Alex Hofford/Greenpeace.
- 2 A fisheries observer.
- 3 Skipjack tuna in a purse seine net. Credit: Alex Hofford/Greenpeace.
- 4 A purse seine 'brailer' bringing catch on board. Credit: Alex Hofford/Greenpeace.

tuna stock, with one headline stating: "EU accused of 'neocolonial' plundering of tuna in Indian Ocean".

The pressure placed on decision makers paid off when, seven hours after the final day of the meeting should have concluded, delegations finally reached agreement and a new yellowfin tuna recovery plan was adopted. BLUE will continue to push for higher standards of conservation for tropical tuna in the Indian Ocean in 2022 for the benefit of the stocks and the coastal communities who depend on a healthy marine environment for food security and their livelihoods.

# International projects



# The Caspian Sea



On a remote stretch of barren Caspian shoreline, fishermen pull up mazes of empty nets. Abandoned trawlers and seine-netting boats lie rotting in a nearby lagoon. This great inland sea would appear to be devoid of life but is in fact home to some of the rarest marine life on the planet; crustaceans, bivalve molluscs and amphipods are food for sturgeon and anchovies; anchovies are food for Caspian salmon. The ecosystem has evolved to perfection.

This unique ecosystem is under increasing pressure however from overfishing, pollution, hydrocarbon extraction, melting ice fields and degradation of river systems - which are crucial for the reproductive cycle of anadromous fish.

BLUE has laid the foundations for a region-wide trans-boundary conservation effort to save the Caspian Sea, creating MPAs, reducing illegal fishing, improving river quality, and sustainably managing fish stocks.

In Azerbaijan, BLUE and local NGO partner IDEA have succeeded in seeing the designation of the first MPA and Mission Blue 'Hope Spot' in the Caspian, protecting an important feeding and breeding area for endemic fish. All gill nets have been banned, and a countrywide programme has removed tons of lost and abandoned 'ghost nets'.

Every possible conservation measure will be implemented in the Caspian to protect and restore this remarkable environment as climate pressures increase.

*"Caspian Sea stakeholders need to act decisively by setting up new transboundary protected areas and by developing conservation interventions to reduce the impacts from illegal fishing and illegal trade in products from the Caspian species. This is to ensure that the ecosystem is not lost and is inherited by future generations."*

DR LINAS SVOLKINAS



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

1 Rory Moore under a National Park information board overlooking the Caspian Sea.

2 Aerial view of Caspian Sea.

3 The endemic Caspian sturgeon.



# Dutch Caribbean



The Dutch Caribbean comprises six tropical gems – Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St Maarten, St Eustatius, and Saba – which host unique and globally threatened biodiversity.

While some of the reefs are considered the healthiest in the Caribbean, and the islands also harbour critical mangrove and seagrass habitats (important for blue carbon), many threats remain unmanaged. These threats include feral livestock (causing sedimentation), invasive exotic species (lionfish, seagrass), coral diseases, overfishing and climate change, alongside coastal development, erosion and eutrophication (promoting excess of nutrition) by waste water.

BLUE has formed a partnership with the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) to support the islands through: a political advocacy campaign to raise awareness of the needs (including financial support) and opportunities for conservation in the Dutch Caribbean; ensuring effective marine protection through up-to-date, impactful Marine Park Management Plans; supporting critical on-island conservation efforts through a small grants scheme; and discussing expansion or strengthening of marine protection of these very special islands.

The Dutch Caribbean is currently failing to meet many of its biodiversity targets, and through this project BLUE, alongside the DCNA, hopes to assist the local nature conservation organisations in addressing their issues of underfunding and under-resourcing so they can deliver effective management and protection of their rich marine biodiversity.

1 Credit: Ocean Image Bank Amanda Cotton.

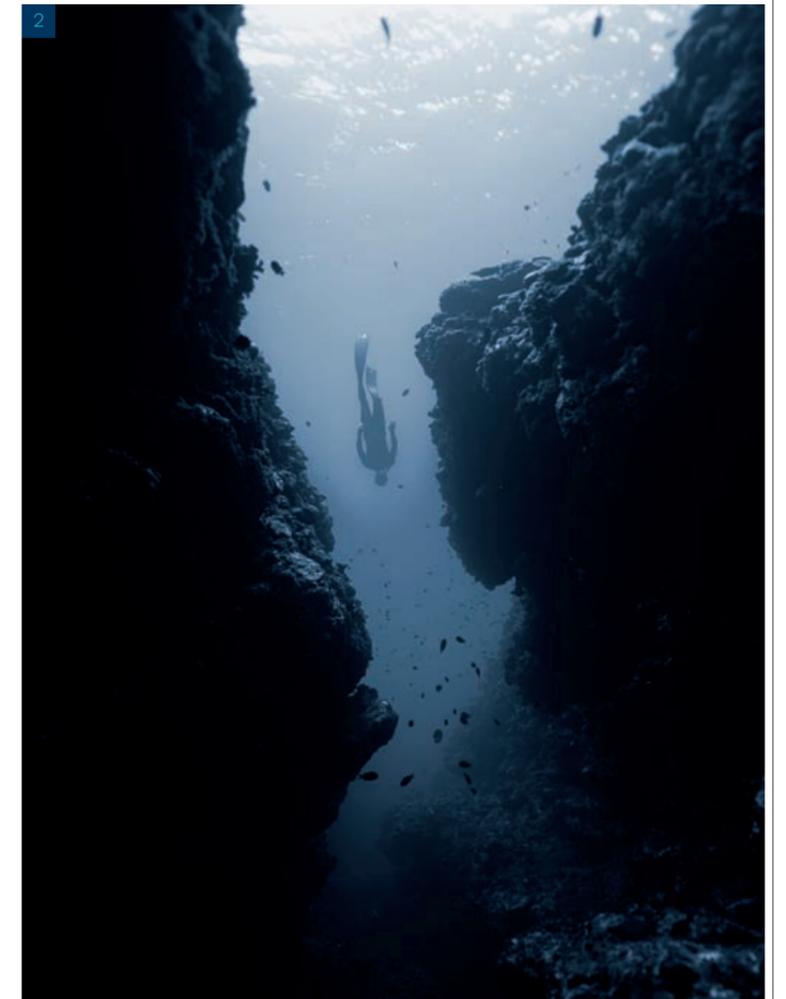
2 Credit: Pexels.



PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH SEA



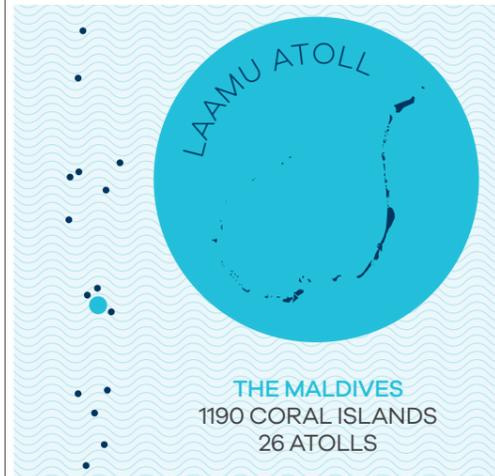
# The Maldives



The health and functioning of the Maldives coral reef ecosystem is integral to the future existence of the country and the wellbeing of its people. However, it is in crisis. The lack of ambition and collaboration by world leaders which was required at COP26 to reduce climate emissions significantly means that global temperatures will rise by 2.4 degrees this century. It is predicted that coral reefs as we know them will cease to exist if global temperatures rise by over two degrees. For an island nation like the Maldives, this is a death sentence.

The Maldives needs to act fast to do all it can locally to ensure its coral reefs are better equipped to bounce back from inevitable climatic changes. BLUE has been working to increase marine protection, improve fisheries management, support local leadership and promote responsible tourism.

At the beginning of 2021, the Maldives government introduced a new fishery management plan to curb the decline of wild grouper, a coral reef fish vital for reef health. New minimum landing size limits to prevent the catch of juveniles for the most highly valued grouper species were based on evidence collected by BLUE.



- 1 An explosion of cardinal fish on a reef in Laamu Atoll, Maldives. Credit: Marteyne van Well/ Six Senses Laamu.
- 2 Aerial view of Laamu Maabaidhoo mangrove and channel, one of the ecologically significant areas proposed for protection. Credit: Arushadh Ahmed.
- 3 BLUE staff conducting baseline coral reef surveys. Credit: Alex Mustard.

"Blue Marine Foundation's efforts on coral reef conservation in the Maldives over the past many years are significant. It is particularly important to note that BLUE's focused and dedicated work on many aspects of the marine environment has helped the Government to implement coral reef management policies and achieve our conservation goals."

DR ABDULLAH NASEER, MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND TECHNOLOGY.

BLUE believes that conservation is most successful when locally led. In 2021, BLUE set up a new charity in Maldives called Maldives Resilient Reefs (MRR). The charity is already achieving huge conservation wins. In March 2021, BLUE supported MRR to run a campaign #SaveOurSharks which prevented the reversal of the Maldives' 10-year-long shark fishing moratorium. Maldives is one of 11 shark sanctuaries in the world and, the only one in the Indian Ocean, it is an important refuge for the ocean's top predators, whose populations are plummeting across the globe.

For the past five years BLUE has been working on Laamu Atoll, to improve coral reef resilience through supporting

the establishment of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs). This year, our hard work came to fruition. The whole atoll was declared a Mission Blue Hope Spot, and the Maldivian Government has designated six new protected areas on the atoll encompassing coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass meadows. Research by BLUE and its partners in the Maldives Underwater Initiative was used to justify the Hope Spot and the MPA site selection. MRR has been working with all stakeholders to ensure they are informed and involved in future management decisions. In 2021, we trained seven new fisheries officers and conducted education sessions for over 250 people in the atoll.



More than 200 local and international organisations and businesses joined the Maldives #SaveOurSharks Alliance.



-  SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS
-  TACKLING UNSUSTAINABLE FISHING
-  CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH SEA
-  PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING

- 4 Newly trained fisheries officers from Laamu Atoll who will be collecting fish and invertebrate data from seven islands across Laamu Atoll.
- 5 Students who participated in BLUE's ocean education sessions.

# Marine protected areas in the Mediterranean



Mediterranean, Aeolian Islands and Italy

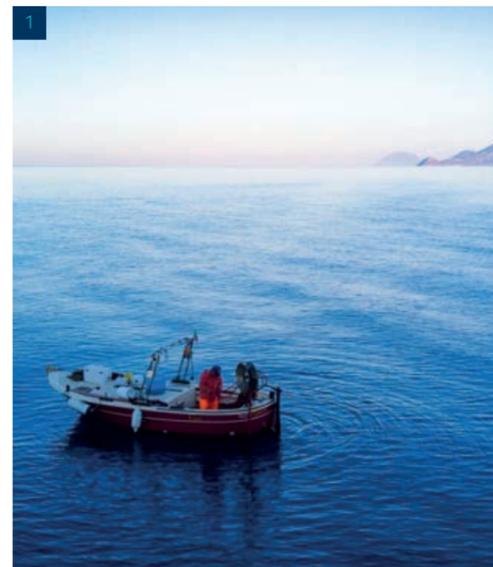
The Mediterranean is one of the fastest degrading and least protected seas in the world. What was once a biodiversity hotspot and home to huge varieties of endemic species is threatened by overfishing, habitat destruction and unsustainable tourism. BLUE is working throughout the Mediterranean to create MPAs. In 2021 BLUE developed projects that:

- Use EU and Member State legal interventions and local capacity building to ensure that existing Natura 2000 Habitats Directive sites are effectively managed and protected.
- Leverage Blue Carbon value of Mediterranean Posidonia seagrass beds and Habitats Directive legislation to protect and restore seagrass meadows.
- Will designate >10% no-fishing zones in Mediterranean exclusive economic zones (EEZs) before 2030.
- Engage BLUE Investigations and Economics Units to address subsidised fisheries and unsustainable aquaculture feeds.
- Use innovative education and media as effective tools to increase awareness and support of marine conservation in the Mediterranean.
- Support small-scale, sustainable fisheries to adapt to changing fisheries dynamics.
- Reduce negative environmental impacts of invasive marine species by creating sustainable markets and working with small-scale fishing communities to adjust to alternative target species.
- Protect endangered species through specific interventions, including tagging programmes, habitat restoration and fishing regulations reform.

**The Balearic Islands**  
The largest UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in the Mediterranean has been designated around Menorca, and several MPAs exist around the Balearic Islands. BLUE's patrol boat operation in Menorca continues to enforce and inform marine protection.

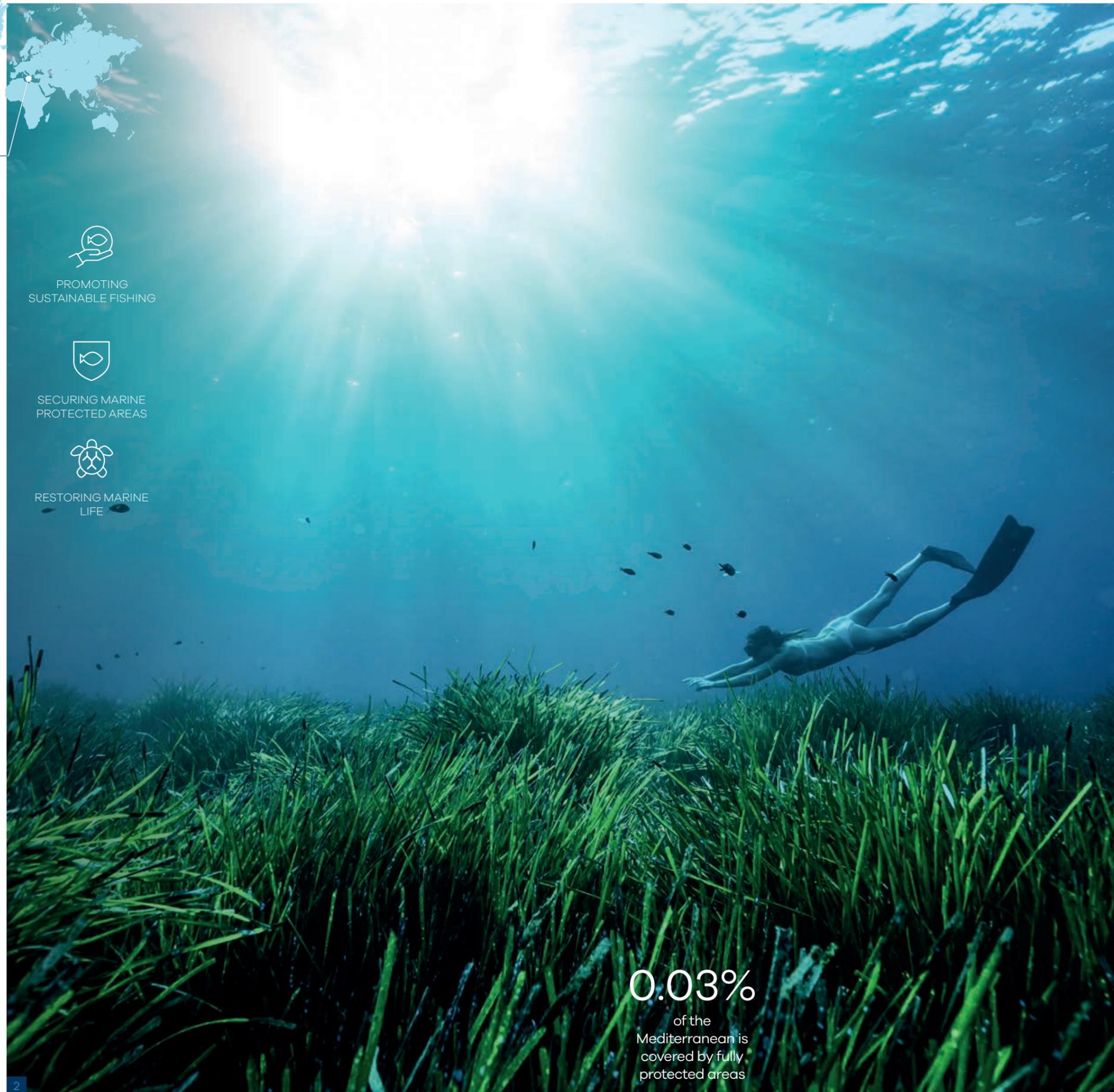
However, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing is a major problem. A report commissioned by BLUE, Marilles Foundation and the Conservation Collective estimates that as much as 40 per cent of fish traded in the Balearics is illegally caught and sold.

