



BLUE MARINE
FOUNDATION

Working to save our ocean



2022 REVIEW



Front cover a puffer fish photographed off Mexico by Blue Marine Head of International Projects Rory Moore
Inside cover George Karbus

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A CELEBRATION OF COURAGE & HOPE

'Blue Marine was always designed to be a different type of NGO. It was easy to stick to that early in our evolution, when we were small. I am proud that in the last two years we have doubled in size and significantly increased our impact, while retaining our entrepreneurial spirit and continuing to innovate — proving that our theory of change and approach are scalable.'



Dr Arlo Brady, Chairman and Trustee

'I am delighted to see Blue Marine taking a leadership position in tackling both the climate and biodiversity crises head on. Our fantastic team are delivering incredible results around the world, giving us a chance of protecting marine ecosystems, and therefore the survival of humanity.'



Chris Gorell Barnes, Trustee and Co-Founder

'With our Convex Seascape Survey and other carbon policy projects, Blue Marine is on the cusp of connecting quantifiable carbon storage with marine regeneration — the holy grail of our decade-long quest to save the sea. I couldn't be more excited about what this will bring.'



George Duffield, Trustee and Co-Founder

Photo George Karbus

Welcome to the annual review of Blue Marine Foundation. As our dynamic ocean conservation charity embarks on its 13th year, this is where we take stock of our progress and reveal in detail some of the amazing stories behind our battle to save the world's oceans.

In 2022, we have enjoyed another year of continued and strong growth — in conservation impact, number of projects, income, expenditure and size of team. But in spite of our rapid expansion, we are proud to retain the essence of what makes Blue Marine special, remaining — we hope — nimble, impactful, brave, pioneering and creative.

Many of the achievements you will find in these pages have required the courage to tackle entrenched interests. Our legal challenges over bottom trawling on the Dogger Bank (p14), our investigations of rampant and illegal fishing in the Indian Ocean (p16), and our campaign to stop the overfishing of British cod (p84) provoked some aggressive reactions from the fishing industry — but we fight on undaunted.

Our determination to speak up for life in the sea is energised by the 'signs of hope' we saw in our projects this year. From close encounters with blue sharks off the coast of Wales, to striped marlin hunting vast schools of sardines in Mexico; from the regrowth of mighty kelp forests in Sussex, to the recovery of critically endangered monk seals in Greece, we witnessed nature's capacity to rebound when given the chance. In the Gulf of California we even met a pod of blue whales, the largest ever living creatures, making a comeback from the brink of extinction.

It is the role of ocean life in mitigating the climate crisis that gives us our biggest impetus. Seagrass, saltmarsh and mangroves all have the capacity to lock up carbon — but the extent to which this

is also true of fish, whales and the seabed itself is one of the key scientific questions of our time. In 2022 we embarked on our five-year Convex seascape project in conjunction with Exeter University to find the answers (p18).

Partnerships have always been important to Blue Marine, and it is an honour to be working with more fellow conservationists than ever, from Namibia to Patagonia, the Maldives to the Dutch Caribbean. More people care about the ocean than ever.

Our work is only possible thanks to our brilliant and committed team, our passionate board of trustees, our partner NGOs, and everyone who gives so generously of their money, time, support and enduring enthusiasm for what we do. We hope you enjoy reading more about it.



Charles Clover, Executive Director



Clare Brook, CEO

OUR MISSION

We aim to see 30 per cent of our oceans protected by 2030

Our ocean is in crisis. Marine ecosystems are under pressure from a range of threats including climate change, acidification, pollution, ocean noise and invasive species.

But the greatest threat of all is overfishing, because if we strip the ocean of life, it will lose resilience to other threats and no longer be able to provide its vital function as the world's largest carbon sink.

Blue Marine Foundation is working to protect and restore life in the ocean. 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 so it is vital that we protect more of it.

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 Marine'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 way that allows life to regenerate.



**Blue Marine Foundation
is working to protect and
restore life in the ocean**

OUR STRATEGY

Five ways we work, from global to local

Blue Marine uses a combination of top-down intervention to improve governance of our seas, and bottom-up project delivery to support local communities who are at the front line of ocean conservation.

Blue Marine works in any area of the world where its particular combination of expertise and experience can deliver the greatest impact. We work in partnership with international NGOs on policy and with local NGOs and communities in our project locations.

We try to identify the best interventions to unlock a project — be it media and education to raise awareness, policy and legal action to galvanise change, investigations and science to discover the truth, or innovative finance to mobilise capital.

We have identified these five strategies as the most effective way to achieve our mission. You will find the symbols through the Review of 2022:



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.



SUPPORTING LOW-IMPACT 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 THE SEA

Enhancing ocean understanding across generations.

Photo George Karbus

CAMPAIGN TRAIL

A timeline of key wins in our 13 years of ocean conservation

Photo George Karbus

2010

Blue Marine, with support from the Bertarelli Foundation, brokers 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 Marine partners with the government of Belize and the Bertarelli Foundation to protect the Turneffe Atoll in Belize, an area rich in biodiversity and CO2-absorbing mangroves.

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

2015

Blue Marine and the Great British Oceans coalition secure 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 Marine is an active part, secures a UK Government commitment to create the world's largest marine reserve around Pitcairn in the Pacific.

Blue Marine launches Reserve Seafood – an innovative label to celebrate the success of sustainable fishing in Lyme Bay and help fishers earn more from their catch. Blue Marine's research on sea bass results in EU-wide measures to protect the stock.

2016

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

2017

Blue Marine, as part of the Great British Oceans coalition, secures an even stronger manifesto commitment from the UK Government, ahead of the June 2017 election, to protect more than four million sq km of ocean around the UK overseas territories.

Broodstock oysters in Blue Marine's Solent Oyster Restoration Project spawn, releasing millions of larvae into the Solent.

Blue Marine spearheads 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 announces a target of 30 per cent of the world's oceans protected by 2030, aligning with Blue Marine's long-term strategy.

Azerbaijan declares the first MPA in the Caspian Sea, the largest inland body of water in the world. The new MPA seeks to protect six significant marine species on the brink of extinction.

2019

Blue Marine publishes 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 across the UK.

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

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

2020

Following a threat of legal action from Blue Marine, the UK Government brings forward a consultation on the future of fishing in offshore MPAs, starting with the Dogger Bank, that includes the option of closing protected areas to fishing.

Blue Marine secures a £2 million donation from long-term supporter Peter Lürssen

OUR 13-YEAR TIMELINE

to establish an endowment fund for the Ascension Island community, in support of their vision to establish an MPA.

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

Following pressure from Blue Marine, on 1 January 2021 the UK Government announces an immediate ban on all electric-pulse trawling and fishing in UK waters.

2021

Destructive bottom-trawling is banned in four offshore areas, following the threat of legal action by Blue Marine.

A byelaw, supported by Sir David Attenborough and Blue Marine through the Help Our Kelp coalition, protects 300 sq km of seabed off the Sussex coast from damaging trawl fishing.

The Scottish government announces an emergency MPA to protect the critically endangered flapper-skate egg site near the Isle of Skye, after pressure from a campaign supported by Blue Marine.

Blue Marine places thousands of oysters into the sea at Langstone Harbour to create the Solent's first oyster restoration reef.

After a marine protection campaign of almost seven years by Blue Marine and our partners, the government of the Maldives designates six new MPAs, encompassing coral reefs, mangroves and seagrass meadows.

2022

Legal action by Blue Marine and others secures a ban in the Dogger Bank that doubles the amount of sea around England closed to trawling and dredging.

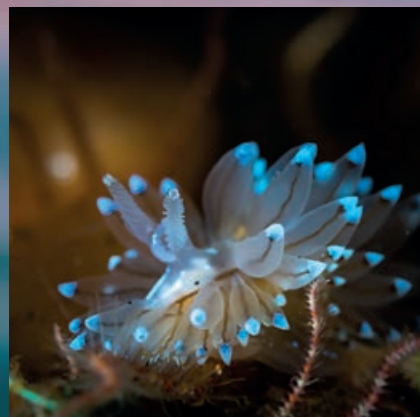
Blue Marine investigations in the Indian Ocean reveal evidence of unauthorised fishing by EU tuna fleets in the waters of four countries, including India and Somalia.

Our public opinion poll on Jersey finds 85% in favour of a marine park.

In partnership with the University of Exeter and Convex Group Limited, we launch the Convex Seascape Survey, a \$15 million five-year research project to quantify the carbon stored in continental shelves.

HIGH WATER MARKS

The pick of Blue Marine's achievements in 2022



Interventions by the legal teams of Blue Marine and other NGOs saw trawling and dredging banned in the Dogger Bank, a rich and distinctive area of the North Sea covering 12,331 sq km — more than half the size of Wales. The ruling doubled the amount of the sea around England that is closed to bottom trawling, from four to eight per cent.

SEE PAGE 14



In the Indian Ocean, our Blue Investigations unit exposed evidence of unauthorised fishing activity on the part of EU vessels in the waters of several developing states, including India and Somalia. Some ships were also revealed to have switched off for months at a time their AIS, the system that transmits their position and is mandatory for large fishing vessels.

SEE PAGE 16



In conjunction with Our Seas and the National Federation of Fish Friers, Blue Marine launched #BringBackBritishCod, which urged the UK government to set responsible and sustainable quotas for the five breeding populations of British cod. Supported by actor Jude Law, the campaign gained 10,000 signatures in 12 weeks and a response from government.

SEE PAGE 84



Blue Marine co-founder Charles Clover published 'Rewilding the Sea', an uplifting call for the oceans to be protected so they may repair themselves. A sequel to his influential 'The End of the Line' (2004), the book also covered the first decade of Blue Marine in action.

SEE PAGE 20

Along with a host of partners, Blue Marine was awarded \$5 million by the Endangered Landscapes Programme to fund a Solent seascape restoration project. The money will be used to restore seagrass meadows, oyster reefs, saltmarsh and seabird nesting habitat across the waterway.

SEE PAGE 66

We conducted a public opinion poll on Jersey in partnership with Jersey National Trust, which found that 85 per cent of the Channel Island's 105,000 population would like to have a marine park in Jersey. The result led to a commitment from the Jersey government to extend the island's network of marine protected areas.

SEE PAGE 60



In Sussex (above), local divers and fishermen observed encouraging early signs of kelp recovery following Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority's byelaw prohibiting bottom trawling, which was enacted in 2021.

SEE PAGE 72

Following a decade of involvement in Lyme Bay (below), Blue Marine was delighted to support the establishment of the Lyme Bay Fishermen's Community Interest Company (CIC), which gives the fishermen full autonomy in the management of a sustainable fishery in one of the UK's largest marine protected areas. We hope to support many further examples of this model both in the UK and further afield.

SEE PAGE 64



'The Sea We Breathe', a compelling online platform commissioned by Blue Marine and narrated by Stephen Fry, won a Webby — awarded for excellence on the internet. Showing the vital role that a healthy ocean can play in the fight against climate change, the interactive web experience won best Charitable Organisation/Non-Profit.

Blue Marine's 2022 Ocean Awards was viewed by 1.25 million people and brought recognition in Mexico and beyond for conservationist Mario Gómez, a leading advocate for marine conservation in the country for decades, who won a lifetime achievement award.

In Greece, we initiated the designation of four no-take fishing zones, the first ever initiative of its kind, in collaboration with the Ministries of Fisheries and Environment and artisanal fishing communities to restore fish stocks and protect endangered monk seals.

SEE PAGE 28

In Chilean Patagonia, Blue Marine and local partners Defendamos Chiloe stopped more than 270 industrial salmon farms from operating in ecological hotspots and destroying marine environments. We also designated two new MPAs in the region.

SEE PAGE 45

BY THE NUMBERS

Measuring the impact of Blue Marine with our partners in 2022

13,416km²

Area of habitat across which mobile gear has been banned



8 awards for The Sea We Breathe

73 pieces of new evidence developed to support **ocean protection**



27 reports, blogs **and** case studies **showing the economic benefits of** ocean conservation

4

key habitat areas under new protection



21,000

native oysters deployed in the Solent



Over 1.7 Million

reached through in-person outreach activities and digital content

Over 40

new partnerships for cooperative ocean conservation established



Over **250**

outreach tools and activities delivered

21 surveys, observations and **reports** completed to support **marine restoration**

Over 17,500

direct beneficiaries (including interns, community members, school and postgraduate students)



137 reports, surveys and published papers developed to support **sustainable fisheries management**



Forecast for Dogger Bank

GOOD, RISING TO VERY GOOD

The sunken landmass that once connected Britain to Europe is a biodiversity hotspot. In June 2022, following a threat of legal intervention by Blue Marine's lawyers, the UK government announced a ban on trawling and dredging there — and doubled the amount of sea protected in English waters

12,331 sq km

HIGH WATER MARKS

Monday June 13 2022 will forever be a red-letter day in the protection of the waters around Britain, and will go down as the date of a great leap forward in the rewilding of the world's oceans. Following interventions by the legal teams of Blue Marine and other NGOs, trawling and dredging were banned in the one of the richest and most distinctive parts of the North Sea — the Dogger Bank.

This marked an extraordinary coup, and at a stroke doubled the amount of sea protected from bottom-trawling in English waters, from four per cent to eight per cent — an area half the size of Wales.

Located 100km off the eastern coast of England and sometimes called the Atlantis of the North Sea, the Dogger is part of the sunken landmass that used to connect Britain to mainland Europe. It is a marine biodiversity hotspot that was once home to the common skate and angel shark. The Dogger remains a nursery for many fish species, as well as a foraging ground for seabirds and mammals such as minke whale, beaked dolphin and harbour porpoise.

It has long been an officially designated Marine Protected Area, with 66 per cent of it in UK waters, amounting to 12,331 sq km of seabed. The rest is divided between Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark. But in practice harmful dredging and beam trawling have been widespread across the Dogger Bank, and had gone unchallenged.

The Dogger was theoretically protected a decade or so ago by the UK government under the EU Habitats Regulations. But actual protection stalled due to a conflict in European law between nature conservation and the Common Fisheries Policy. This is still yet to be resolved.

When the Common Fisheries Policy ended in UK waters as Brexit began, Blue Marine took steps to remind Defra ministers that they were obliged to enforce the nature laws which the UK had inherited from Europe. There was no longer any conflict in law.

In addition, Blue Marine mounted a legal campaign in two phases. First, in 2021, came a challenge to the government on the grounds that the granting of fishing licences to fish on the Dogger Bank, an area protected under the Habitats Regulations, was illegal. This challenge was withdrawn when the government promised to protect the site.

A long delay ensued, and so Blue Marine's legal team again contemplated litigation by issuing a pre-action letter early in 2022 to the Marine Management Organisation, which said that the government was still acting illegally in continuing to grant fishing licences in protected areas. On April 13, the government finally announced that the protection by-laws would come into force.

As for the European part of the Dogger Bank, which remains unprotected, Blue Marine is engaged in a similar action with other European environmental groups to try to guarantee it the same degree of cover that will now be enforced in the UK section.

Banning the most damaging fishing gear — not fishing per se — can be both an economic and an ecological success. As the plants and animals of the Dogger Bank begin the journey back to full restoration, so we enhance the power of the ocean to absorb carbon, and tackle the crises in biodiversity and climate change with renewed hope.

Main image the crested aeolis, a mollusc found on Dogger Bank. **Left** the bank's location. **Below** the area is a nursery for Atlantic cod. **Photos** © onderwaterbeelden.nl



WHEN GREEDY FLEETS 'GO DARK'

Our six-month investigation in the Indian Ocean exposed evidence of unauthorised fishing, and the continued overfishing of yellowfin tuna



In 2022, Blue Marine stepped up its fight against the rampant overfishing that has plagued the Indian Ocean since 2015. A long-awaited stock assessment published early in the year found that catches of overfished – but highly valuable – Indian Ocean yellowfin tuna need to be cut by almost a third in order to save the stock. While objectively shocking, those familiar with the situation in the Indian Ocean saw this as the inevitable outcome of years of unchecked overfishing.

The EU's industrial distant-water fleet is the largest contributor to this overfishing, and has been for as long as the yellowfin stock has been overfished. Made up predominantly of huge purse-seine vessels that deploy great walls of netting around whole schools of tuna (as well as anything else that happens to be in the way), the EU fleet catches more than any other member of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) – the intergovernmental body in charge of managing these shared stocks.

Following an investigation that lasted more than six months, Blue Marine published a set of reports that revealed evidence of unauthorised fishing on the part of EU vessels in the waters of several developing Indian Ocean coastal states.

The reports highlighted evidence of fishing activity on the part of EU-owned purse-seine vessels in the waters of Somalia and India for which there was no evidence of access agreements authorising the activity. They also exposed reported fishing effort in the Chagos Archipelago marine protected area, and in Mozambique's exclusive economic zone (EEZ), where no vessels flagged to any EU country could have been authorised to fish.

This was achieved by mapping the fishing activity of Spain and France as reported by the EU to the IOTC, identifying activity within the EEZs of coastal states, and investigating whether any access agreements were in place at the time.

In addition to the EU's so-called Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreements — which subsidise EU vessels to fish in the waters of third countries, often at a fraction of what it would otherwise cost — there also exist opaque and highly controversial

private-access agreements made between fishing companies and coastal-state governments.

Blue Marine, together with global investigations firm Kroll, highlighted potential non-compliance with national and international regulations by Spanish-owned vessels, which appear to have spent time fishing in the waters of both India and Somalia without authorisation.

In addition to analysing reported fishing catch and effort in and around the boundaries of coastal states' EEZs, Blue Marine's Investigations Unit also exposed widespread noncompliance with the regulations that govern the use of the Automatic Identification System (AIS) — an important safety tool that transmits a ship's position.

We found that Spanish-flagged purse-seine vessels operating in the Western Indian Ocean 'went dark' by switching off their AIS for an average of almost three quarters of the two-year study period. Importantly, our report found that significant fishing activity was undertaken without the associated use of AIS, likely contravening EU law and jeopardising crew safety.

The publication of the reports triggered an immediate backlash from the industry, with legal threats issued, alongside a statement denying any wrongdoing on the part of the purse-seine fleet. Blue Marine countered these claims, requesting proof of any access agreements that may have been in place at the time. No response to this request was received.

Blue Marine shared these findings with the European Commission, calling for an urgent investigation. The Commission has since tasked the flag states (Spain and France) with investigating the specific cases raised in our reports.

Blue Marine will continue to push for answers, and for the adoption of a responsible and equitable recovery plan for yellowfin tuna — one that puts the health of tuna stocks and the livelihoods and food security of coastal communities above short-term gain and the greed and self-interest of industrial fishing fleets.

Left, above tuna is brought onboard a purse seine vessel. Photo Alex Hofford/Greenpeace. Left, below a purse seine vessel in Victoria, Seychelles

VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA

The Convex Seascape Survey is a five-year, \$15-million project in search of the holy grail of ocean conservation — the true potential of the seabed to mitigate climate change



Main images the survey includes analysis of polar sediment. **Photos** Alejandro Roman Gonzalez. **Above** project scientist Dr Jamie Shutler

CONVEX SEASCAPE ADVISORY BOARD EXPERT PANEL

Dr Trisha Atwood

Associate Professor at Utah State University, and National Academies of Sciences Gulf Research Early Career Fellow, with expertise in quantifying marine sediment carbon

human health, and government advisor on chemical pollution

Professor Hilary Kennedy

biochemist who was responsible for getting coastal ecosystems recognised for their importance for storing carbon and mitigating climate change

Professor Bill Austin

St Andrews University, Scotland, current chair of the Scottish Carbon Forum, and lead of the UN's Global Ocean Decade Programme on Blue Carbon (GO-BC)

Dr Ruth Parker

Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science. Shelf sea biogeochemist, and UK policy expert

Steve Crooks

Partner, Silvestrum Associates, experienced wetland scientist in the response of coastal wetland systems to human impacts and climate change, and the translation of this into effective policy

Loreley Picourt

Secretary General of the United Nations Ocean & Climate Platform. A strong advocate for multilateral cooperation, she works for a better integration of the ocean-climate-biodiversity nexus in decision-making at national and international level

Professor Michael Depledge (Chair)

expert in oceans and

The Earth needs three major things to happen if it is to have any hope of keeping global warming within the 1.5-to-2 degrees of the 2015 Paris Agreement:

1. **Reduction of carbon emissions into the atmosphere**
2. **Maximising the ability of the planet to draw down and store carbon already in the atmosphere**
3. **Further ways (including technology) of removing carbon already in the atmosphere**

The ocean is Earth's largest carbon sink, but what is critically lacking is the data on how much carbon it stores, and the effects on it of disturbance.