BLUE is working with local partners to introduce an awareness-raising campaign directed at all stakeholders involved in buying and selling fish, and is lobbying regulators to reduce the illegal catch of fish. In Ibiza, BLUE is developing an innovative Posidonia seagrass programme, leading the way for effective Mediterranean seagrass mapping, protection and restoration.



1 Mediterranean Fishermen. Credit: Danny Copeland.

2 Mediterranean seagrass meadows trap more carbon than rainforests and are important fish nursery habitats. Credit Rory Moore.



-  PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING
-  SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS
-  RESTORING MARINE LIFE

0.03%  
of the Mediterranean is covered by fully protected areas

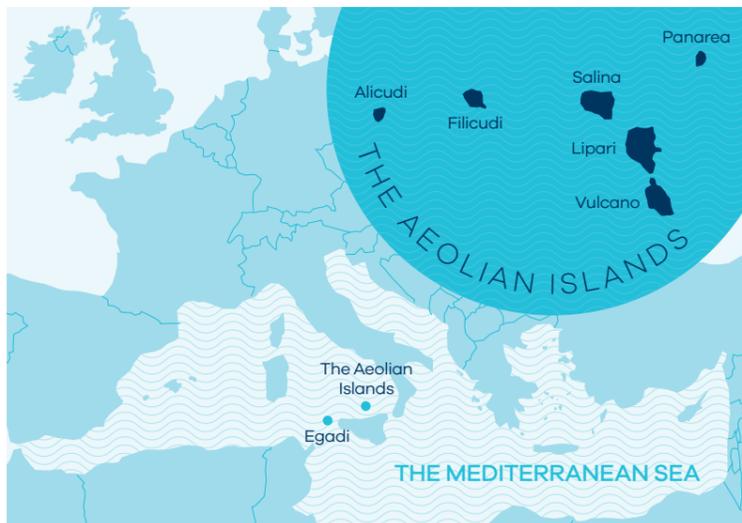
# Italy



Great schools of bluefin tuna and swordfish once filled Italian waters, migrating across the Mediterranean to spawn and feed. Coastal migrations would pass caves where Monk seals sheltered their pups and a variety of sharks and rays patrolled the deep straits. The Aeolian Islands and Sicily were surrounded by particularly productive waters, home to sperm whales, dolphins, loggerhead turtles, red grouper and huge squid.

However, the Italian seas are some of the most overfished in the world and are struggling to maintain healthy ecosystems under pressure from unsustainable tourism, lost carbon-rich seagrass meadows, invasive species and climate change.

BLUE is working in the Aeolian Islands to create MPAs and promote sustainable fishing in local communities and schools. In 2021 BLUE worked with Regione Sicilia for the designation of new Natura 2000 Habitats Directives sites, directly protecting valuable Posidonia meadows and seamounts around the entire Aeolian archipelago. BLUE also supports the Salina MPA commission to designate a new MPA, supported by local stakeholders. Ongoing work with small-scale fishermen promotes sustainable, responsible fishing to produce traceable, high-value and diverse seafood for local markets, proving that marine protection is both an environmental and economic solution.



PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



RESTORING MARINE LIFE



Last summer, hundreds of local schoolchildren were captivated by BLUE's 'Understanding the Sea' marine education programme facilitated by our partners, the Kurma Association. Local fishermen taught students about historical, artisanal fishing methods and the importance of protecting spawning areas. Potito Ruggiero, a 13-year-old Italian author, climate activist and TEDx speaker, spoke to local students in the Aeolian Islands in November about how climate change is impacting the ocean.

In the Egadi Islands and Torre Guaceto MPAs, BLUE has successfully applied a small-scale fisheries model, and a complementary sustainable seafood



Seagrass traps more carbon per square metre than rainforests do

label, working with fishermen to help them sell their responsibly caught seafood at reasonable prices for the consumer, in return for fair profit for themselves. Fishing codes of conduct are intended to reduce the use of harmful fishing gear and the landing of undersized fish.

This year, BLUE developed seven new conservation projects in Sardinia, Tuscany, Sicily and Puglia to build on BLUE's successes in the region.

1 Dr Giulia Bernardi and Stromboli fishermen. Credit: Rory Moore.

2 Aeolian school children learn artisanal fishing techniques.

3 The daily catch.

# Greece, Turkey and Cyprus



East Mediterranean

## Greece

The waters surrounding Greece and its many islands are home to turtles, seals, sharks, rays, tuna and a huge diversity of other marine species. Unfortunately, Greece has the poorest track record of conservation in Europe, with overfishing, ineffective marine protection and habitat destruction threatening to collapse fish stocks. BLUE has developed and funded a programme supporting the Greek Government's commitment to protect 10 per cent of Greece's EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) as no-fishing, and 30 per cent as sustainably managed - protected from damaging fishing gear such as trawling. The programme will address unsustainable trawling, invasive species and fisheries economics, and will use legal interventions to ensure that Greece's marine resources are protected and restored for future generations.

This year, BLUE hired Angela Lazou Dean, who comes with a wealth of experience, as Greece project manager. BLUE is working closely with local NGOs and government-appointed offices to identify and develop projects that will efficiently address conservation issues in Greece. BLUE's legal unit is working hard to submit legal complaints against environmentally damaging development. Several potential no-take zones have been identified and work has begun to reduce trawling bycatch and pressure on spawning fish



1

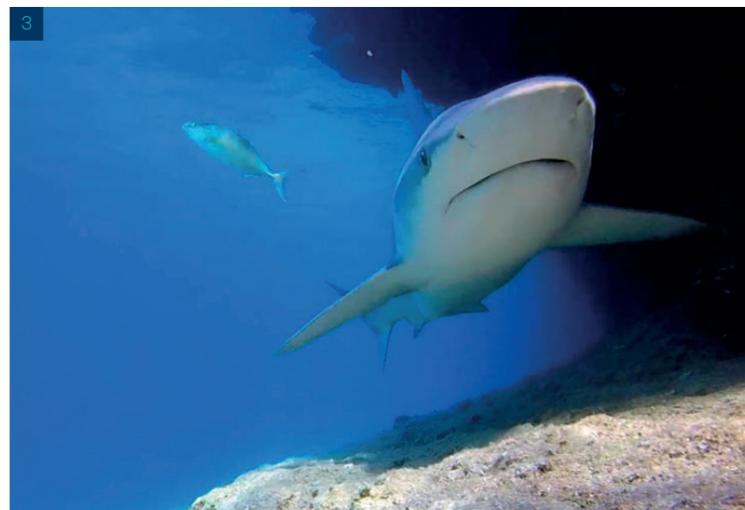
stocks. BLUE is developing education programmes and media to raise awareness of projects in Greece.

## Turkey

BLUE's partnership with the Mediterranean Conservation Society to expand and protect the largest highly protected network of MPAs in the Mediterranean, in Turkey, has seen success this year. New designations to expand the MPA have been approved and signed into law. BLUE's patrol boat continues to be the fastest of the small fleet and patrols the MPAs daily, including new officially marked no-fishing zones and restored Monk seal caves. Rangers are given GPS and cameras to easily report incidents to the authorities.



2



3



PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



RESTORING MARINE LIFE



4

The boat was also put to good use by rescuing villagers in remote locations during the Turkish wildfires in July and August. BLUE is working with local conservationists and the predominantly female artisanal fishery in Gokova bay to reduce invasive lionfish and pufferfish and protect rare aggregations of sandbar sharks. BLUE's Economics unit is using the Turkish MPA as an example to develop innovative sustainable financing models for protected areas in the Mediterranean, and an extensive seagrass mapping operation is underway. The abundance of invasive species such as lionfish, pufferfish and rabbitfish is altering entire ecosystems and weakening MPA resilience in Turkey, so an extensive initiative is underway to incentivise fishers to target these species by creating and facilitating a market for alternative seafood. A win-win for fishers and MPAs.

## 10.5k

Hectares of no-fishing zones in Turkey

- 1 Mediterranean caves.
- 2 Invasive Lionfish.
- 3 Sandbar sharks thriving in no-fishing zones. Credit: Mediterranean Conservation Society.
- 4 A Turkish artisanal fisher. Credit: Mediterranean Conservation Society.

## Cyprus

In Cyprus, BLUE has partnered with the Sovereign Base Authorities and Marine and Environmental Research (MER) laboratory to submit a new MPA proposal to the Department of Fisheries and Marine Research (DFMR). This project will drive progress towards designation of MPAs, reduce invasive species and protect numerous endangered species in Cyprus' rich waters, such as guitarfish, Monk seals and Green and Loggerhead turtles. BLUE's team has been carrying out fish surveys and seagrass monitoring, working closely with the DFMR and local fishing communities to create MPA management plans that will restore marine life and provide a sustainable resource for artisanal, small-scale fisheries.

# Namibia



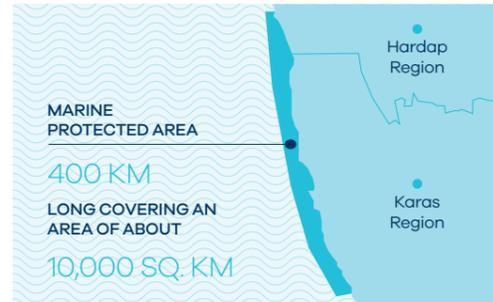
Namibia's waters are some of the richest in the world. More than fifty years ago Namibia's healthy sardine and anchovy populations were the main food source for an array of marine species that depended on them. However when industrial fishing drove fish populations to the point of collapse in the 1970s, Namibia's entire marine ecosystem followed suit and it has not yet recovered.

Fortunately, in the south of Namibia lies the Namibia Islands Marine Protected Area (NIMPA), Africa's second largest marine protected area. Yet few know it exists. If managed properly, the NIMPA could help return Namibia's waters to their former glory and be a shining example of successful marine protection on the continent for others to follow.



"The collaboration with BLUE has been instrumental in galvanizing further interest and resource for the Namibian Islands Marine Protected Area, and more widely, marine conservation in Namibia. We look forward to building on our existing collaborative efforts with BLUE and our other supporters."

ANGUS MIDDLETON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR NAMIBIA NATURE



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

## 90%

Decrease in African Penguin numbers in Namibia

- 1 Cape gannet colony. Credit: J Kemper.
- 2 Ichaboe Island, NIMPA, one of the most important seabird breeding islands in the world. Credit: J Kemper.



# Patagonia



The world's largest kelp forests and rare species of cold-water corals cling to Patagonia. Blue and Sei whales filter the rich waters to feed and Orcas patrol the vast, wild coastline. This great marine wilderness needs effective marine protection, but Salmon aquaculture and industrial fishing are contributing to the coastline's declining biodiversity and marine health.



Last year, BLUE expanded projects with local partners, Patagonia Projects and Rewilding Chile, to identify, study and designate new MPAs in Chilean Patagonia. The vision is for a network of 'Land and Sea' parks to protect the extraordinary biodiversity living in the fjords, much of which is found nowhere else in the world. BLUE's local scientist, Dr Vreni Haussermann, supports this work with state-of-the-art marine ecology research.

Salmon farming represents one of the area's most urgent threats. As well as the dead zones created underneath fish farms, and the significant damage to local marine life through sea lice and escaped fish, noise pollution created by huge farming vessels on the surface directly impacts endangered blue whales. BLUE works with Defendamos Chiloe to ban salmon farming in Patagonia's MPAs, and in 2021 they succeeded in proposing a bill to the Chilean congress.

- 1 Patagonia's kelp forests are some of the last great marine habitats on the planet. Credit: Rewilding Chile.
- 2 An octopus looks for food under an abandoned salmon farm. Credit: Rewilding Chile.
- 3 Sealsions play above mussel beds in Patagonia's fjords. Credit: Rewilding Chile.



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



# The British Isles

2021 was a seismic year for fisheries and marine conservation. There were open debates in the UK Parliament over how fisheries will be managed after Brexit, and less-than-transparent discussions over how an EU/UK trade deal would affect fishing in UK and Channel Island waters over the next five years. BLUE did its best to inform legislators about the opportunities, while at the same time trying to support the inshore fishing communities it works with whose businesses were badly hit by the Covid-19 pandemic.

# Berwickshire



## BERWICKSHIRE

In Berwickshire, cold and warm water currents converge - providing a rare diversity of marine life. This coastline supports productive crab and lobster fisheries and provides some of the best diving and recreational fishing opportunities in the UK. Despite its importance for people and nature, the majority of the Berwickshire Marine Protected Area is open to bottom-towed trawling and dredging, and reports of unlawful fishing by trawlers is common.

BLUE is working with the local fishing community, divers and researchers to monitor and manage the MPA. This year BLUE and partners undertook a survey of the entire MPA and found that large areas of rocky reef (a protected feature) lie outside current protection from bottom-towed fishing. BLUE is using data to make the case to the Scottish Government to close the whole MPA to trawling and dredging.