First announced in November 2021, the Convex Seascape Survey is a five-year, \$15-million global research programme — to date the largest of its kind. It seeks to answer one of the great unanswered questions of our time, namely the capacity of the ocean in helping to slow runaway climate change.

Blue Marine is managing the project, which began in earnest in the summer of 2022, led by Professor Callum Roberts and the University of Exeter in the UK, with funding

from Convex Insurance Ltd. Its aim is to collect and present robust data on the importance of the ocean, its ecosystems and the seabed in drawing down and locking away carbon.

Focusing on the role of carbon stored on the seabed of continental shelves, the Survey will quantify for the first time ever how much carbon is trapped in shallow seabed sediments. It will identify how and when it got there, where it came from and its context in the global carbon cycle.

In another first, the Survey will also identify the last remaining areas of pristine seabed and seascape on Earth, alongside a map of human disturbance of the seabed over the past 250 years — everything from historic prospecting and cable-laying to modern trawling and dredging activity. It will use this to build a picture of how we have influenced and affected the ocean's ability to store carbon.

The project gathers 11-and-counting international institutions, world experts in their fields, and will mount up to 16 global research expeditions over the five years, using satellites, drones, ship-based sampling, submarines, remotely operated underwater vehicles, Geographic Information Systems, scuba and high-powered machine learning.

These will help us fill existing gaps in our knowledge, and allow us to make conservation and policy recommendations that help the oceans and our planet maximise their capacity as a 'nature-based solution' for climate change.

The Convex Seascape Survey is bold and ambitious in its scope. Sediment carbon is a current hot topic in UNFCCC circles, but collecting robust data on dynamic and shifting processes is incredibly hard and contentious. It took more than 10 years for coastal ecosystems such as mangroves to be included in global policy. This is the next, and even more complex, piece of the puzzle.

It will take the full five years to complete this task, but the project will take us on a journey far closer to understanding the role that the ocean can play in climate change mitigation. And, potentially, towards the holy grail of ocean conservation: carbon credits from marine protected areas, and policy to control disturbance activities. To date, the science is simply not there to unlock these. We intend to solve this.

'THE PRISTINE IS A THING YOU CAN RE-GROW'

Blue Marine's Jo Coumbe celebrates the publication of 'Rewilding the Sea' by our executive director and co-founder Charles Clover, a book alive with optimism at the power of nature to repair itself

There are few moments in an organisation's history when you can mark, with accuracy, a seismic shift in tone. When the orchestra, swelled by both strings and brass, builds to its crescendo. Just such a time is at hand for Blue Marine Foundation.

This tenth Blue Marine annual review moves me to revisit the first, in 2013. A smattering of projects had just begun. In Lyme Bay, where the pioneering project to protect 'England's coral garden' was still brand new, and in the Indian Ocean's Chagos islands, where Blue Marine was 'negotiating with the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office on the best ways to conserve the beauty and variety of the reserve.' Much has happened since.

Blue Marine's story began with a book. A book which led to a film – a film that struck an ominous chord that not all was well below the waterline. Charles Clover's *The End of The Line* was a much-needed wake-up call, swimming with stark warnings and uncomfortable truths about the state of the ocean.

Fast-forward to June 2022, after two years of lockdown had reminded the world how much it loved – and missed – nature, another book was born. But not the one you might have expected. It was a book of hope. An ode to restoring, regenerating, re-imagining – rewilding. Charles's *Rewilding the Sea: How to Save Our Oceans* is a love letter to protecting the ocean so that nature might have the chance to lick its wounds and begin to repair. Of 'letting nature lead,' if only we would let it. The results are in – protection works. For habitat, for biodiversity, for food security, for fishermen and for climate. As he has since argued in an interview with Elizabeth Alberts for conservation platform Mongabay, 'the pristine is not necessarily a historical concept. It is a thing you can regrow.'

The book details this by exploring examples of Blue Marine's success over the past 12 years. From protection of the United Kingdom's Overseas Territory 'Blue Belt' to domestic, collaborative protection in Lyme Bay, from regenerated bluefin now so numerous that they readily show off in the shore break of Cornwall's surfing beaches to restoring carbon guzzling oysters in the Solent. To quote marine conservation professor Callum Roberts in his five-star review of the book for the Telegraph, 'Rewilding the Sea' is an account of the successes of Blue [Marine] and a testament to what can be achieved by determined people.'

Rewilding the Sea also addresses head-on the challenge for anyone striving to effect change – that of making it feel, at the very least, possible. After Charles's dawn appearance on Sky News with Kay Burley to talk about the book on World Ocean Day, the scene was set for us to talk of success – of what might be achieved if we come together. You see, hope spreads. In his review of the book in the Spectator, David Profumo wrote 'Clover insists that rewilding is catching on, and its benefits are discernible. This is an important, intriguing and informative book, and I would like to share his admirable optimism.'

Charles's rewilding message was delivered not just at its summer launch event at London's Somerset House, attended among others by life peer and environmentalist Zac Goldsmith and singer/activist Ellie Goulding, but at literary festivals from Hay to Charleston to Tetbury. The book has opened the door to communicating concepts as complex and wide-ranging as methods of cooperative stewardship for protection to understanding the link between marine health and global health. Charles's appearance at the Edinburgh Fringe also offered Blue Marine the opportunity to launch our #BringBackBritishCod campaign, pertinent particularly in Scotland where populations have declined 92 per cent in 40 years.

There is much to do. But it is clear there are many people absolutely determined to do it. Both the book and this Review are resounding proof of that. As Charles says in the book, 'The natural world is far more dynamic than we give it credit for, especially the sea.'

What will Blue Marine's next chapter hold? Time will tell. But we have hope.

Left Charles Clover. Below an Atlantic bluefin tuna off the coast of Cornwall.
Photo Megan Hemsworth



The book marks a tangible shift in tone for Blue Marine — a sense of building to a crescendo





INTERNATIONAL

Blue Marine is working in a range of extraordinary locations around the world from Patagonia to the Maldives. We select project locations where there is an urgent conservation need, where Blue Marine feels it can make a significant difference, where we have a trusted local partner or partners, and where there is a 'Blue-shaped hole' — by which we mean a need for our combination of experience and expertise.

THE MEDITERRANEAN STRATEGY

A HEADY EXCHANGE OF IDEAS

Our summit in Turkey saw 30 top conservationists hatch a plan for 30% of the Mediterranean to be protected by 2030

Blue Marine achieved significant growth and success in the Mediterranean in 2022. Our project portfolio now stretches from the seagrass beds of Ibiza to the last shark and ray strongholds in Sicily, and the largest Mediterranean network of highly protected marine areas (MPAs) in Turkey.

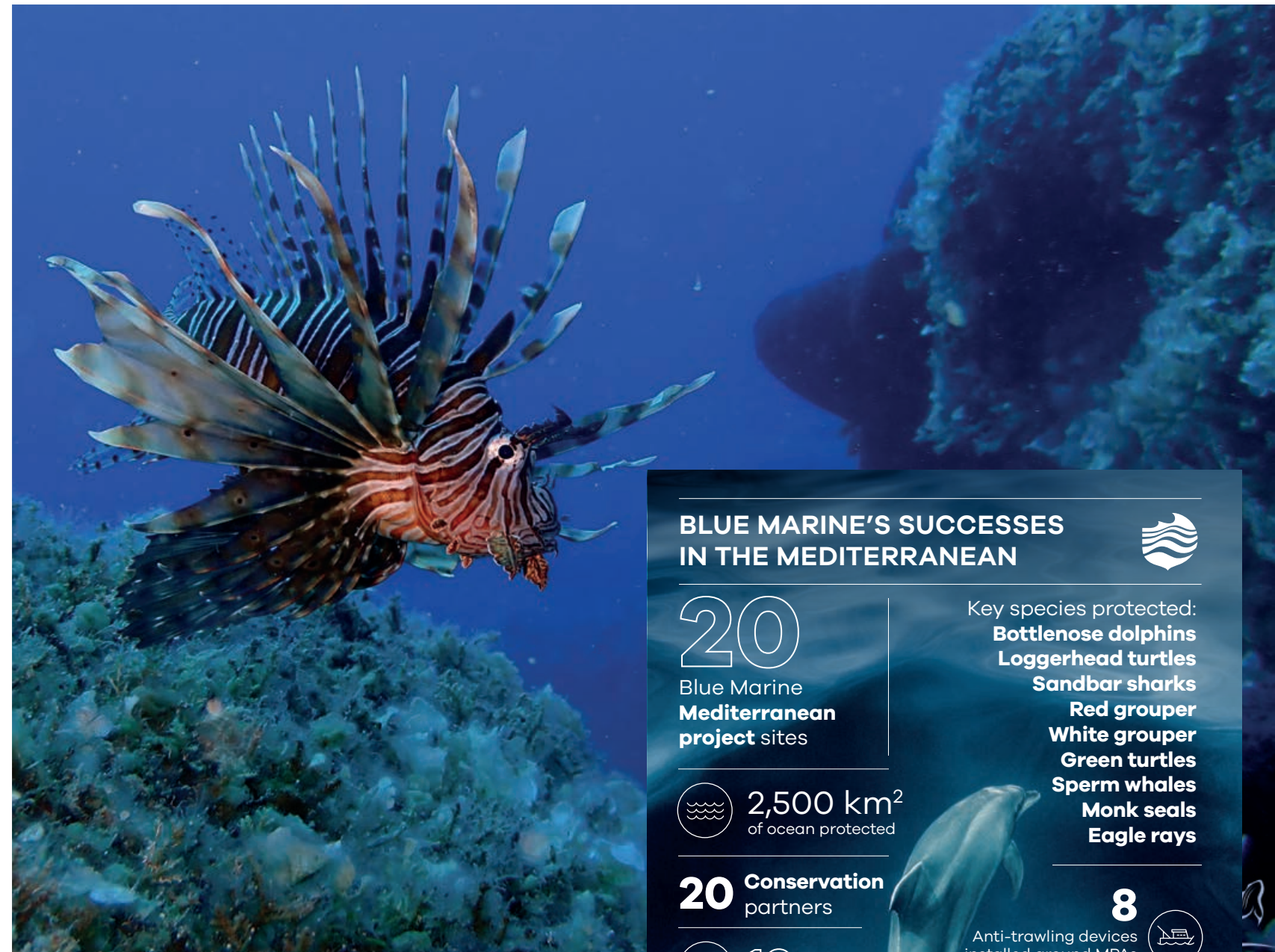
In October, all project staff and partners came together in Gokova MPA, Turkey, to co-develop a consistent, coherent Mediterranean conservation strategy leading up to 2030. Thirty project

managers and conservationists from Turkey, Italy, Greece, Menorca, Cyprus, Israel and Spain met up to make a plan. They were joined by experts from Scotland, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Australia, and the Caspian Sea.

Over three days of workshops, staff and partners were encouraged to feed into the process, bringing their experience and ideas to the table and debating the strategy. The workshop themes were informed by a comprehensive study of current marine conservation in the Mediterranean, and a questionnaire circulated to conservationists throughout the region. Current approaches and



Blue Marine set up new networks, connecting and supporting people and projects, encouraging trans-boundary efforts to protect the sea



BLUE MARINE'S SUCCESSES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN



20

Blue Marine
Mediterranean
project sites

Key species protected:
Bottlenose dolphins
Loggerhead turtles
Sandbar sharks
Red grouper
White grouper
Green turtles
Sperm whales
Monk seals
Eagle rays



2,500 km²
of ocean protected

20

Conservation
partners



10
Low-impact fishing
communities adopting
conservation measures

8

Anti-trawling devices
installed around MPAs



5 TONS

Lost and discarded fishing nets
and gear removed from MPAs

3,000

Students reached
through Blue
Marine's education
programmes

Habitats protected:
Coral reefs
Seamounts
Marine caves
Maerl beds
Posidonia seagrass meadows

Photo George Karbus



SUPPORTING LOW-
IMPACT FISHING



SECURING MARINE
PROTECTED AREAS



RESTORING MARINE
LIFE

methodologies were evaluated, conservation gaps and opportunities identified and priority actions to achieve 30 per cent marine protection by 2030 were agreed.

The summit was the first time that many of Blue Marine's staff and partners had met in person, which resulted in a heady exchange of ideas, experiences, and identified similarities and differences in conservation approaches from country to country. Blue Marine set up new networks, connecting and supporting people and projects, encouraging trans-boundary efforts to protect the sea and the unique biodiversity of the Mediterranean.

Blue Marine's Mediterranean conservation strategy will be implemented in 2023, with ambitious goals to transition to low-impact fisheries and significantly increase the area of effective MPAs, protecting and restoring carbon-trapping habitats and endangered species.

Above the lion fish — invasive species, and scourge of the Mediterranean. **Photo** Marine and Environmental Research lab. **Left** project managers and conservationists from Turkey, Italy, Greece, Menorca, Cyprus, Israel and Spain joined experts from Scotland, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Australia, and the Caspian Sea for three days of debate

HEROES OF THE FUTURE

Encouraging Greek fishers to protect their own seas can be a turning point for one of Europe's fastest-deteriorating marine environments

A country whose legendary engagement with the sea goes back millennia, Greece has some of the richest, most biologically diverse and iconic marine realms on the planet. Its waters are home to thousands of species of fish, shellfish, whales, dolphins, monk seals, turtles, octopus and micro-organisms. The Greek coastline exceeds 15,000km and is characterised by carbon-rich Posidonia seagrass and algal meadows, dropping off into deeper waters where fragile corals feed in the productive water currents.

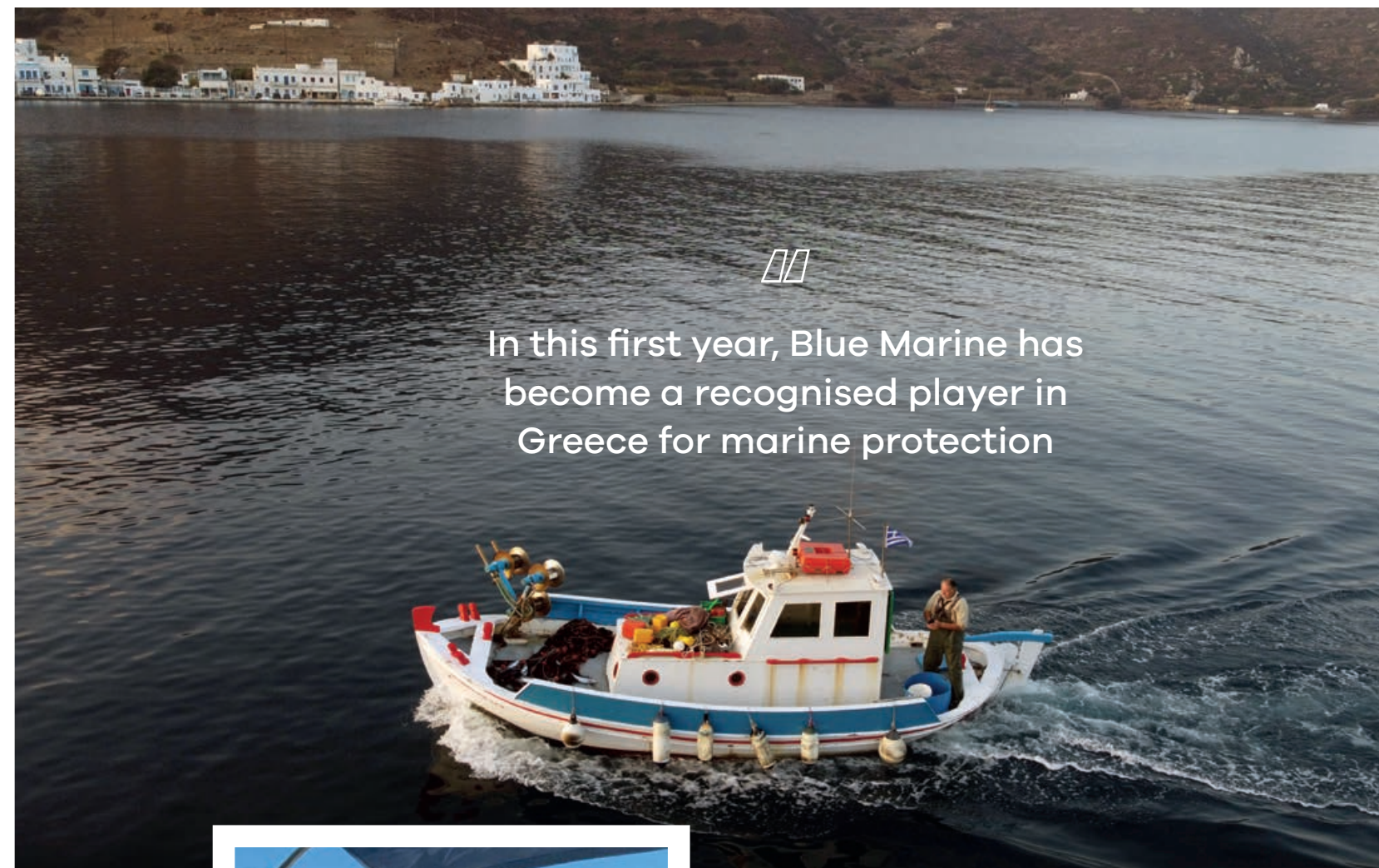
These unique and remarkable animals and plants have enormous

value both ecologically and environmentally. Seagrass beds trap carbon and are a nursery for juvenile fish.

Every single organism has evolved to fit the Greek marine environment perfectly. Without this natural balance, the future of Greece's seas and economy is bleak.

The Mediterranean is one of the most overfished seas in the world, but the situation is most dire in Greece. A '2020 State of Nature in the EU report' shows that Greece has the fastest deteriorating environment and poorest marine conservation status in all of Europe. Overfishing and trawling and general lack of effective protection (less than 1% strict

Greece



In this first year, Blue Marine has become a recognised player in Greece for marine protection



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RESTORING MARINE LIFE

protection) has destroyed whole marine ecosystems, which has left them vulnerable to invasive species and climate change.

Blue Marine has an ambitious conservation programme in Greece that aims to restore its seas to health by establishing Marine Protected Areas and by tackling overfishing. In this first year, Blue Marine has become a recognised player in marine protection here. We have made excellent progress with the initiation of a number of projects across the country, which focus on increasing no-take zones, increasing the management of designated areas, tackling invasive species, and protecting important habitats. We are building strong partnerships and alliances with relevant stakeholders and other organisations while engaging local communities and empowering local champions.

Above the waters around Amorgos island will be the first MPA proposed by local small-scale fishermen, **left**, and designated by the Ministry of Fisheries. **Photos** Giorgos Moutafis. **Inset** Blue Marine CEO Clare Brook returns from Formicula island, stronghold of the monk seal

There were three main highlights for 2022. Blue Marine signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Greek Ministry of Fisheries committing support for the designation of three no-take zones covering 1,300 hectares and trawling restrictions around Amorgos island. Once this happens, Amorgos will be the first MPA proposed by local small-scale fishermen and designated by the Ministry of Fisheries. It is an exemplary case that we believe will inspire other island communities in Greece to follow suit.

Elsewhere, the Greek Ministry of Environment engaged with Blue Marine, iSea and Tethys Research Institute to establish a strictly protected zone around Formicula island in the Ionian archipelago, which will protect one of the most important monk seal strongholds in the Mediterranean. And finally, Blue Marine and local NGO partner iSea mapped some of the largest seagrass meadows in Greece — covering almost 10,000 hectares — to establish habitat boundaries, health and supported biodiversity. This work will inform the designation of further MPAs.

Looking to the future, we will focus our efforts on implementing successful management plans for key marine areas, while working to inspire other fishing communities in Greece to demand protection of the seas upon which they all depend.

ITALY

THE ITALIAN JOB



An ambitious network linking seven of the country's MPAs will safeguard whales, sharks, dolphins, turtles, and the critically endangered monk seal

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. Italy's sea today still contains deep coral gardens and shallow seagrass beds that are home to an abundance of fish, turtles, sharks, squid and whales.

Yet only 1.6 per cent of Italian Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are effectively managed, and only 0.1 per cent are fully protected. Consequently, Italian seas are dangerously overfished and are struggling to support

healthy ecosystems. This is why Blue Marine is working on an ambitious project to establish a network of effective MPAs, and secure real protection for Italy's remarkable coastal waters.