BLUE is also working to support low-impact fisheries within the MPA. Research led by fishermen during the summer, across the Scottish / English border, revealed female crabs maturing at different rates within the region. This research is feeding into BLUE's regional Shellfish Working Group that aims to improve local management measures for key fish stocks.



- 1 Crab and lobster creeler coming home to land. Credit: Paul Richards.
- 2 Nesting gannets, guillemots and razorbills. Credit: Paul Richards.
- 3 Eye on the prize. Credit: Paul Richards.

80+

Towed video and diver survey transects conducted in the MPA



TACKLING UNSUSTAINABLE FISHING



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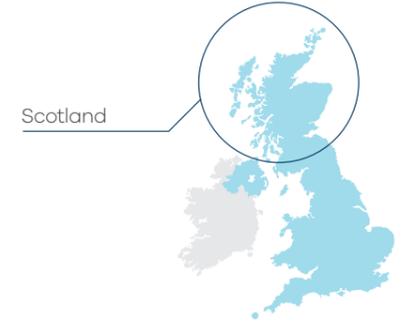


SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH SEA

# Protecting Scotland's inshore waters



Scotland's inshore waters have suffered significant decline, with less than five per cent closed to bottom-towed dredging and trawling. A 2020 Scottish Government marine assessment revealed that over the last ten years 99.5 per cent of blue mussel beds in the Firth of Forth and 53 per cent of flame shell reefs in Argyll have been destroyed. In fact, loss of biogenic reef was recorded in every region studied.

These declines are having a massive impact on inshore fisheries and local communities. BLUE continues to campaign with the Our Seas coalition to call for vessel monitoring on all boats, preference for low impact, non-destructive fishing practices and the reinstatement of an inshore limit. Scotland once had a three mile limit but now has none around its whole coastline and this year we produced a film, The Limit, that

highlights the benefits that would come from reinstating a modern inshore limit. The campaign is gaining momentum with over 7000 signatories.

BLUE is working with local communities to protect inshore waters. Last year we supported divers and NGOs in discovering a flapper skate egg-laying site and in March the government announced a 12 month emergency MPA (Red Rocks and Longay) to protect it. BLUE will now aim to make the MPA permanent.

120+

marine businesses, Scottish NGOs, fishing associations and community groups

- 1 Cathedral Rock, St Abbs Harbour. Credit: Klikpic.
- 2 Blue carbon support Skye Bridge.



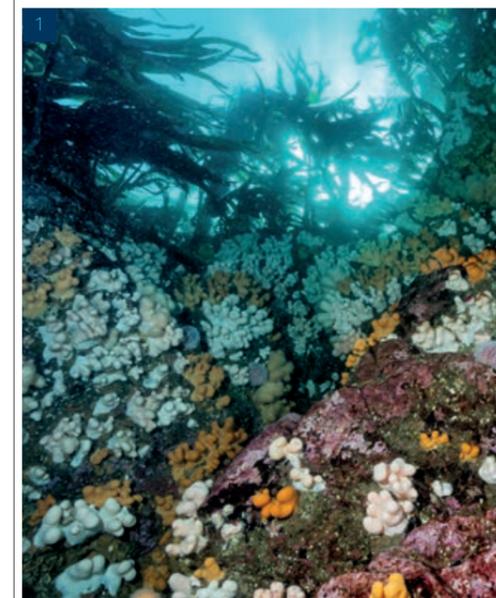
SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



TACKLING UNSUSTAINABLE FISHING



RESTORING MARINE LIFE



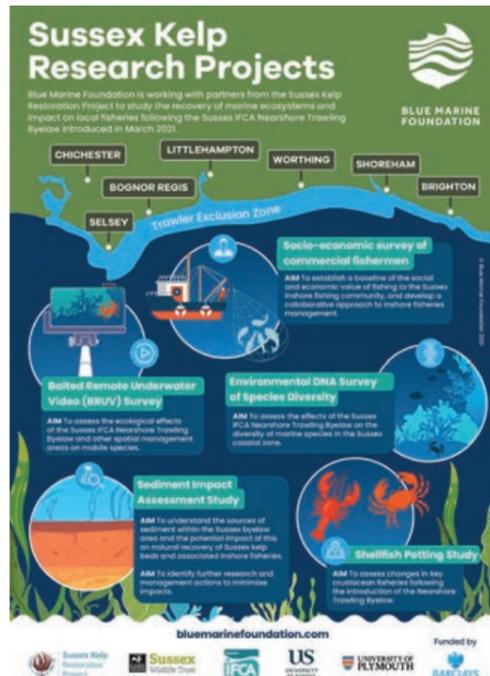
# Restoring Sussex's kelp forest



Historically, vast kelp beds stretched along more than 40 kilometres of the Sussex coast, teeming with life and providing vital habitat for important commercial fish species. However, since 1987, over 96 per cent of the area once covered by Sussex kelp has disappeared. Increased storm intensity, years of destructive trawling and other human pressures have reduced this underwater forest.

To reverse this decline, the Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) proposed a byelaw prohibiting trawling of over 300 square kilometres of seabed to allow the kelp to recover and protect essential fish habitats.

In March 2021 the Sussex Nearshore Trawling Byelaw was approved, creating one of the largest inshore areas closed to trawling in England's waters. Sir David Attenborough lent his support in the early stages of the Help Our Kelp campaign and welcomed the byelaw as a "landmark decision for the management of the UK's coastal waters".



RESTORING MARINE LIFE

- 1 BLUE and Sussex Kelp Restoration Project partners are monitoring the ecological, social and economic impact and value of the Nearshore Trawling Byelaw.
- 2 BLUE staff Joe Richards carries out crab and lobster surveys off Selsey. Credit: Jen Lewis.



To help the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project that arose from the Help Our Kelp partnership, BLUE is working with Sussex IFCA and the University of Sussex to establish a baseline of the abundance and diversity of key kelp habitat species, using innovative techniques such as Baited Remote Underwater Videos and environmental DNA analysis. To measure the value of recovery of the kelp habitat to commercial fisheries, BLUE has undertaken a survey with a local Selsey fisherman of the crab and lobster pot fishery and, working with the University of Plymouth, is carrying out a socio-economic survey of Sussex commercial fishermen.

Alongside field research, BLUE is leading an assessment of the potential sources and impacts of sediment on the recovery of kelp and associated fisheries. A desk-based review was commissioned and a Sussex Sediment Workshop brought together over 50 stakeholders to share information and identify actions to reduce the inputs of sediment from land and marine sources.

96%

of Sussex kelp beds lost since 1987

300

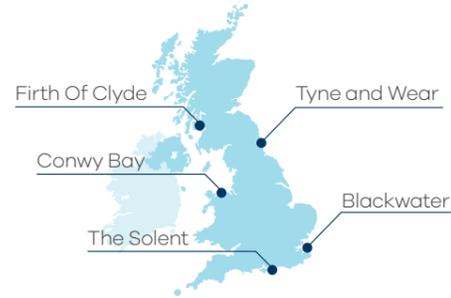
Kilometres of seabed protected by Nearshore Trawling Byelaw

To help small-scale fishermen maintain their low-impact, sustainable fisheries within the byelaw area, BLUE is actively engaging fishermen in Bognor and Worthing to help develop conservation, research and marketing initiatives. Small-scale inshore fishermen see the byelaw as a sign of hope for the recovery of once-thriving fishing communities and BLUE is working with the Bognor Regis Fishing Quarter to set up an education point and a local fish market that promotes their low-impact traditional fishery.

- 3 Engaging with local fishermen in Worthing. Credit: Sam Fanshawe.
- 4 Sussex inshore day boat. Credit: Sam Fanshawe.



# Native oyster restoration



## SOLENT OYSTER PROJECT

The Solent once supported the largest native oyster fishery in Europe. In 1978, 450 vessels were involved in oyster fishing and 15 million oysters were harvested in that year alone. Overfishing, pollution, disease and habitat loss caused the fishery to collapse in 2013. BLUE is working to revive this population and has now restored almost 100,000 oysters. In 2021, BLUE created in Langstone Harbour the Solent's first oyster reef, one of the largest in the UK and home to 15,000 oysters - with thousands more to be added soon. The reef will increase biodiversity, improve water quality, and stabilise sediments. BLUE and the University of Portsmouth opened the UK's first restoration-focused oyster hatchery this year. Oysters from the hatchery will be settled onto shell and used to supply the reef in the future. BLUE is now working towards the creation of another reef in the River Hamble.

75+

Million litres of water filtered in the Wild Oyster Project alone

1

Billion larvae released from the hatchery

## WILD OYSTERS PROJECT

The Wild Oysters project is a partnership between BLUE, Zoological Society of London, and British Marine, funded by the People's Postcode Lottery Dream Fund. In March, rehabilitation hubs were established in Tyne and Wear, Firth of Clyde, and Conwy Bay, which aim to recover native oysters and the environmental benefits they provide. 142 oyster nurseries have been deployed in marinas, releasing billions of larvae, and over 17,500 people have been reached by social media so far. Numerous species have been found on the nurseries including the critically endangered European eel, and the project is now planning the creation of oyster reefs.

## ESSEX OYSTER PROJECT

The Essex Native Oyster Restoration Initiative (ENORI) is a partnership between BLUE, conservation organisations, fishermen, academia and Government, aiming to restore native oyster populations. ENORI has restored and improved 13,340m<sup>2</sup> of seabed this year alone making it the largest restored oyster habitat in the UK. This will increase the available settlement material for young oysters within the Marine Conservation Zone.



RESTORING MARINE LIFE

- 1 Wild Oyster nurseries in Tyne and Wear. Credit: Celine Gamble.
- 2 Cultch deployment in the river Blackwater to improve seabed substrate.



# Solent seascape scale restoration project



## THE SOLENT

The Solent's waters once hosted abundant seagrass, saltmarsh, and oysters, but are now severely degraded. These habitats filter water, sequester carbon and support biodiversity. It is estimated that their combined natural capital value is over one billion pounds.

The Solent Seascape project expands on our existing Solent oyster restoration work, and aims to re-connect these fragmented saltmarsh, seagrass and oyster habitats. In March, BLUE held a stakeholder workshop attended by over 50 people to explore the Solent as an area for seascape scale restoration; meaning working in collaboration on a large scale, to deliver more benefits to people and nature. BLUE assisted the University of Portsmouth with the deployment and monitoring of

saltmarsh restoration in the river Hamble and collected 30,000 seagrass seeds with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, to be restored to the Solent. BLUE is now gathering partners to select restoration sites and drive this project forward.



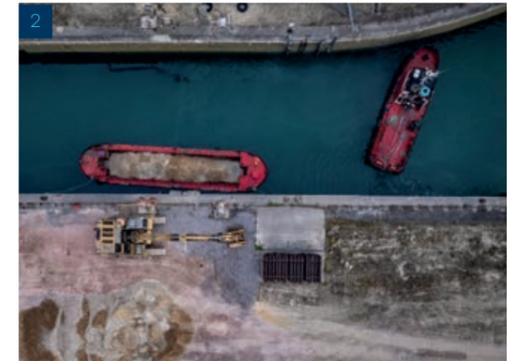
SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH SEA



PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING



In the Solent, over half the saltmarsh has been lost, oyster populations have declined by 95 per cent and all 317 hectares of seagrass beds are in poor condition.

- 1 Seagrass seed collection. Credit: Luke Helmer.
- 2 Langstone Harbour. Credit: Matt Jarvis.
- 3 Saltmarsh and oyster shells for relaying.

# Lyme Bay

**LYME BAY**  
The pioneering Lyme Bay project is proving that marine protected areas can benefit both fishermen and the marine environment.

Since 2012, BLUE has worked alongside local fishermen, scientists and regulators to support a collaborative model of sustainable fishing within the Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve. Established in 2008, this marine protected area has banned trawling and dredging - allowing the fragile seabed and rare species to recover. To help low-impact, sustainable fisheries to continue to survive within the area, a voluntary code was developed with the fishermen to set limits on the number of pots and nets used.

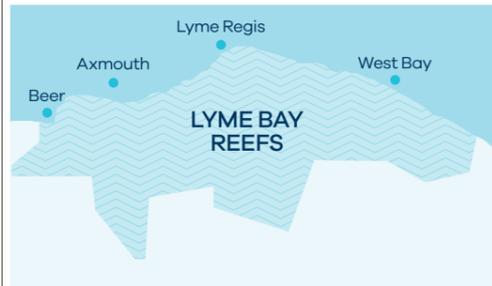
To ensure the level of pot fishing is compatible with protection of the Reserve's habitats and species, BLUE funded a four-year study by the University of Plymouth in partnership with the fishermen. The study was published in the journal Scientific Reports in 2021, showing that the number of pots used by fishermen under the code of conduct had minimal impact on reef-building and commercially targeted species within the Reserve. This is just one of over 20 scientific papers and reports generated from over 12 years of ecological, social and economic research, and BLUE will draw the results from these together in a 12-year impact paper to be published with the University of Plymouth in 2022.



PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



THE LYME BAY RESERVE IS A 90 SQ. MILE AREA.



One of BLUE's goals is to achieve a harmonised approach to the regulation of fishing activity across the two Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority districts that the Reserve spans. 2021 provided opportunities to influence a number of consultations on potting limits and minimum landing sizes, to which BLUE facilitated input from the Committee and fishermen. It is hoped that new measures to be introduced in early 2022 will add significant weight to the voluntary code.

The fishermen in the four ports of BLUE's Lyme Bay project continued to face challenging times as the effect of Covid continued and the UK's departure from the EU brought additional uncertainty to the domestic and export markets. Providing some much-needed stability, BLUE continued to support the fishermen with the Reserve Seafood brand and our van transporting their catch to key fish markets three times a week. By supporting initiatives that maximise the quality and freshness of the catch from sea to plate, and promoting the fish caught sustainably by fishermen

22%

Increase in pink sea fans

3X

The abundance of all marine species

52%

Increase in species diversity

\* Statistics show increases within the reserve compared to outside the reserve based on 2008-2016 data.

within the Reserve, BLUE aims to reward responsible fishing and show that low-impact fishing, effectively managed, can bring lasting benefits for people, nature and communities.

"The great value to us has been in the collaboration between fishermen, BLUE, scientists and the powers-that-be, all meeting together in one room and getting to the root of the problems we've had."