Since 2016, Blue Marine has been working in the Aeolian Islands to create MPAs and promote sustainable fishing. This year Blue Marine's efforts saw the designation of new Natura 2000 Habitats Directives sites, protecting valuable Posidonia meadows and seamounts around the entire Aeolian archipelago.

Blue Marine supports the Salina MPA commission to designate a new MPA supported by local fishers, and has engaged hundreds of local schoolchildren through the 'Understanding the Sea' marine education programme and newly created Italian MPA 'Makerzine'.

In 2022, we also initiated seven new projects in Sardinia, Sicily, Apulia and Tuscany, applying specific conservation interventions to make these MPAs more effective:

- **Sardinia: Capo Carbonara, Asinara, Capo Caccia (29,000 ha)**
- **Sicily: Egadi, Pelagie (60,000 ha)**
- **Apulia: Torre Guaceto (2,300 ha)**
- **Tuscany: Tuscan archipelago national park (80,000 ha)**

This bold new network embodies an overarching vision of protection, which aims to inspire Italian MPAs to be more effective

by developing better management plans for enforcing their protection strategies.

Blue Marine has also removed tons of discarded 'ghost nets', found exceptional populations of sharks and rays, and ensured that existing MPAs are enlarged and managed effectively. Around one MPA we also deployed anti-trawling devices.

The network initiative aims to protect tens of thousands of species, many of which are found nowhere else. They include sandbar sharks, common eagle rays and the ultra-rare monk seal, of which there are only 700 still in existence. In 2023, communication and outreach campaigns will be developed to build local support and educate the wider community on the importance of marine conservation.

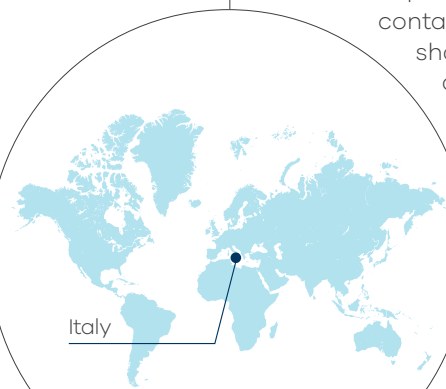
Blue Marine's work in Italy showcases how well-managed and well-connected MPAs can preserve natural environments, restore threatened habitats, and mitigate the effects of climate change. Over the next two years, Blue Marine is looking to fully establish these MPAs to strengthen Italy's marine protection and reduce illegal fishing.



Main image setting a BRUV unit to study the aggregation of eagle rays in Sicily's Egadi MPA
Photo Mathia Coco. **Left** retrieving lost pots in Capo Carbonara MPA, Sardinia. **Below** a sandbar shark in Sicily's Pelagie MPA. **Photos** Mathia Coco



SECURING MARINE
PROTECTED AREAS

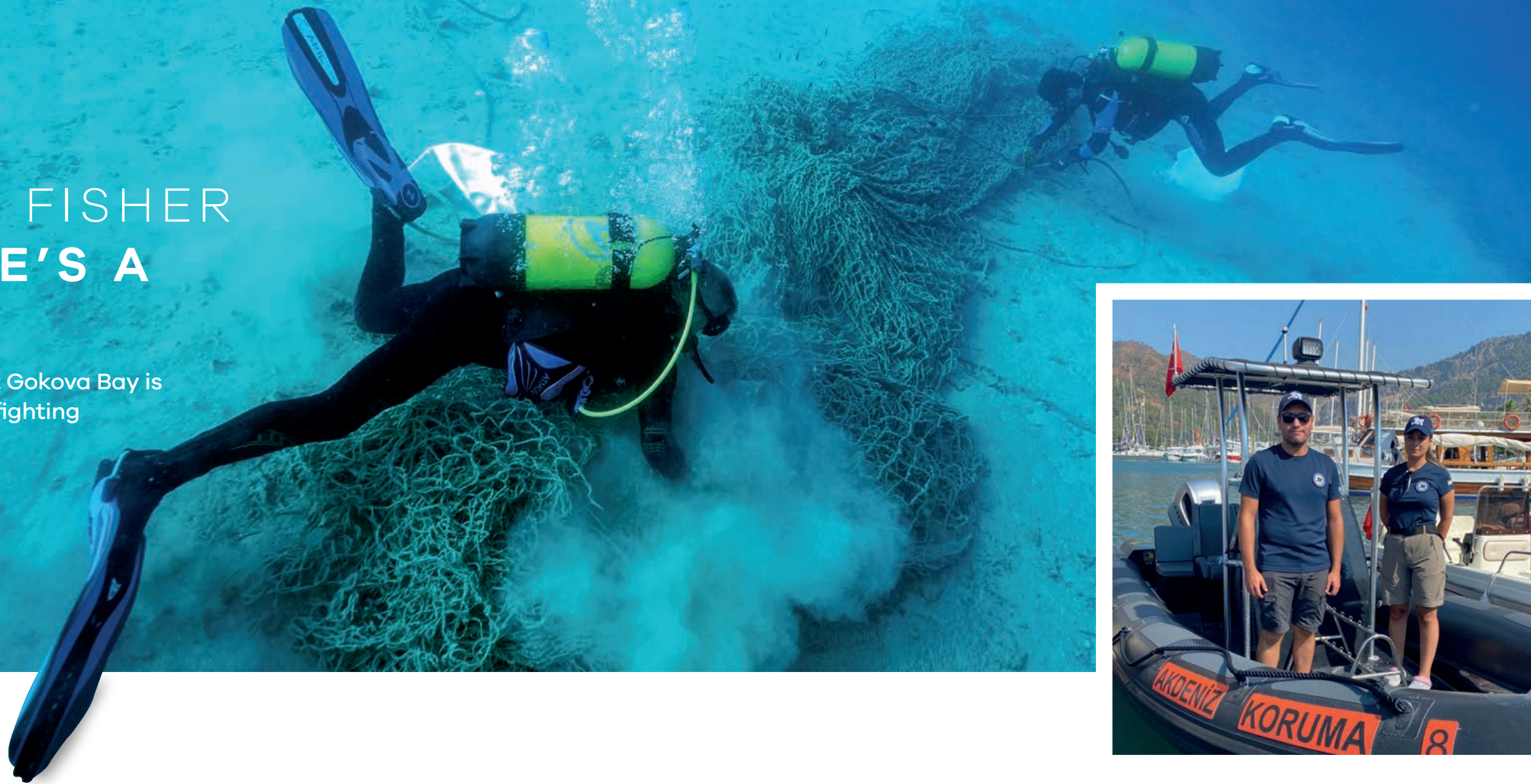


Italy

TURKEY

SHE WAS A FISHER — NOW SHE'S A RANGER

Turkey's all-female fishery at Gökova Bay is just one of the communities fighting for conservation in Europe's largest marine reserve



Turkey's Mediterranean coastline is under pressure from multiple threats. Overfishing, invasive species, coastal development and tourism all have an impact on the region, which is home to many threatened species including the Mediterranean monk seal, sandbar shark, cetaceans and turtles.

Although the Turkish government designated 500km of its coastline to be Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in 2020, and created the Mediterranean's largest highly protected marine reserve, it lacked capacity and expertise to enforce protection.

But Blue Marine has worked with local NGO the Mediterranean Conservation Society to ensure the effective

conservation of the reserve — 55,000 hectares closed to trawling and purse seining, 10,500 hectares of no-take zone.

There is a large and unique community of fisherwomen in Gökova Bay, the epicentre of the Turkish MPA network. This reserve is one of the few areas in the Mediterranean where women dominate the small-scale fishing community and actively conserve marine resources to feed their families. Results show that their fishing income has increased six-fold thanks to yields increased through marine protection, and socio-economic support.

A pilot marine-habitat restoration project in Gökova Bay has already yielded impressive scientific findings. In just five years there has been significant recovery of habitat and fish stocks, increases in incomes of local fishers, reduced abundance of invasive species and the return of vulnerable sandbar sharks and the endangered Mediterranean monk seal.

Blue Marine's focus is on effective enforcement and management, which have been implemented quickly to support the designation, and ensure that protection is driven by local communities. This is a proven model of effective, efficient and sustainable conservation. Blue Marine has supported:

- The enforcement of 10,500 hectares of no-fishing zones and 55,000 hectares closed to highly damaging purse seining and trawling, using new patrol boats and retraining fishers as rangers. We are actively increasing the accessibility of careers in ocean conservation. One of the new female rangers in Gökova Bay was previously a fisher, and has seen the benefits of the MPAs first hand.
- The removal of several tons of discarded and lost fishing gear (ghost nets) from MPAs.
- The creation of commercial markets for invasive species such as lionfish;

incentivising fishers to catch and sell these species, reducing pressure on MPAs.

- The development of a powerful set of films that will help raise awareness and encourage other Mediterranean fisheries to learn from the Turkish example.
- The socio-economic evaluation of the MPA network, identifying sustainable economic solutions to finance MPA management for perpetuity.

Looking forward, Blue Marine aims to continue enforcing the MPA network, consolidating protected areas, expanding the network, and potentially creating transboundary protection of seagrass between Turkey and Greece. We will document the spill-over effect of biodiversity into Greek and wider Mediterranean waters, and improve local scalability. There is the potential to link the protected areas in Turkey, and significantly increase marine protection.

Left removing discarded and lost fishing gear (ghost nets). **Above** patrol boats allow rangers to enforce MPA restrictions



SUPPORTING LOW-IMPACT FISHING



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



RESTORING MARINE LIFE

CYPRUS

GUITAR SHARKS WON'T NEED TO FRET

With mapping and monitoring done, prospects are excellent for an enduring new zone to protect the rare and wonderful species around the UK sovereign base at Akrotiri

Since its launch in 2010, Blue Marine Foundation has played a pivotal role in the creation of Marine Protected Areas around a number of UK Overseas Territories (UKOTs) — both independently and as part of the Great British Oceans Coalition. Blue Marine is now working on the UK government's Blue Belt initiative in select UKOTs in the Mediterranean.

The marine ecosystem surrounding the UK's sovereign base in Akrotiri is one of the most productive and valuable in Cyprus. At its location in the south of the island, the ocean environment is characterised by carbon-trapping seagrass beds, rocky coral reefs and sandbars. It's an area where warm and cool Mediterranean currents meet, up-welling productive water, which leads to high biodiversity.

The ecosystems support numerous protected and endangered species, including groupers, sea turtles, guitar sharks and Mediterranean monk seals. Yet despite their high ecological importance, the

waters of Akrotiri have been overlooked, insufficiently managed and overfished.

Blue Marine has been working with its partners, the Marine and Environmental Research Laboratory and the Sovereign Base Authorities (SBA) to create an MPA management plan that will enable the restoration of marine life and provide a sustainable resource for artisanal, small-scale fisheries.

The preliminary phase of this project has been hugely successful: engaging with stakeholders, developing a joint-management committee, collecting data about the biodiversity in the area, monitoring species and mapping the proposed MPA. We have also collected film and imagery, showing marine life in Akrotiri that until now has mostly been unseen by the public and authorities.

Key achievements in 2022 have included raising awareness to key stakeholders and local communities about the project — why an MPA is crucial, and how it will improve local livelihoods. We have mapped the key habitats, and assessed their vulnerability to fishing and climate change. A full report and MPA proposal, with support of the SBA has been submitted to decision-makers.

Here warm and cool currents meet, up-welling productive water, which leads to high biodiversity



Main image Cypriot waters are home to guitar shark, and **left**, bearded fireworm. **Above** explaining how an MPA will improve local livelihoods



The results from all activities will inform effective and realistic conservation regulations for the MPA. Working with the UK Foreign Office and Blue Belt team, we are aiming to make Akrotiri a priority for protection. We aim to achieve the designation of the Akrotiri MPA within two years and then pass management over to the relevant authorities.

During the project, we will be developing sustainable financing mechanisms, which could support the MPA in perpetuity. The scheme will result in a long-lasting, effective MPA, which is enshrined in law and well managed. Once declared, the project would be eligible for long-term support from the Blue Belt programme. The MPA will provide a legacy of benefits to both marine life and local communities.



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH THE SEA



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



RESTORING MARINE LIFE

Cyprus

THE BALEARIC ISLANDS

RESTORING SEA-GRASS MEADOWS 100,000 YEARS OLD

In the Mediterranean archipelago, one of the oldest living things on earth is under threat. Blue Marine is working with local partners to turn the tide

The Balearic Islands are home to magnificent marine habitats that are rich in biodiversity. Ancient *Posidonia oceanica* seagrass meadows flourish in the shallow waters of the Mediterranean archipelago, while deep-sea corals can be found scattered across the seabed like rare gems. These waters also support integral spawning grounds for schools of bluefin tuna, and provide a

habitat for more than 400 species of fish, including dusky groupers. Many endangered and iconic species such as sea pens, loggerhead turtles and sperm whales can also be found.

A network of Marine Protected Areas covers approximately 20 per cent of the waters around the islands, but less than one

per cent is closed to fishing. In addition, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing threatens the health of this exceptional ecosystem and marine biodiversity. Blue Marine is partnering with the Mallorca and Menorca Preservation Funds to protect these habitats and fish stocks by tackling IUU fishing and improving existing marine protection.

Over the past year, Blue Marine has supported the development of a key report that creates a road map for tackling IUU fishing in the Balearics for the next two years. 'Ending illegal fisheries and fish fraud in the Balearics (2022-24)', has been the catalyst for round-table debates, community awareness events and the creation of the Balearic Illegal Fisheries Steering Group.

Within these forums, Blue Marine and our partners are pushing for a more systematic and effective approach to monitoring, in addition to governance and policy

The project also makes restaurants and consumers aware of illegally caught seafood — and the alternatives available

improvements. The project also aims to connect with restaurants and consumers, making them aware of illegally caught seafood and the alternatives available.

In Ibiza and Formentera, Blue Marine is looking to support a seagrass mapping, restoration and education project led by the Vellmari Association. The interconnected seagrass meadows of Formentera are thought to be between 80,000 to 100,000 years old, making them one of the oldest known living things on the planet.

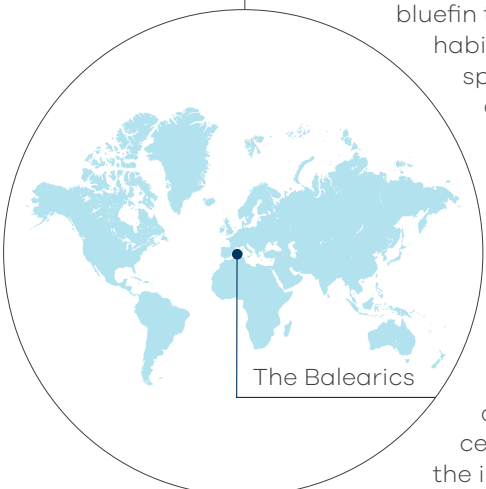
This project aims to actively restore damaged meadows through seedling and fragment planting, while developing an innovative mapping project that leverages existing side-scan sonar data and high-resolution satellite imagery. The project also aims to educate young people about the ocean through 'Dive Camps' and classroom workshops, providing participants with valuable hands-on experience.

 SUPPORTING LOW-IMPACT FISHING

 TACKLING UNSUSTAINABLE FISHING

 RESTORING MARINE LIFE

Images first stages in a project to map and restore the interconnected seagrass meadows of Formentera, smallest of the Balearic islands. **Photos** Manu San Felix



DUTCH CARIBBEAN

E.E.Z. DOES IT

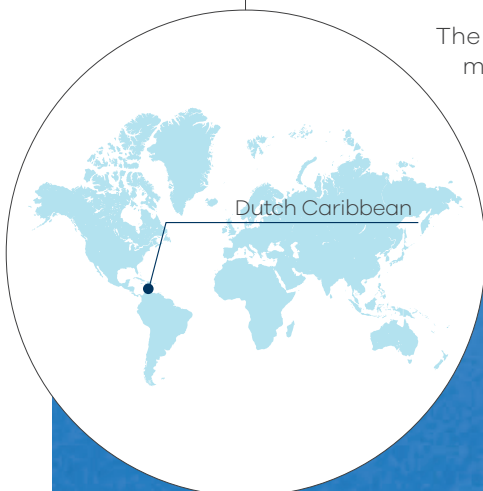
By extending protection into the Exclusive Economic Zones of all six islands, the Dutch Caribbean has the chance to keep its gems of coral and cetacean life safe from harm

The Dutch Caribbean comprises six tropical islands – Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St Maarten, St Eustatius, and Saba – which host unique and globally threatened biodiversity. The thriving reefs around Bonaire, an untouched gem of the Caribbean, support more than 350 species of fish and 57 types of coral.

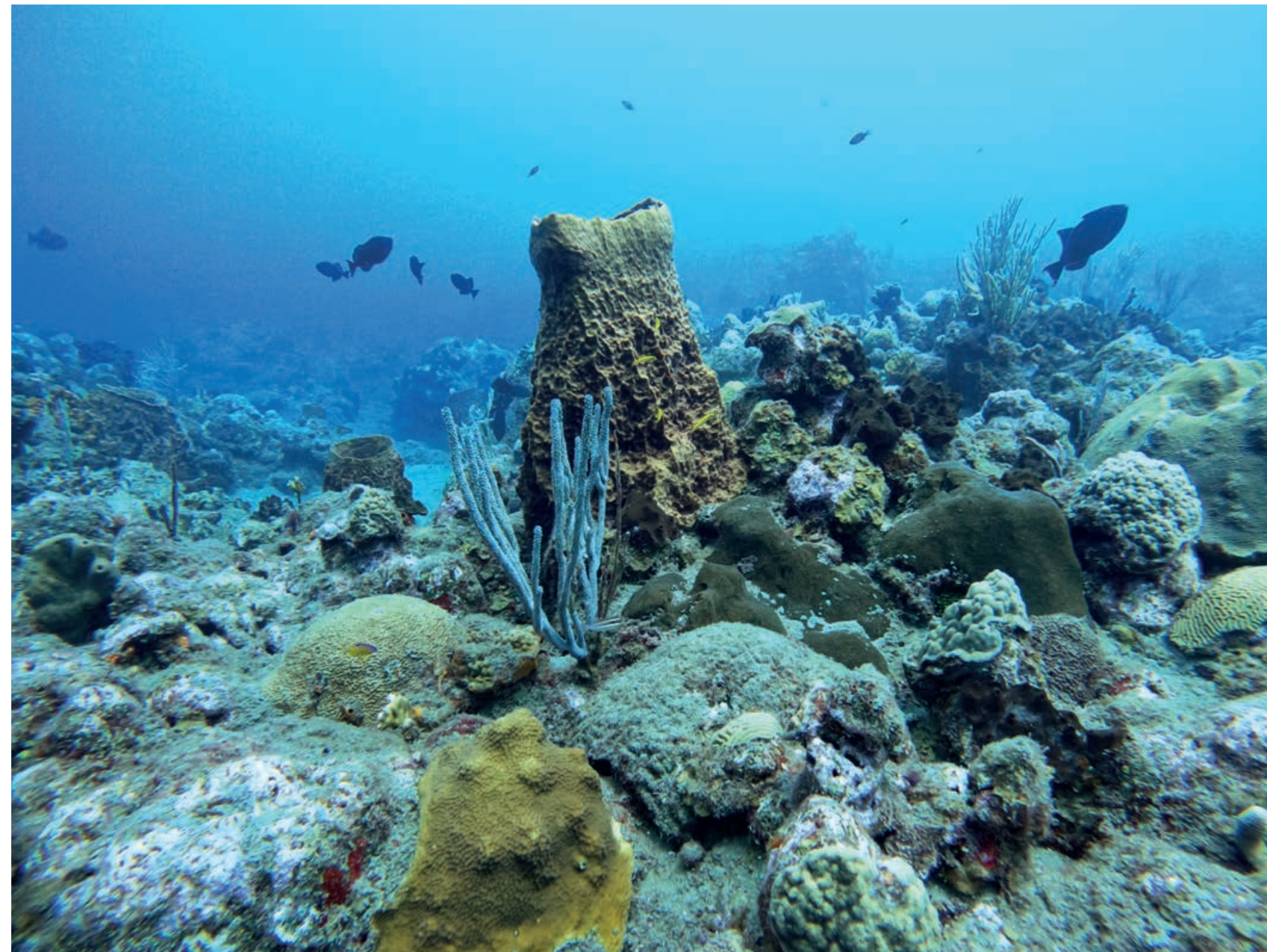
The islands also harbour mangrove and seagrass habitats vital for blue carbon, but many threats remain unmanaged. Their

rare ecosystems are vulnerable to feral livestock causing sedimentation on reefs, invasive species, overfishing, climate change, coastal development, erosion, and the build-up of harmful algae caused by waste water.