JIM NEWTON, FISHERMAN AND CHAIRMAN OF THE EAST DEVON FISHERMAN'S ASSOCIATION- BEER (DEVON) BRANCH

- 1 Lyme Bay Reserve fish delivery to the Dorset Seafood Festival 2021. Credit: Sam Fanshawe.
- 2 Kieron Williams, Lyme Bay scallop diver.
- 3 Small-scale fishing boat, West Bay Credit: Sam Fanshawe.
- 4 Lyme Bay Reserve fisherman brings in the catch for the potting survey. Credit: Adam Rees.

# Jersey



## JERSEY

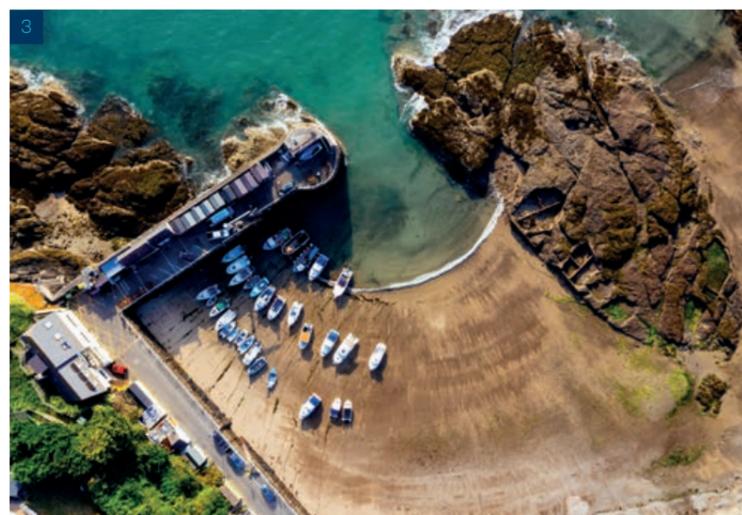
With one of the largest tidal ranges in the world, Jersey's marine environment hosts an astonishing diversity of habitats. They range from seagrass and maerl (coralline algae) beds providing shelter for key commercial species to rocky reefs hosting rare pink sea fans. The marine habitats around Jersey perform crucial roles in storing and sequestering carbon and buffering the effects of climate change.

To protect this incredible ecosystem, BLUE is campaigning for a large marine park closed to bottom-towed fishing. This marine park would afford high levels of protection to over 30 per cent of Jersey's waters.

Research from BLUE-funded PhD student Sam Blampied continues to show recovery within existing marine protected areas (MPAs). In summer and autumn of 2021, a study demonstrating the ability of older, well-established seagrass beds to support biodiversity and store carbon was completed alongside diver surveys and potting studies to assess the impact of Jersey's MPAs.

BLUE is working to increase support for low-impact fisheries on the island through a promotional scallop label, 'Jersey Hand Dived', launched to boost consumer awareness on differing scallop fishing methods. In partnership with a local underwater photographer, BLUE has developed an educational website, 'Jersea' to inform islanders of the diversity and seasonality of their seafood choices.

The post-Brexit trade agreement led to an overhaul of Jersey's licensing arrangements, resulting in tensions around licence distribution. BLUE worked with local stakeholders to help with interpretation of the agreement, and repeatedly called on Jersey's government to re-introduce licence conditions aimed at safeguarding the future of Jersey's fishery.



1 A Jersey hand-dived scallop. Credit: James Bowden.  
2 A Jersey scallop diver. Credit: James Bowden.

-  SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS
-  CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH SEA
-  PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING

**>30%**  
the percentage of Jersey's waters proposed for designation as a marine park

# Safeguarding at-risk fisheries



Nearly three quarters of the UK's fishing fleet operate boats 10 metres and under. These vessels target a range of fish across the UK's inshore waters and form an important part of our heritage and local economies. With little access to quota, many rely on non-quota species such as whelk, crab, lobster, scallops and cuttlefish. These fisheries are data-deficient with little or no management, leading to uncontrolled overfishing.

In response to increasing concern among conservationists and the industry itself about declining stocks, overcrowding and gear conflict, BLUE started the Safeguarding At-Risk Fisheries project. The project hopes to identify key at-risk fisheries and propose management solutions to avert collapse and support the livelihoods of small-scale fishermen.

In 2021 our focus has been on cuttlefish, an important seasonal fishery for the English Channel, with several ports on the south coast dependent on them. Over 90 per cent of cuttlefish landings are caught by offshore trawlers with no limitation on effort or quantity. They are often caught before they spawn and, with a short two-year life cycle, this can have significant impacts on population.

In November BLUE convened a Cuttlefish Symposium bringing together over 120 attendees including fishermen, fisheries managers, government agencies, conservation groups and citizen scientists, to share information about current cuttlefish stocks and fisheries.

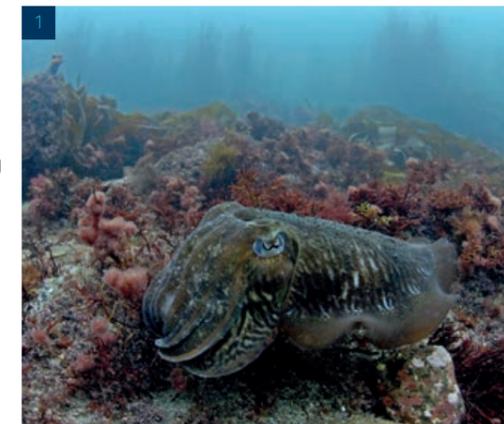
This work has formed the foundation of a collaborative effort to identify effective measures to manage the fishery and safeguard cuttlefish populations and sustainable fisheries for the future.

**74%**

of the active UK fishing fleet is made up of vessels under 10 m

**90%+**

of cuttlefish landings are caught by trawlers offshore



-  SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS
-  PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING

1 Cuttlefish. Credit: Paul Naylor.  
2 Cuttlefish pair. Credit: Paul Naylor.



# Saving the sturgeon



## EUROPEAN STURGEON

The European sturgeon, once abundant across Europe and the largest migratory fish species to previously occupy UK rivers, has suffered a long history of decline. The construction of river barriers, habitat destruction, exploitation and pollution accelerated its loss, and it is now considered one of the most critically endangered species on the planet.

BLUE is aiming to raise awareness of this iconic species and begin to restore populations in the UK. In 2021, a report based on the UK sturgeon captures database was published and shared with government bodies. In collaboration with the UK Sturgeon Alliance, BLUE also launched the #SavetheSturgeon website, which displays information on the species and provides a platform to record sightings.

BLUE has also begun scoping sites within the Severn Estuary that may be suitable for the restoration of native sturgeon. Initial results show that the rivers Wye and Tywi have suitable habitat and no river barriers. BLUE will continue to scope sites for restoration and will work with the wider Sturgeon Alliance network on best practice methods for sturgeon restoration in UK rivers.

Sturgeon have been around for over 200 million years.



RESTORING MARINE LIFE

- 1 Nantgaredig Bridge, River Tywi. Credit: Rory Moore.
- 2 European sturgeon. Credit: Alamy.
- 3 UK Sturgeon fieldwork team (Rory Moore, Alex Hubberstey and Lucy Capron). Credit: David Tudor.

# Harnessing the potential of wind

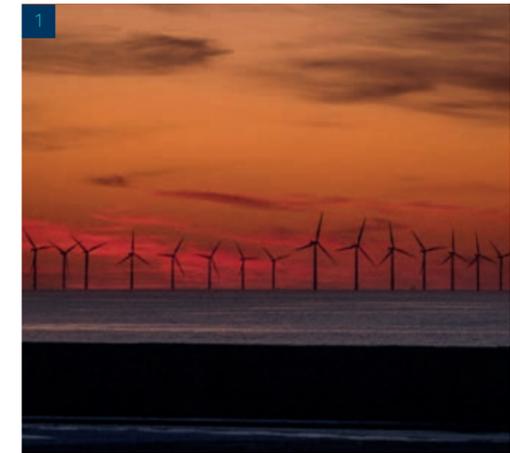


Across Europe the role offshore wind farms can play in restoring nature is gaining momentum. Several pilot schemes are underway in Holland and Belgium exploring seaweed cultivation and native oyster restoration within offshore windfarms. Research is also investigating the use of artificial structures to provide habitat for fish and shellfish populations. These pilots are underpinned by government policy that mandates which offshore wind installations should make space for nature within their infrastructure and contribute to national biodiversity targets.

With the UK Government committed to providing over a third of British electricity from offshore wind power by 2030, BLUE believes there is an urgent need to develop strategies to enhance nature in the UK.

In 2021 BLUE developed a methodology to analyse over 50 wind farms and their suitability for restoration or habitat enhancement in the UK. This work is building on previous research by BLUE to assess the viability of placing native oysters within an Orsted-operated windfarm - Gunfleet Sands Wind Farm - to boost populations in a nearby Marine Protected Area. BLUE hopes to use our work to inform future policy in the UK and identify a number of trial sites to demonstrate proof of concept.

BLUE is keen to see nature enhanced as wind energy expands in the UK.



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



RESTORING MARINE LIFE

1/3rd

British electricity by 2030 will be powered by offshore wind

- 1 Credit: Unsplash.
- 2 Credit: Unsplash.

# Highly protected marine areas



The United Kingdom

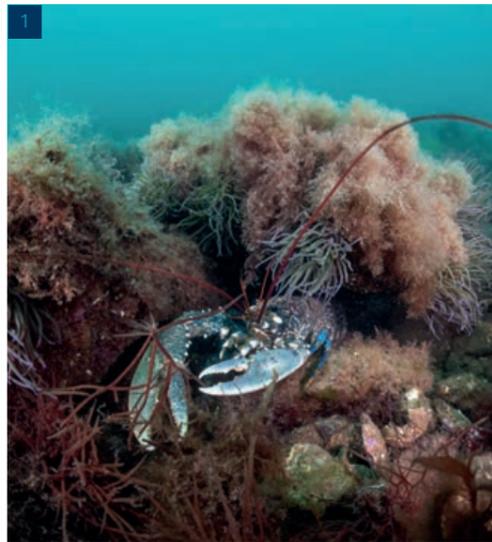
One of the simplest and most effective solutions to overfishing is establishing highly protected marine areas (HPMAs). Scientific evidence shows that areas fully closed to fishing will - in under a decade - contain on average six times more biomass than totally unprotected areas.

Despite these benefits, there are only three small no-take areas in English waters, covering less than 0.01 per cent of home waters under the UK Government's jurisdiction. DEFRA claims that 38 per cent of UK waters are under protection, yet destructive bottom trawling still takes place in an extraordinary 97 per cent of UK offshore MPAs.

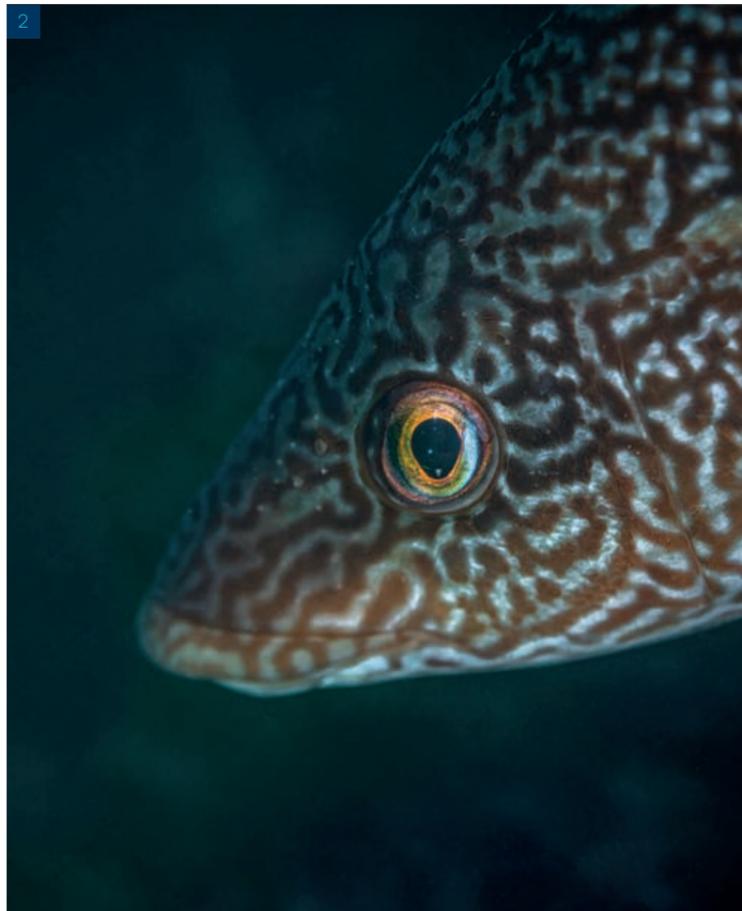
BLUE continues to work hard to see trawling banned in 100 per cent of UK protected areas and to see more Highly Protected MPAs designated. Our Policy and Legal teams engaged both the UK Government and the European Commission throughout 2021, seeking the implementation of the recommendations of the Benyon Review into Highly Protected Marine Areas.



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



1 Common Lobster, South Devon. Credit: Henley Spiers



2 Ballan Wrasse. Credit: Henley Spiers

**97%** of bottom trawling takes place in offshore MPA's

# Offshore Marine Protected Areas



Dogger Bank

## DOGGER BANK

The UK has over 60 marine protected areas (MPAs) in its offshore waters. As well as having the potential to support exceptional biodiversity, these areas could provide vital carbon storage if they were properly protected. Investigations by an NGO coalition that includes BLUE revealed that, unbelievably, 97 per cent of so-called protected areas in offshore UK waters remain subject to destructive fishing.

Last year BLUE threatened the Government with legal action for failing to protect these sites. As a result, in February 2021 the Government announced a consultation on proposed management measures for four offshore marine sites: The Dogger Bank, the Wash approaches (the Inner Dowsing, Race Bank and North Ridge), the South Dorset Marine Conservation Zone and the Canyons Marine Conservation Zone. In April, the Government announced that it would protect all 40 offshore MPAs in England within three years.

BLUE research has shown that the critically endangered sturgeon once lived on the Dogger Bank.

To continue building the case for protecting the UK's marine environment, BLUE - in partnership with WWF and the RSPB - published a report 'Assessment of carbon capture and storage in natural systems within the English North Sea'. The report found that carbon stocks in the English North Sea amount to nearly 20 per cent of that held in UK forests and woodlands. The protection of these habitats can only be achieved by removing destructive fishing pressures. The report has enabled BLUE to provide further evidence in support of a total ban on destructive fishing that disrupts the seabed and releases carbon. Ensuring that marine protected areas are actually protected remains a high priority for BLUE.



TACKLING UNSUSTAINABLE FISHING



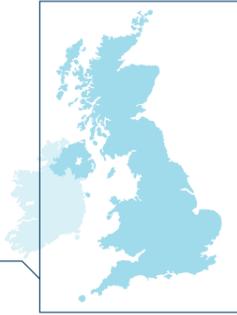
1 Minke whale surfaces.

**97%** Of marine protected areas are subject to destructive fishing



# Rolling out Marine Parks in the British Isles

The United Kingdom



When National Parks were designed over 70 years ago no-one thought beyond the shoreline. Of the 15 National Parks in Britain today, none includes the sea. It is widely acknowledged that the general public has been left behind when it comes to the way in which we protect our domestic waters. BLUE is now seeking to catalyse National Marine Parks. In 2019 we helped Plymouth to declare the first National Marine Park (NMP). In 2020, BLUE started conversations about the purpose and benefits of NMPs across Britain. In 2021, we started to build a campaign for national marine parks.

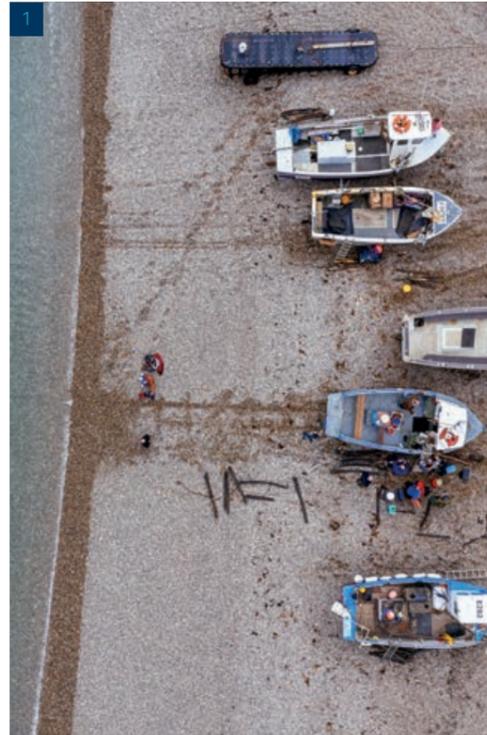
A vision for National Marine Parks in British Seas was published in 2021, based on interviews with 30 key stakeholders around the country. The vision gained wide media pickup across the country at both the local and national level. BLUE has started to establish NMP 'champions' in each of the ten locations proposed in the report.

We also released a vision for Scotland where the recent legislation includes provision for National Parks at sea.

Strategic alliances have been formed to enable this vision to become a reality.

*"Marine Parks have the potential to take us a new distance towards engaging people with the sea"*

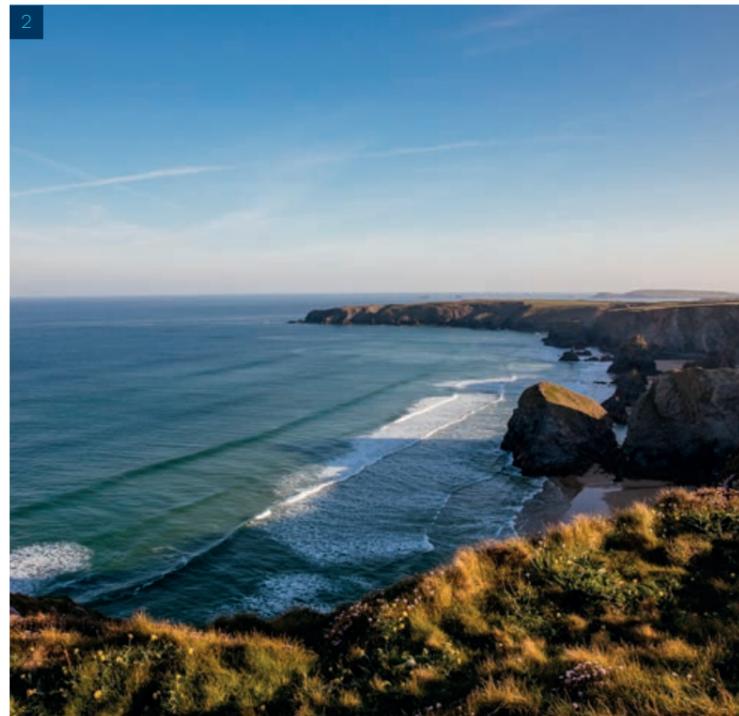
DAN LAFFOLEY, IUCN



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH SEA



BLUE is now playing a role in shaping the deployment of Britain's first NMP with a £9.5m National Lottery Heritage Horizon Award achieved by Plymouth City Council with our support. The ten National Parks in England have been shown to contribute to the economy, with 90 million visitors each year spending as much as £4 billion and 22,500 businesses employing 140,000 people. National parks on land have been found to be important to 90% of people - their value is well recognised and there is potential for similar principles, practices and rewards for our seascape.

BLUE will continue to explore and apply this vision for British waters. Looking ahead, we will establish a new National Advisory Group to help keep up the momentum at the strategic level, raise awareness and facilitate progress from within the ten locations.

**90M**

visitors to National Parks each year

*"There can be few national purposes which, at so modest a cost, offer so large a prospect of health-giving happiness for the people"*

JOHN DOWER (1945)

1 Credit: James Bowden.

2 Credit: James Bowden.

3 Credit: Mark Smith.

# Blue Carbon Conference

In June 2021, BLUE held a full day conference dedicated to blue carbon. The event aimed to unite the global community focused on this topic, share evidence and raise ambition ahead of COP26. The conference heard from many thought-leaders from around the world, whose insights may be summarised as follows:

The impact that trawling and dredging might have on global carbon emissions was highlighted, with Lord Goldsmith calling for research on this topic to be a priority.

The concept of blue carbon can only move beyond currently recognised habitats (mangroves, seagrass and saltmarsh) with the right level of scientific evidence.

Domestic policy needs to catch up. The rapid application of emerging blue carbon evidence to existing policy mechanisms must be a priority. Currently, the ocean isn't even in the UK's greenhouse gas inventory.

There is a need for better coordination between blue carbon stakeholders – scientists, government agencies and NGOs.

Any credits generated by a voluntary market must be of the highest possible quality.

Countries must be encouraged, through international pressure and support, to make coastal ecosystems high priorities in their Nationally Determined Contributions for both blue carbon and the other benefits these ecosystems provide. This sends important signals to the private sector for where investment should go.

The emerging blue carbon market and the projects it supports must place community ownership and engagement at their heart. If done right, this could improve gender equality and provide sustainable finance. .



PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

- 1 Rainforest of the sea website journey from The Sea We Breathe.
- 2 What is blue carbon, website page from The Sea We Breathe.
- 3 Credit: Benjamin Jones.



# COP26



The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) this year held its 26th Conference of the Parties in Glasgow. Delayed by the pandemic and with the climate crisis now the defining issue of our time, it was a pivotal event.

Throughout the fortnight the ocean, for the first time, was well-represented in the blue zone where negotiators gathered each day. The text of the treaty, also for the first time, recognised the role of the ocean in mitigating and adapting to climate change. BLUE actively engaged in the event in several ways:

BLUE team members (including Charles Clover, who was at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992) were present in the blue zone throughout COP 26.

Clare Brook spoke to over 100 CEOs at a major nature day event.

Lord Zac Goldsmith announced a BLUE scientific programme in collaboration with the University of Exeter. This Blue Carbon Seascape Survey will explore the role of the ocean as a climate change solution.

Alongside WWF and the Wildlife Trusts, BLUE released a report looking into blue carbon stocks in the North Sea and the best way for policymakers to protect them.

With the same partners, BLUE launched a UK blue carbon forum to share evidence and raise ambition.

BLUE projected a blue carbon seascape on a giant screen in the main café of the blue zone. This display took delegates through blue carbon habitats, showcased their extraordinary benefits and called for negotiators to remember the ocean.

BLUE launched a targeted report, funded by DP World, into the opportunity for a voluntary blue carbon market in the UK.

For the first time, the ocean gained a foothold in the text: Article 21 highlights how important marine ecosystem are in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the need to protect, conserve and restore them. Article 61 introduced a recurrent yearly dialogue on ocean-climate matters, which will be held by the Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice. Meanwhile the Article 6 negotiations finally reached consensus, and started to draw together rules for a transparent and accountable global carbon market. For all the failings with regards to loss and damage, phasing out coal and other crunch points in the text, COP26 was of huge significance for the ocean.

*"While we know that bottom trawling has utterly devastated whole tracts of ocean floor, we do not yet know the full extent of its impacts in terms of carbon. We need to step up our research, and fast." "*

RT HON LORD ZAC GOLDSMITH

Minister of state for the Pacific and the Environment, speaking at BLUE's conference in June 2021



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH SEA



PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE FISHING



1 Image Caption: Professor Callum Roberts and Sabra Ibrahim Noordeen.

# BLUE Units

BLUE has eight specialist units, which deploy a combination of in-house expertise and external consultants. These units both support our projects and act as think tanks in their own right. As we have eight units, BLUE resembles an octopus – and we aspire to be as intelligent and adaptive as those remarkable creatures.

# BLUE EDUCATION

At BLUE, we know that conservation is always more effective with local community input and support. Education and raising public awareness serve not only the ecosystems we're aiming to protect, but also the young people who will depend on them in the future.

Following the pandemic, one of BLUE Education's priorities has been providing free and easily accessible ocean education to millions around the world. Another focus area has been helping people to visualise and understand the inextricable link between the ocean and climate change. To address both of these areas, BLUE has built an interactive web experience titled *'The Sea We Breathe'*, narrated by Stephen Fry. Users can 'swim' through three immersive journeys which explore underwater rainforests that store billions of tonnes of carbon, marine protected areas that boost the ocean's resilience to climate change, and fisheries that impact the entire web of life.

BLUE Education has also worked closely with the BLUE team in the Aeolian Islands, delivering a second year of marine education to local school children and communities. Activities ranged from lessons on sustainable fisheries, taught onboard by local fishermen, to seagrass 'summer schools' for university students refining their scientific dive skills.

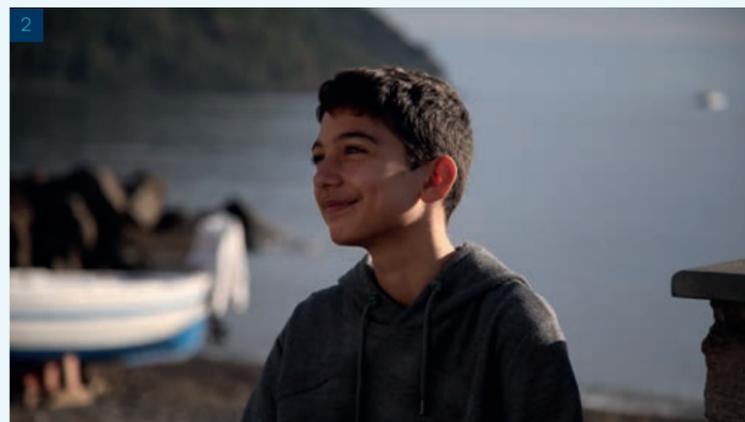
4,214

makerzines distributed to date

c.500K

people reached by The Sea We Breathe campaign

- 1 *The Sea We Breathe* website landing page.
- 2 Potito Ruggiero, climate activist and TEDx speaker who worked with BLUE in the Aeolian Islands on the marine education programme.
- 3 A university student monitors seagrass in the Aeolian Islands.



# BLUE LEGAL

2021 has seen BLUE Legal significantly increase its activities in developing strategic legal interventions to protect the marine environment in the UK and abroad.

This year, BLUE Legal went one step further and became party to an appeal on the Hinkley Point nuclear power station, ensuring that environmental laws, which would otherwise have gone unnoticed or been misapplied, are taken into consideration in the planning process and properly enforced. Having successfully secured a commitment from the government to protect the Dogger Bank and other offshore MPAs from destructive fishing practices, BLUE Legal continues to apply pressure both in the UK and in Brussels to ensure that these commitments are upheld and the sites effectively protected. In those cases, BLUE Legal has been testing the application

1 Scottish Salmon farm pens. GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

of the Habitats Regulations and other environmental legislation in the UK and replicating this work in other projects across the EU, like France and Greece.

In Scotland, the team aims to transform salmon farming practices making the sector more sustainable and compliant with environmental laws. With BLUE investigations, the legal team continues to tackle the illegal switching-off of AIS and the use of FADs in the Indian ocean. The law is a useful key to unlock ocean conservation.

*"The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man."*

# BLUE MEDIA

Blue Media continues to use short films, social and digital media to get the ocean's story heard by a range of audiences, from global to hyper-local.

## Backing the Blue Belt across the UK Overseas Territories

We have supported the conservation team on Ascension Island with specialist filming equipment and training to allow them to gather their own footage and conduct local interviews to support future local public engagement campaigns. We have also helped launch Ascension's online MPA management plan. Meanwhile, we are supporting the St. Helena conservation team with short films to promote responsible whale shark tourism.

## Winning hearts and minds in the Maldives

In a rapid, crisis-response campaign, we launched the #SaveOurSharks Alliance, a partnership with over 200 businesses and organisations. Reaching over 300,000 people on social media, we forced the Maldives government to uphold its long-cherished shark fishing ban. While the pandemic delayed designation of six new protected sites in Laamu, we continued to build support for the #EkuEkyLaamu protection campaign with hugely popular "snorkel camps" for women and school children.

## Inspiring greater protection and sustainable choices in the British Isles

Our recent filming in Berwickshire will showcase the importance of an MPA there while calling for even greater protection within it. Meanwhile in Jersey, we have supported local sustainable fishing initiatives with the press launch of the "Jersey Hand-Dived" food label as well as our sustainable #FishOfTheMonth campaign. In Scotland, we have supported the #InshoreLimit social media campaign and petition to close bottom-trawling and dredging in inshore waters, including the virtual screening of "The Limit" documentary.



4.5m

People saw the social media content for #FishForTomorrow

## Reaching millions with positive stories of marine restoration

We brought an audience of millions to the Solent Oyster Restoration Project with an exclusive reef and oyster deployment story for BBC TV's The One Show, supported by the BBC's social media accounts. In partnership with PPL and ZSL, we are also continuing our media support for the #WildOyster project, which aims to restore oysters into UK marinas.