Blue Marine has formed a partnership with the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA) to support the islands through: political advocacy for conservation; ensuring high-quality marine protection with effective marine-park management plans, supporting on-island conservation efforts via a small grants scheme, and



We went to the Hague to encourage the government to emulate the success of the UK's Blue Belt with its overseas territories



promoting the expansion or strengthening of marine protection. Funding has been secured for five years.

All six islands have inshore Marine Protected Areas ranging in size from 10 to 60 sq km. The aim is to increase substantially the size and scope of MPAs in both inshore waters and offshore Exclusive Economic Zones, and secure sustainable financing for local nature conservation.

In 2022 Blue Marine met with ministries in the Hague regarding the environmental significance of the Dutch Caribbean, the threats of climate change to the islands, and to encourage the Dutch government to emulate the success of the UK's Blue Belt with its overseas territories.

We supported projects this year on all six islands, which included cetacean monitoring, blue carbon sampling, youth

Above reefs here contain 57 types of coral. **Left** supported projects included cetacean and turtle monitoring **Photos** Judith Brown



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH THE SEA

ranger education and training, the establishment of a climate-change monitoring lab, coral monitoring and turtle conservation work. We funded an in-person summit for the Caribbean Shark Coalition to promote shark and ray science and conservation in the Greater Caribbean. Our MPA workshop in Aruba drew attendees from all six islands.

In 2023 we will continue to work with DCNA, local governments and nature foundations towards expanding the existing Yarari mammal and shark sanctuary into the EEZs of all six islands — it currently covers 25,390 sq km across the EEZs of Bonaire, Saba and St Eustatius. We also aim to facilitate an event with the DCNA at the Our Ocean conference in Panama for the Dutch Caribbean to showcase its commitment to marine conservation and achievements to date.

ST VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

CONCH DIVERS
TAKE STOCK

Many on these Caribbean islands depend on the sea for their livelihood. Our new plan aims to promote sustainable fishing — and protect its exceptional biodiversity



Where the south-eastern Caribbean meets the Atlantic Ocean lies St Vincent and the Grenadines, a country comprised of 32 islands and cays that amount to 369 sq km (142 sq miles) of territory. The many coastal communities that make up its 100,000 population rely heavily on its marine ecosystems for their livelihoods.

Despite existing protection in the form of six marine conservation areas, a marine park and a marine reserve, the exceptional biodiversity here is threatened by overfishing, pollution, climate change, invasive species, and loss of habitat from unsustainable development.

The aim of Blue Marine's project has been to propose a sustainable fisheries plan to the Minister of Fisheries for St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG), providing advice on measures to help achieve the country's national biodiversity targets and Aichi targets, and helping to protect and develop local livelihoods. It also proposes ways to rebuild fish stocks and reduce pressure on heavily fished nearshore resources.

During 2022, Blue Marine conducted 93 conch dive surveys and 69 baseline reef fish surveys, including training of local conch divers and Government Fisheries staff. There were stakeholder meetings with local conch divers and fishers to discuss fisheries management and their concerns regarding stock status.

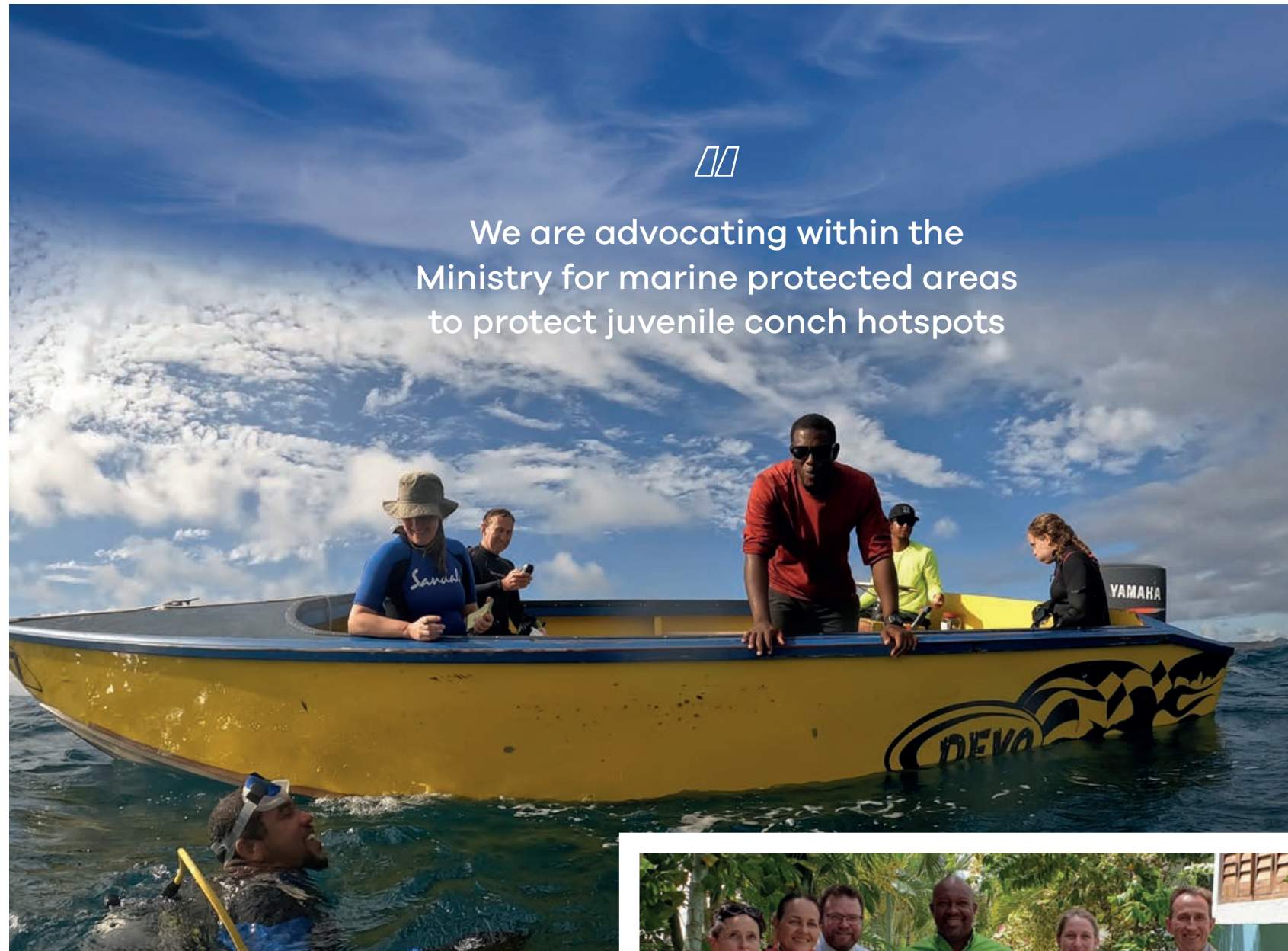
Following a personal invitation from the SVG fisheries minister the Hon Saboto Caesar, we completed a field trip to review the status of the country's fisheries, and

proposed initiatives to develop sustainable fishing practices, community partnerships and managed areas. We subsequently produced a report, 'Sustainable Fisheries Management Advice for the Government of St Vincent and the Grenadines'.

The document includes policy recommendations for all marine species, focussing on conch, lobster and inshore fish species, as well as proposed areas for designation as MPAs. It assesses current data and fishery practices, and provides fisheries management advice on new regulations/policies/licensing criteria that could be considered for immediate implementation.

In 2023 we intend to visit to St Vincent to present the report to Minister Caesar, so that he may bring it before the Government Council. There will also be stakeholder meetings with local fishers to present findings from dive surveys

We are advocating within the Ministry for marine protected areas to protect juvenile conch hotspots



Main images conducting a dive survey. **Above** Conservation Collective Executive Director Jade Brudenell, SVG Environment Fund Director Louise Mitchell, Blue Marine Head of Policy Jonny Hughes, SVG Fisheries Minister Saboto Caesar, Blue Marine Head of International Projects Jude Brown, Blue Marine Operations and Risk Advisor Andrew Woods

and make recommendations. We will continue to advocate within the Ministry for implementation of good fisheries management practices, including the establishment of MPAs to protect juvenile conch hotspots. In addition, we will be applying for an environmental grant from the Blue Action Fund for continued sustainable fisheries management work in the area.



SECURING MARINE
PROTECTED AREAS



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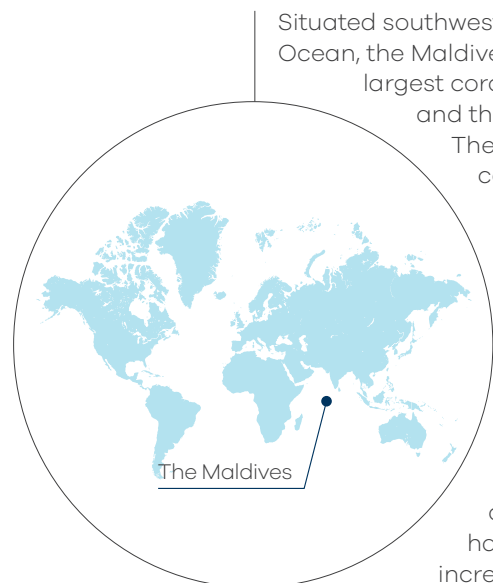


St Vincent and
the Grenadines

THE MALDIVES

HELPING MANTA RAYS
LOOK THEIR BEST

An agreement with the local island council will soon protect a cleaning station for the ocean giants on Laamu Atoll



Situated southwest of Sri Lanka in the Indian Ocean, the Maldives is home to the seventh largest coral reef system in the world and the fifth most biodiverse.

The health of its waters and coral reefs is not only vital for the two mainstays of the country's economy — tourism and fisheries — but for the physical survival of the Maldives itself.