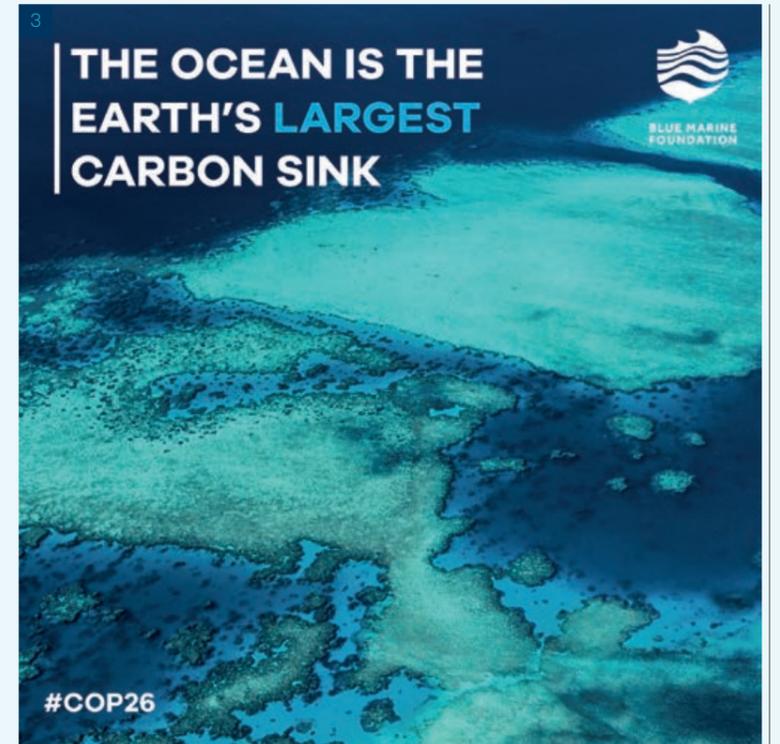


## Thought-leading through events

Not daunted by Covid, in 2021 we took all of our major events online and virtual. Our Blue Carbon conference brought experts, thought-leaders and decision-makers together from around the world, inspiring productive conversations and partnerships ahead of COP26 and providing a rich online legacy of talks and films available free on our digital channels. We also gathered a global virtual audience to celebrate this year's "Ocean Awards" with a live awards event and associated films, podcasts and social media – inspiring thousands with the very best in marine conservation.

## Making the ocean's case in the climate change debate

We are proud to have been involved in the development and distribution of the highly successful digital platform [www.theseawebreathe.com](http://www.theseawebreathe.com), which explains the ocean's role in climate change systems. The site has been viewed over 400,000 times, with ongoing support from social media influencers including HRH Princess Eugenie. To date it has won six digital awards.



1 Solent oyster drop with Dr Luke Helmer.

2 Ascension Island Turtle. Credit: Lucie Machin.

3 COP26 Infographic.

# BLUE INVESTIGATIONS

BLUE Investigations works to research, expose and combat harmful and unsustainable practices affecting our oceans. This year, BLUE Investigations has focussed primarily on exposing and combating the overfishing of tropical tuna in the Indian Ocean and highlighting the UK's role in the opaque deep-sea mining industry.

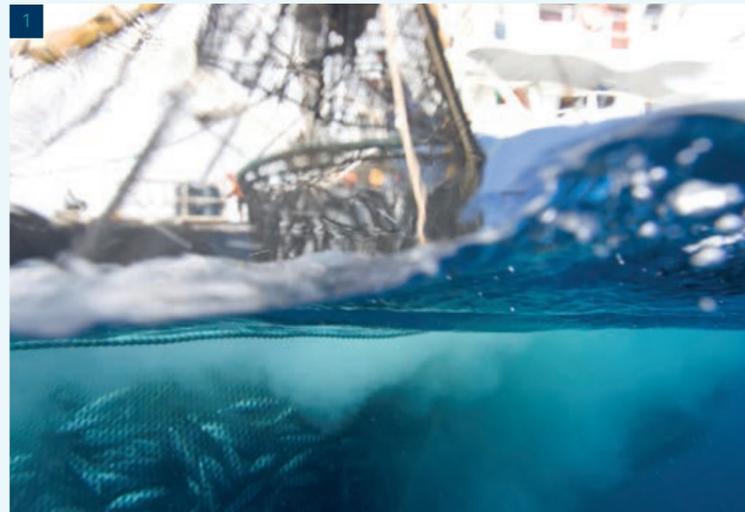
While a full account of BLUE's efforts in the Indian Ocean can be found on page 26, BLUE Investigations has supported this work by uncovering the continued misuse of the Automatic Identification System (AIS) on the part of EU-owned industrial, distant-water fleets. BLUE Investigations is also working with BLUE Legal to assess the implications for this ongoing violation of EU law on the vessels' insurance.

Following the publication of BLUE's deep-sea mining report at the end of 2020, the UK Government made public the deep-sea exploration licences it holds with Lockheed Martin's subsidiary UK Seabed Resources Limited which had previously been withheld. BLUE undertook an analysis of the licences which were found to be unlawful and riddled with inaccuracies. Together with those of Greenpeace, our findings were published in the Guardian in May, casting a shadow of doubt over the legality of the Government's involvement with this controversial company. BLUE continues to push for a global moratorium on all deep-sea mining until the impact on the environment is properly understood.

1 Tuna being caught by an industrial purse seiner. Credit: Alex Hofford/Greenpeace.

2 A purse seine vessel bringing its catch on board. Credit: Alex Hofford/Greenpeace.

3 A sea angel. Credit: Alexander Semenov.



# BLUE CARBON

BLUE Carbon aims to raise the profile of the ocean as a climate change solution. We develop targeted evidence to better understand the role of marine habitats in mitigating and adapting to climate change. The major blue carbon habitats (mangroves, saltmarsh, and seagrass) are in rapid global decline. These habitats remain little understood and largely overlooked by policymakers. BLUE carbon therefore acts as a catalyst to build political ambition. This includes ensuring that the voluntary blue carbon market supports biodiversity recovery, is well-evidenced, transparent, and socially equitable. We are focused on the following projects:

The Convex Seascape Survey, a \$15m research programme to understand the role of recovering seascapes as climate change solutions.

A Blue Carbon Development Fund seeking to channel finance to conservation and restoration projects globally.

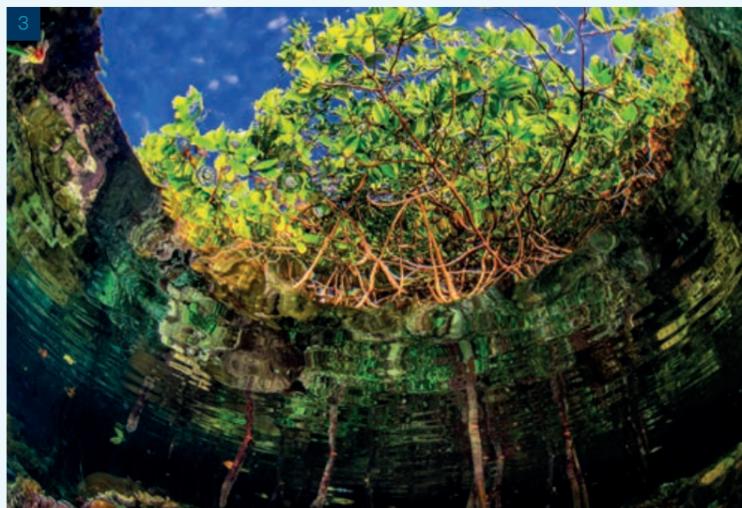
A postdoctorate at the University of Exeter calculating carbon sequestration and storage in BLUE's projects.

The UK Blue Carbon Forum, a group of over 20 organisations united to share evidence and raise ambition.

Developing evidence to support better protection and restoration of UK blue carbon habitats.

"For far too long, the ocean has been mostly absent from serious policy discussions about reducing carbon emissions."

JANE LUBCHENCO, OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY



## 10cm

layer from the top of the North Sea seabed contains the equivalent of 20 per cent of the carbon stored in Britain's forests

- 1 Credit: Alex Mustard.
- 2 Credit: Liam McGuire.
- 3 Credit: Beth Watson.

# BLUE ECONOMICS

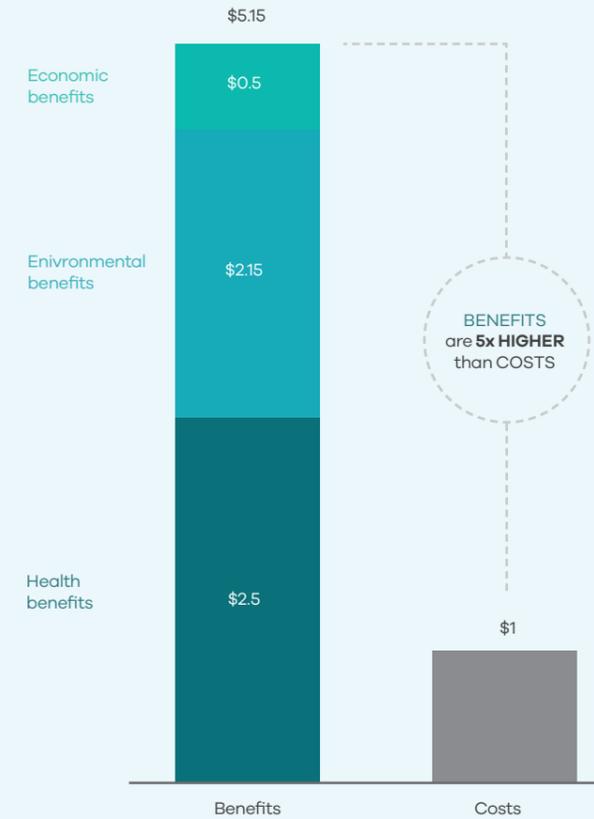


Figure 1: Sustainable ocean investments yield benefits at least 5 times higher than costs.

Reference: Konar, M., & Ding, H. 2020. A Sustainable Ocean Economy for 2050 Approximating Its Benefits and Costs. Secretariat of the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, World Resources Institute. Washington, DC.

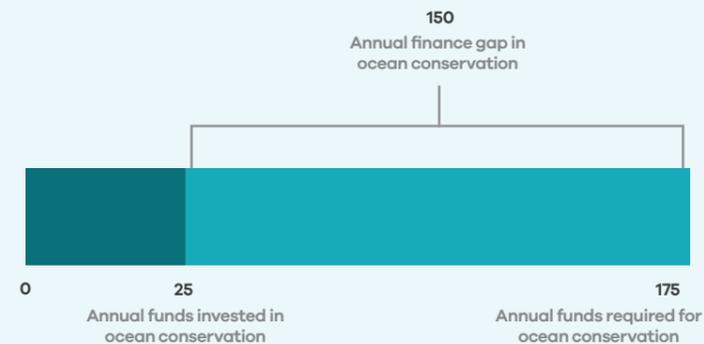


Figure 2: Annual financing gap in ocean conservation.

Reference: Johansen, D., & Vestvik, R. 2020. The cost of saving our ocean - estimating the funding gap of sustainable development goal 14. Marine Policy, Volume 112.

If we are to avert catastrophic climate change and biodiversity loss, we need a complete change in the way nature is valued. BLUE Economics is working on quantifying the real cost of destructive fishing while developing new ways of directing capital at scale towards ocean protection and restoration.

In its first year, BLUE Economics has seen strong interest and demand for our work from both corporate partners and BLUE project managers. In particular, we have identified that BLUE's hands-on experience establishing the Ascension endowment fund can be expanded to other projects in need of sustainable financing models, while we can apply economic theory to help develop our blue carbon work and restoration projects.

One study we have carried out is on the economics of bottom trawling in the North Sea, assembling information on employment, contribution to GDP, government subsidies, operating costs, energy usage and discards. This analysis is supporting BLUE's wider work around this damaging form of fishing.

But BLUE Economics' most groundbreaking work has been the development of a Blue Carbon Development Fund – a blended capital fund to catalyse the development of the voluntary blue carbon market and direct sustainable and equitable investment to marine conservation and restoration projects.

## \$25bn

The voluntary carbon market is estimated to grow to \$25bn by 2030.

Ecosystem Marketplace

- 1 Seagrass and pipefish. Credit: Paul Naylor.
- 2 Juvenile Pollack. Credit: Henley Spiers.

# BLUE POLICY

The decisions that determine if our seas will be restored and protected or continue to be overexploited and degraded are often made in capitals far from the sea. We have therefore formed Blue Policy to take our mission to the corridors of Whitehall, Edinburgh, Brussels and beyond. Working closely with BLUE's projects teams, our policy team seeks to embed permanent and lasting changes in laws and policies that will mean a healthier and more resilient ocean.

If we are to avert the twin crises of climate change and biodiversity loss that are ravaging our oceans, we need laws and government policies that deliver on political commitments. By engaging with politicians, civil servants and other NGOs, BLUE Policy tackles many of the big issues facing our seas, both domestically and abroad. We work to end overfishing, introduce meaningful protection in the UK's network of so-called marine 'protected' areas and lead on BLUE's efforts to deliver meaningful change in management of the global oceans.

"For far too long, the ocean has been mostly absent from serious policy discussions about reducing carbon emissions."

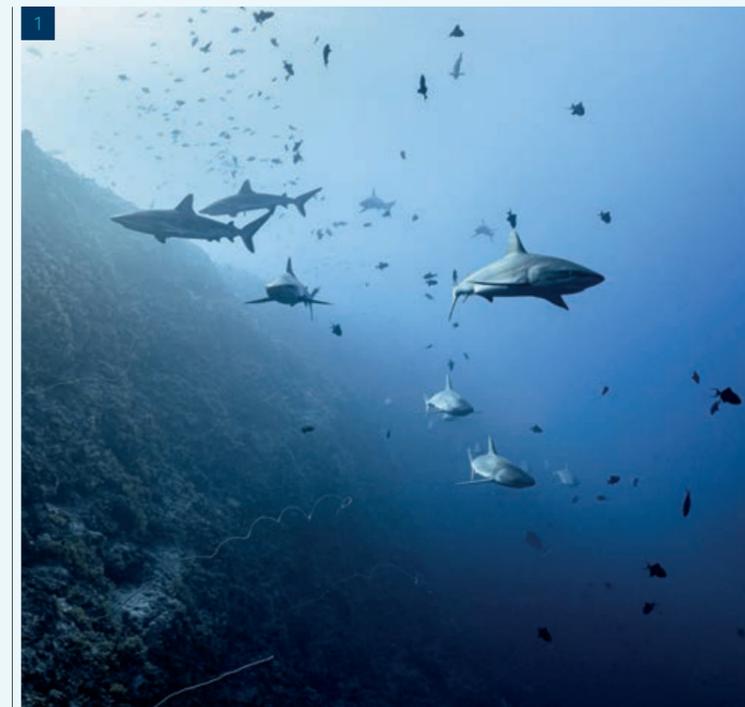
JANE LUBCHENCO, OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY



- 1 Blue Policy produced this Parliamentary Briefing for all MPs (November 2021) as a means of expanding our caucus of MPs who actively support the protection of the ocean.
- 2 Seven-armed Starfish clammers over purple rocks as it predares on Common Brittlestars. Credit: Henley Spiers.
- 3 Cuckoo wrasse swimming off the British coast. Credit: Henley Spiers.



# BLUE SCIENCE



Marine conservation is best achieved when underpinned by robust and up-to-date scientific evidence. Having a strong scientific foundation helps BLUE tackle misinformation and strengthens the case for increased marine protection, two outputs that also improve communication with policymakers and the public. Targeted, pioneering science can also act as a source of inspiration and provide the basis for further projects and research.

As a newly formed unit, BLUE Science will provide strategic and supporting science to further the success of BLUE's projects and position BLUE as a thought leader within ocean conservation. The unit is led by Professor Callum Roberts, BLUE's Chief Scientific Adviser, award-winning author and Professor of Marine Conservation at the University of Exeter.

The vision of the BLUE Science unit includes:

Developing scientific position statements that tackle misinformation, provide critical evidence for policymakers and demand improved protection of the ocean.

Publishing peer-reviewed scientific papers that further advance and inspire conservation research.

Rapidly responding to time-sensitive conservation issues that require further analysis and/or scientific evidence.

1 Grey reef sharks. Credit: Henley Spiers.

2 Corkwing wrasse swimming over British seabed. Credit: Henley Spiers.

# Funding and finance

# THANK YOU

BLUE would like to say a huge thank you to all of our donors, who support and enable all of the work we do. In particular, we would like to thank Barclays, who are supporting a portfolio of BLUE's projects with a generous donation of £5m over three years. Now in their second year, the projects supported by this donation are already making a significant impact in four areas: marine protection, restoration, sustainable fisheries management and connecting people with the sea.

BLUE would also like to extend a special thank you to our major donors who have supported our work over a number of years: Rolly and Françoise van Rappard, Peter Lürssen, Charles Dunstone, UBS Optimus Foundation, Alex Beard, Turgay and Didem Ciner, James Hopkins, James Kalbassi, Steve Koltes, Mike Sharp, Six Senses, Cristina Stenbeck and Paul Sykes.

Credit: Henley Spiers

## MAJOR PARTNERS

Major partners play an integral role in BLUE's progress and impact around the world, and are recognised for making significant contributions to restoring the ocean to health.



## CORPORATE PARTNERS

Corporate partners provide BLUE with core support and a global platform on which to raise awareness of the cause.



## TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

Over the last year, BLUE has received significant support from a number of trusts and foundations, whom we would like to thank for supporting our vision and work.

These funders support a range of our work with some of them supporting multiple projects. The Don Quixote Foundation is supporting our work in Turkey, the Dutch Caribbean, BLUE Legal and other MPA work; the Brook Foundation is supporting the BLUE Media unit. UBS Optimus Foundation supports our work on Ascension Island and in Greece, while the Garfield Weston Foundation provides core funding to underpin all of our project work.

Several funders are focused on our UK work, with the John Ellerman Foundation supporting our UK and UKOT projects and the EQ Foundation helping us to restore critically endangered European sturgeon to UK waters.

A number of trusts and foundations also support our units, with the Waterloo Foundation supporting BLUE Investigations' work to tackle overfishing in the Indian Ocean, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation supporting our blue carbon conference and blue carbon seascape projection at COP26, and Flotilla Foundation supporting BLUE Legal's work to improve the sustainability of salmon farming in Scotland.



# SUPPORTERS

## MAJOR DONORS

Barclays  
 Alex Beard  
 CVC Capital Partners  
 Turgay and Didem Ciner  
 James Hopkins  
 James Kalbassi  
 Steve Koltes  
 Peter Lürssen  
 Mike Sharp  
 Six Senses Hotels Resorts Spas  
 Cristina Stenbeck  
 Paul Sykes  
 Vincent Tchenguiz  
 Rolly van Rappard

## MAJOR PARTNERS

BlueBay  
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 Christopher Ward  
 Golden Acre Foods  
 Lürssen  
 Vita Yachts

## CORPORATE PARTNERS

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 Vessul, A TapTrip Company  
 West of England Insurance  
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## TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

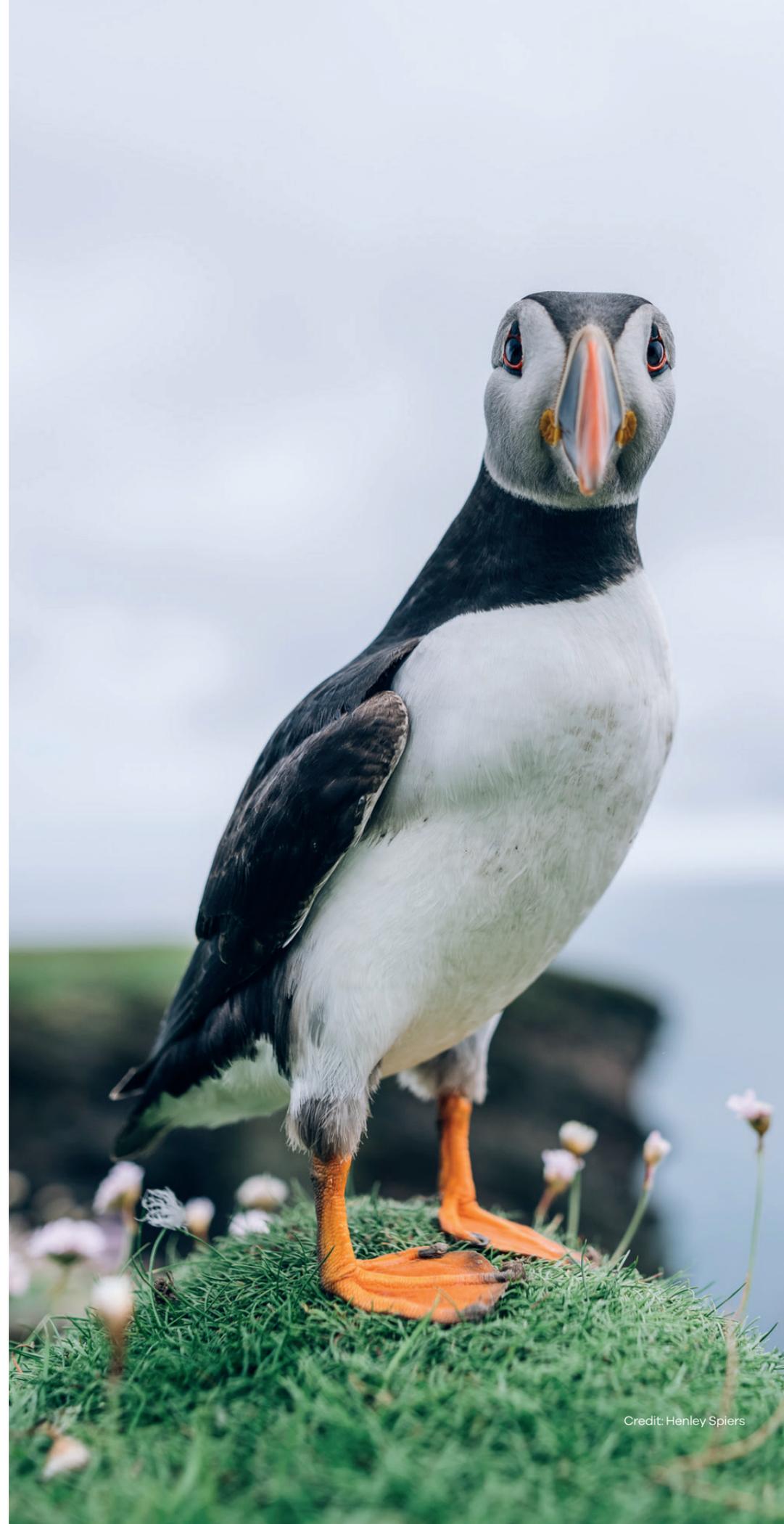
Addo Trust  
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 AIM Foundation  
 Ardevora Charitable Trust  
 Brook Foundation  
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 Don Quixote Foundation  
 EQ Foundation  
 Eurofins Foundation  
 Fishmongers' Company  
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 The Philip and Psyche Hughes Trust  
 UBS Optimus Foundation  
 Walk The Talk  
 The Waterloo Foundation  
 Whitley Animal Protection Trust  
 Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust

## BMYC

Sir Charles Dunstone  
 Gtechniq  
 Peter Lürssen  
 Cristina Stenbeck  
 Vincent Tchenguiz  
 Rolly van Rappard  
 Andrew Winch  
 Lars Windhorst

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Patrick Aberin  
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 Alex Wheatley  
 Andrew and Jane Winch  
 World Wise Foods Ltd



Credit: Henley Spiers

## JOIN BLUE

Roger Ames  
 Aqualuce  
 Bazar Ethical Marketplace  
 Rob Button  
 Michael Hall  
 Grant Rumbles  
 Sheila Rumbles  
 SF Marina  
 Mike Sharp  
 Studio Delta  
 Peter Whale

## PRO BONO

David Churchill  
 Engel & Volkers  
 Freuds  
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 Latham & Watkins  
 The Lion Trust  
 Rawlinson & Hunter  
 Steve Edge Design

## AMBASSADORS

HRH Princess Eugenie  
 Sir Nigel Bogel  
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 Cara Delevingne  
 Poppy Delevingne  
 Fiona Drummond  
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 Ben Fogle  
 Cindy Forde  
 Stephen Fry  
 Olivier de Givenchy  
 Ben Goldsmith  
 Andrea Hamilton  
 John Hitchcox  
 Nick Hounsfeld  
 Nico Kos  
 Melanie Laurent  
 Simon Le Bon  
 Yasmin Le Bon  
 Carl Gustaf Lunding  
 Takuji Masuda  
 Sienna Miller  
 Arizona Muse  
 Rupert Murray  
 Amber Nuttall (Ambassador-in-Chief)  
 Marie-Athena Papatthanasiou  
 Sir Jonathon Porritt  
 Sir Stuart Rose  
 Marina Vaughn Spitzzy  
 Baroness Worthington of Cambridge

## RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

Bangor University  
 University of Essex  
 University of Exeter  
 Heriot-Watt University  
 Maldives National University  
 Nature Metrics (Private research)  
 University of Portsmouth  
 University of Plymouth  
 University of Southampton  
 University of Sussex  
 University of the West of England  
 University of York

## NGO PARTNERS

1851 Trust  
 ASOC  
 Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland  
 Berwickshire Marine Reserve  
 BLOOM  
 British Marine  
 ClientEarth  
 Clyde Porpoise CIC  
 Coalition for Transparent Tuna Fisheries  
 COAST  
 Community Association of Lochs and Sounds  
 Conservation Collective  
 Craignish Restoration of Marine and Coastal Habitats  
 Defendamos Chiloe  
 Dorset Coast Forum  
 Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance  
 ENORI  
 Fauna & Flora International  
 Global Ghost Gear Initiative  
 Great British Oceans Coalition  
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 NGO Tuna Forum  
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 Shark Guardian  
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 SIFT  
 Société Jersiaise  
 Solent Protection Society  
 Sustainable Solent  
 UK Sturgeon Alliance  
 The Wildlife Trusts  
 Tompkins Conservation  
 World Wildlife Fund  
 Zoological Society of London

# BLUE MARINE YACHT CLUB



The Blue Marine Yacht Club (BMYC) was launched in 2012 by His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, the Club's Founding Patron, and has the health of the ocean at the heart of its philosophy.

By putting the superyacht community on the front line of marine conservation, the BMYC is mobilising an industry who love and rely on the ocean, and who can direct major resources into tackling the problems it faces while also helping slow down climate change.

BMYC members lend their support not just with financial donations, but with their influence, high-level connections, and expertise. This combination of support enables BLUE to unlock new project areas, increase global marine protection and restore vital marine habitats - which protect vulnerable and threatened species but are also able to absorb and store carbon.

## Superyacht industry comes together to raise €1million for ocean conservation

An appeal launched by BMYC 3-star member Peter Lürssen, at the BOAT International World Superyacht Awards on 5 September, saw a commitment of €1m donated to ocean conservation by the superyacht industry.

Visionary philanthropist and yacht builder Lürssen appealed to friends and colleagues in the industry for their support in reaching a joint commitment of €1m, and personally committed to a donation of €250,000.

The same amount was matched by Lars Windhorst, who in doing so became a 3-star member of the BMYC. Seven other generous donations were made to reach the target after the appeal was raised again at the annual BMYC members' dinner during the Monaco Yacht Show.

Joining the BMYC is an elite statement of intent by a group of people who have a unique ability to influence the way the ocean is treated for years to come.

## For further information about joining the BMYC please contact:

E sarajane@bluemarinefoundation.com  
T +44(0)7435 289410

1 Credit: Alex Iby.



14x

more carbon than air and land combined stored in the ocean

## BMYC Supporters:



"It is a matter of the heart for my family and me to help make a difference to the alarming state of our oceans. We are in the fortunate position of being able to support BLUE's mission and I see it as my duty to motivate others in the yachting industry to do the same."

PETER LÜRSEN  
3-Star BMYC Member

"I am delighted to make a contribution to the critical work the Blue Marine Foundation is doing to protect the ocean's precious and vulnerable ecosystems. I am also honoured to become a three-star member of the Blue Marine Yacht Club, whose purpose is to bring together the world's yachting enthusiasts and preserve the marine environment for future generations."

LARS WINDHORST  
New 3-Star BMYC Member

"From my point of view, it was so inspiring to see how responsive and dynamic BLUE are, and this gave us a real sense that our contribution, no matter how small, would help deliver meaningful results through specific and lasting ocean conservation projects."

ROB EARLE, MANAGING DIRECTOR, GTECHNIQ  
New 1-Star BMYC Member



# BLUE MARINE SPORTING EVENTS

For a second year, BLUE's popular London to Monaco (L2M) annual charity bike and networking event was put on hold for 2021. Although this was a hugely tough decision to make with our cycle tour partner, Just Pedal, it meant planning for 2022 started early. It seems that two fallow years have only heightened the anticipation and excitement for the fifth edition of London to Monaco, and at the end of 2021, places on the main 8-day event had sold out!

With over 60 riders already signed up, we expect L2M2022 to be the biggest and best yet. The ride will go from the UK, taking its debut through Holland, then into Belgium and France before reaching Monaco, where riders will be met with a champagne-sprayed finish and a warm congratulatory welcome from Prince Albert II of Monaco.

London to Monaco 2022 will take place 20-27 September.



## IN FOUR YEARS

£1.7m

Raised for marine conservation projects around the world

380

Riders from 15 different countries have taken part

2.5m

Social media reach

"We have been so proud to stand by the Blue Marine Foundation for the last 11 years, since they started. Their work unites and motivates the whole Winch team, and since the first London to Monaco bike ride, Winch has raised over £250,000 for the essential protection of our oceans. We are inspired by the immense beauty and biodiversity of our ocean, and we feel determined to make a difference, and to support the vital work of BLUE to protect our seas for generations to come."

ANDREW WINCH, CO-FOUNDER, CREATIVE DIRECTOR, WINCH DESIGN

Special thanks to one of our longest standing supporters and co-founder of London to Monaco:

**WINCH DESIGN**

"The London to Monaco cycle ride is a wonderful opportunity to raise awareness on the necessity to protect our fragile oceans."

HSH PRINCE ALBERT II OF MONACO



£30,000 raised for BLUE's South coast projects

Although London to Monaco was not able to run this year, BLUE was able to launch its first UK ride in July, called the South Coast Challenge, a three-day cycle ride from Beaulieu to Plymouth. The ride stopped off at three of BLUE's south coast projects along the way, allowing riders to see at first-hand the work they were fundraising for.

The money raised has gone to support BLUE's Solent Oyster Restoration Project, its conservation and fisheries programme in Lyme Bay and its work on Jersey to increase protection of its waters and marine life.

South Coast Challenge 2022 will take place 13-15 May.



Special thanks to:

1 Winch Team celebratory hug at the finish of L2M2019 in Monaco.

2 A Royal and celebrity departure, with Princess Eugenie and James Blunt seeing all riders off from Windsor Park - marking the official start of L2M2019.

3 Finish photo under the arch in Monaco with all riders from the L2M2019 at Musée océanographique de Monaco.

WINCH DESIGN



Steve Edge Design Ltd.



To ride or sponsor next year, please visit: [www.london-monaco.cc](http://www.london-monaco.cc)

Or contact us directly:  
E [info@london-monaco.cc](mailto:info@london-monaco.cc)  
T +44 (0) 207 845 5850

# BLUE SUPPORTERS: ART AND ENDURANCE

Artist: Andrea Hamilton



Jasmine Harrison completed her 3,000 mile row across the Atlantic in a time of 70 days, 3 hours and 48 minutes. At 21 years old Jasmine became the youngest woman to row the Atlantic solo.

Credit: Atlantic Campaigns.

The "Blue Minds" exhibition ran in the summer of 2021, generously hosted by AH Studios and co-curated by Andrea Hamilton, Julia Campbell-Carter and Nico Earle.

The exhibition, in aid of BLUE, comprised over 60 works of art from 26 world-leading contemporary artists. It beautifully illustrated and documented the crisis in our oceans, shedding light on something which is so often out of sight.



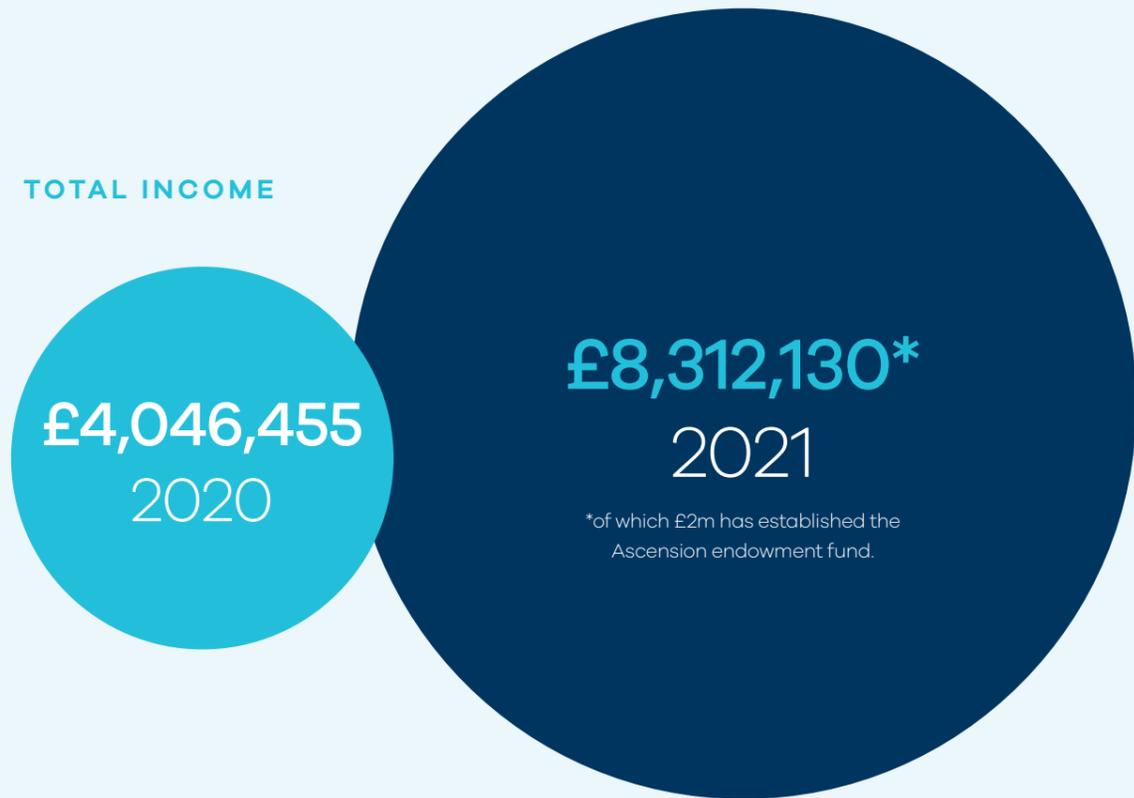
Artist: Blue Minds, Emma Critchley.

- 1 Artist: Anna Barriball
- 2 Julia Campbell-Carter, Andrea Hamilton, Nico Earle and Clare Brook
- 3 Artist: Mariele Neudecker



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

TOTAL INCOME



'FREE' RESERVES



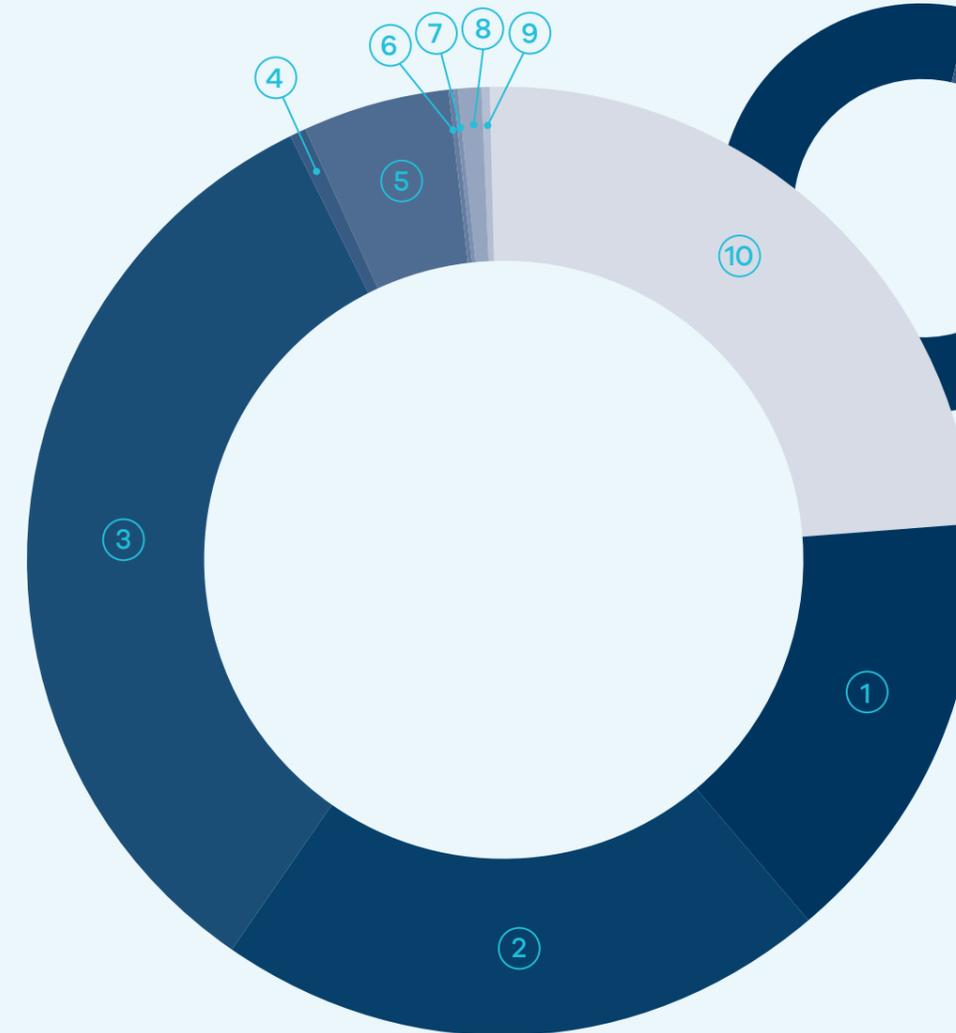
FUNDS DISTRIBUTED



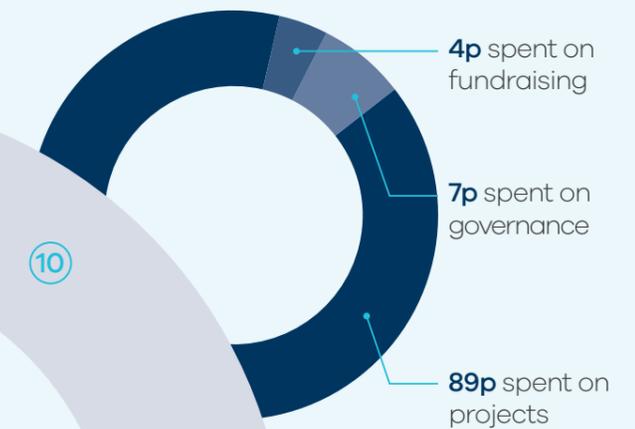
BLUE SIZE



SOURCES OF INCOME



HOW IS EVERY POUND SPENT AT BLUE?



<b>1</b> Donations from Private Foundations <b>£1,278,260</b>	<b>2</b> Donations from Individuals <b>£1,724,458</b>	<b>3</b> Corporate Donations <b>£2,720,459</b>	<b>4</b> BMYC Donations <b>£45,000</b>	<b>5</b> Donations in Kind <b>£384,179</b>
<b>6</b> Government Funding <b>£11,673</b>	<b>7</b> Auction and Events Income <b>£12,947</b>	<b>8</b> Gift Aid <b>£103,230</b>	<b>9</b> Other Income <b>£31,924</b>	<b>10</b> Donation of AIMPACT Endowment Fund <b>£2,000,000</b>

FOR EVERY **£1** BLUE SPENT GENERATING FUNDS, WE SECURED **£50** OF FUNDING



# BLUE MARINE FOUNDATION

## TRUSTEES

- Arlo Brady**  
Chairman
- Chris Gorell Barnes**  
Co-founder
- George Duffield**  
Co-founder
- Tom Appleby**  
Chief Legal Affairs Adviser
- Sofia Blount**
- Craig Davies**  
Treasurer
- Lord Deben**
- Celine Herweijer**
- Lucy Lake**
- Callum Roberts**  
Chief Scientific Adviser

## DIRECTORS

- Charles Clover**  
Executive Director
- Clare Brook**  
CEO
- Dan Crockett**  
Development Director
- Lynne Smith**  
Financial Director
- David Tudor**  
Projects Director

## BLUE TEAM

- Kaija Barisa**  
Economics Researcher
- Judith Brown**  
Senior Projects Manager
- Priyal Bunwaree**  
Lawyer and Legal Co-Ordinator
- Jo Coumbe**  
Head of Communications

- George Duncan-Jones**  
Investigative Researcher
- Viv Evans**  
Senior Project Manager
- Samantha Fanshawe**  
UK Marine Projects Manager
- Shaha Hashim**  
Maldives Project Manager
- Luke Helmer**  
Restoration Science Officer
- Alex Hubberstey**  
UK Sturgeon Project Coordinator
- Jonathan Hughes**  
Senior UK Marine Policy Manager
- David Hutton**  
Management Accountant
- Hannah Le Brocq**  
Fundraising Officer
- Sophie Locke**  
Research and Projects Manager

- Josh McCarty**  
Marketing & Communications Manager
- Rory Moore**  
Head of International Projects
- Hassan Moosa**  
Laamu Project Officer
- Jenny Murray**  
Senior Restoration Projects Manager
- Emily Norris**  
Head of Development
- Jess Rattle**  
Head of Investigations

- Sofia Regalado**  
Events and Operations Manager
- Joe Richards**  
Berwickshire Project Manager
- Morven Robertson**  
Head of Projects (UK)
- Sara-Jane Skinner**  
Head of Partnerships

- Emma Stanley**  
Marketing and Communications Officer
- Matthew Uttley**  
ENORI Project Manager
- Freddie Watson**  
Jersey Project Officer
- Appin Williamson**  
Jersey Project Manager
- Mandy Wolfe**  
Lyme Bay Reserve Project Manager

## CONSULTANTS

- Helen Ahern**  
Senior Adviser, Legal Unit
- Giulia Bernardi**  
Italy Projects Manager
- Natasha Bradshaw**  
National Marine Parks Consultant
- Tara Cummins**  
Projects and Admin Assistant
- Anna Gage**  
HR Consultant
- Adrian Gahan**  
Government Affairs Adviser
- Vreni Haussermann**  
Project Manager Chile
- Angela Lazou Dean**  
Greece Marine Projects Manager
- Simon Lonsdale**  
Lyme Bay Van Driver
- Sriram Natarajan**  
BLUE Economics Consultant
- Adam Rees**  
UK & Maldives Project Consultant
- Callum Roberts**  
Chief Scientific Adviser
- Tim Scoones**  
Media Unit Consultant
- Mike Simmonds**  
Renaissance of East Anglian Fishing (REAF) Project Manager
- Rowena Taylor**  
Lyme Bay Consultant
- Andrew Woods**  
Operations & Risk Consultant
- Fiona Woods**  
Solent Restoration Intern
- James Wylor-Owen**  
Consultant to the St Helena Project



[blumarinefoundation.com](http://blumarinefoundation.com)  
[info@blumarinefoundation.com](mailto:info@blumarinefoundation.com)

South Building, Somerset House,  
Strand, London WC2R 1LA



**BLUE MARINE  
FOUNDATION**