Since 2016, Blue Marine has been supporting climate-resilient reefs across the islands. This has meant working for the increase of effective marine

protection, maintaining the sustainability of coral reef fisheries, promoting sustainable tourism and increasing local capacities for marine conservation. In 2020, we set up the local NGO Maldives Resilient Reefs (MRR), which is led by Maldivians.

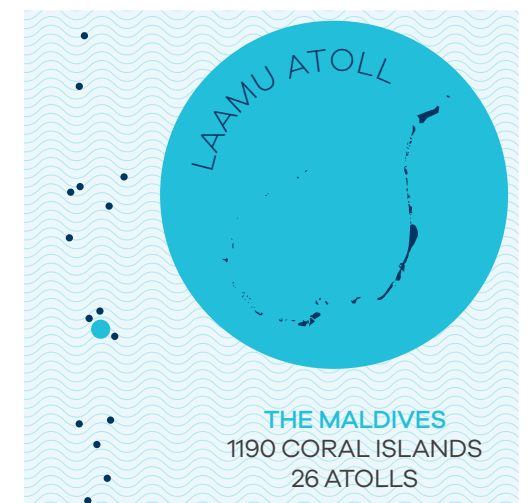
Our biggest success to date has been the protection of critical habitats on Laamu Atoll as nationally designated MPAs, and the designation in 2021 of the whole atoll as a Mission Blue Hope Spot. This was achieved thanks to the research and community outreach activities of Blue Marine and its partners. Our research has also supported the revision of size limits for highly targeted groupers and better management interventions for the fishery.

In 2019, the social media campaign #ProtectMaldivesSeagrass by Blue Marine and Six Senses Laamu managed to change the perception of seagrass in the Maldives tourism industry, and saw more than 25% of resorts committing to protect this valuable habitat. Blue Marine's #FishForTomorrow campaign brought awareness about vulnerable marine species in the area. Two months after this campaign, all parrotfish were protected as a no-take species throughout the islands.

In 2022, Blue Marine completed important research on coral reef health and fisheries on Laamu Atoll, which will support the establishment of a fisheries co-management model. An evaluation was conducted of our sustainable-resort reef fishery programme at Six Senses Laamu, and it was adapted to prepare for roll-out across the Maldives tourism industry.

Blue Marine and MRR have also signed a memorandum of understanding with the Laamu Hithadhoo Island Council to support the establishment of a Locally Managed Marine Area (LMMA) that will protect a critical grouper spawning and manta ray cleaning station.

Next year, Blue Marine and MRR will be working to roll out these projects across other atolls. Having previously led a successful campaign to stop the lifting of a 10-year shark-fishing moratorium, we are also launching #Begotletogiants, a new campaign to protect whale sharks through the introduction of a code of conduct for the tourism industry.



Main image manta rays on sparkling form. Inset the health of its waters is vital for the Maldives. Below the Blue Marine team.



SECURING MARINE
PROTECTED AREAS



CONNECTING
PEOPLE WITH THE SEA



SUPPORTING LOW-
IMPACT FISHING

THE CASPIAN SEA

SAVING SALMON,
SEAL AND STURGEON

Overfishing has devastated this vast inland lake. But patient work with three nations on its shores is helping safeguard a host of endangered species

Blue Marine started working in the Caspian Sea in 2015 to try to save from extinction six species of Caspian sturgeon, rare salmon and a type of seal. Sturgeon are the most critically endangered group of species on the planet.

In the late 1800s, countries bordering the Caspian had thriving fishing communities. But without management the fish stocks were decimated. Boats were decommissioned and abandoned, jobs lost, and eventually the industry collapsed.

For Caspian sturgeon, large rivers are vital for their survival. Each spring these prehistoric fish migrate hundreds of miles up-river to lay their eggs — which the world knows as caviar. Older locals tell of sturgeon six metres long, and so many fish in the rivers that you could walk across on their backs. As caviar became more and more prized, fishermen started laying nets and hooked lines across the river mouths.

Working in Azerbaijan with local conservation organisation IDEA, Blue Marine has campaigned successfully for a ban on the use of gillnets, plastic nets designed to entangle fish's gills. Now volunteers remove discarded nets from the riverbanks, and the authorities use boats to drag the nets out of the river.

Blue Marine created the first ever Marine Protected Area in Azerbaijan, 350 sq km around a vast wetland named Gizilagac, an area rich with worms, shrimps and other crustaceans, which provide perfect feeding grounds for juvenile sturgeon.

In 2022, we worked with the Azerbaijani ministry of environment to designate a second MPA of 60 sq km around the Absheron peninsula, north of the capital Baku, an important migration route for sturgeon.

Blue Marine has also teamed up with the University of Leeds to identify projects in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. In Kazakhstan we are building relations with local conservationists to create MPAs and try to save the Caspian seal from extinction.

In Turkmenistan, Blue Marine has earmarked a vast sturgeon feeding-ground for protection and is working with local scientists and politicians towards the designation.

Blue Marine's goal is to create a trans-boundary approach to conservation in the Caspian Sea, connecting conservationists and decision-makers, and building capacity at local level to protect habitats and critically endangered species.

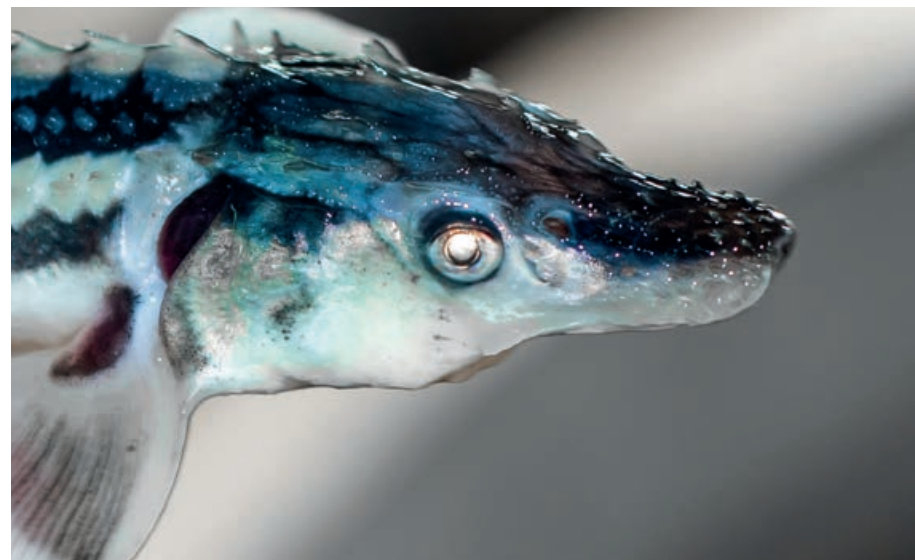


SECURING MARINE
PROTECTED AREAS



CONNECTING
PEOPLE WITH THE SEA

Below a young sturgeon. Blue Marine is working in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan to protect this critically endangered group of species. **Photo** Rory Moore



PATAGONIA

HOW TO RESIST A
RESOURCE GRAB

From Chile's wild fjords to its National Congress, Blue Marine works with local groups to halt the salmon farms that threaten this biological hotspot. And this year we kept out 271

Vast and inaccessible, Patagonia is one of the last great wildernesses in the world. The maze of fjords on Chile's Pacific coast is rich in marine biodiversity, from whales at the surface to forests of kelp below. Sadly, an ever-expanding resource grab — intensive salmon farming, overfishing, unsustainable development — continues to blight the area.

In our eighth year of engagement here, Blue Marine has been working with the non-profit Fundación Rewilding Chile to give the land and the ocean the highest possible legal protection by creating and connecting national parks and marine 'no-take' zones.

The vision is to:

- protect an additional 57,000 sq km of land and sea, increasing the protection of Patagonia from 113,000 sq km to 170,000 sq km.
- protect more than 48,000 sq km of coastal waters through the creation of at least eight new Marine Protected Areas.

This year, two new MPAs were designated: King Penguin Marine Park (4,200 sq km) and Cape Froward Marine Park (1,300 sq km).

Blue Marine is also supporting one of Chile's leading scientists, Dr Vreni Haussermann, to collect and publish evidence of Patagonia's biological hotspots, and propose these as priority areas for marine protection.

Our research partners, Patagonia Projects, have been battling through the often-harsh marine environment aboard the research vessel 'Saoirse'. From the bottom of the food



chain to the top, the team has assessed plankton abundance, marine biodiversity, and baleen whale migrations throughout the fjords — information crucial to Blue Marine's mission.

Patagonia is also home to the planet's largest kelp forest. Vital in sequestering carbon, these forests are declining twice as quickly as coral reefs, and four times faster than tropical rainforests. In Patagonia, Blue Marine is working with Forests of the Sea, a global initiative to protect and preserve them.

In addition, Blue Marine has been supporting NGO partner Defendamos Chiloé in its campaign to oust salmon farming from Patagonia's MPAs, and this year we have successfully prevented 271 farms from operating within MPAs. We have worked with the Chilean government to address the salmon problem, and highlighted in the National Congress the importance of MPAs. All the while we pursue a strong media presence to pressure decision-makers to reform the salmon industry.



SECURING MARINE
PROTECTED AREAS

Above fjords on Chile's Pacific coast **Photo** Rory Moore



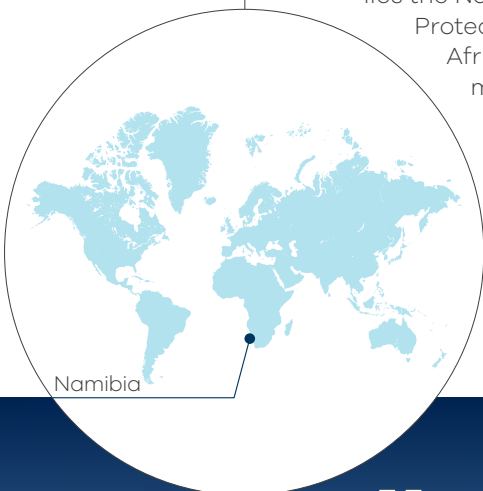
NAMIBIA

AFRICA'S LITTLE-KNOWN STAR

The second-largest marine protected area on the continent could be a shining example for its other nations to follow

Namibia's waters are some of the richest in the world, but industrial fishing in the 1970s drove its fish populations to the point of collapse. 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). It is 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



Industrial fishing in the 1970s drove the fish populations of Namibia's waters to the point of collapse



of successful marine protection on the continent for others to follow.

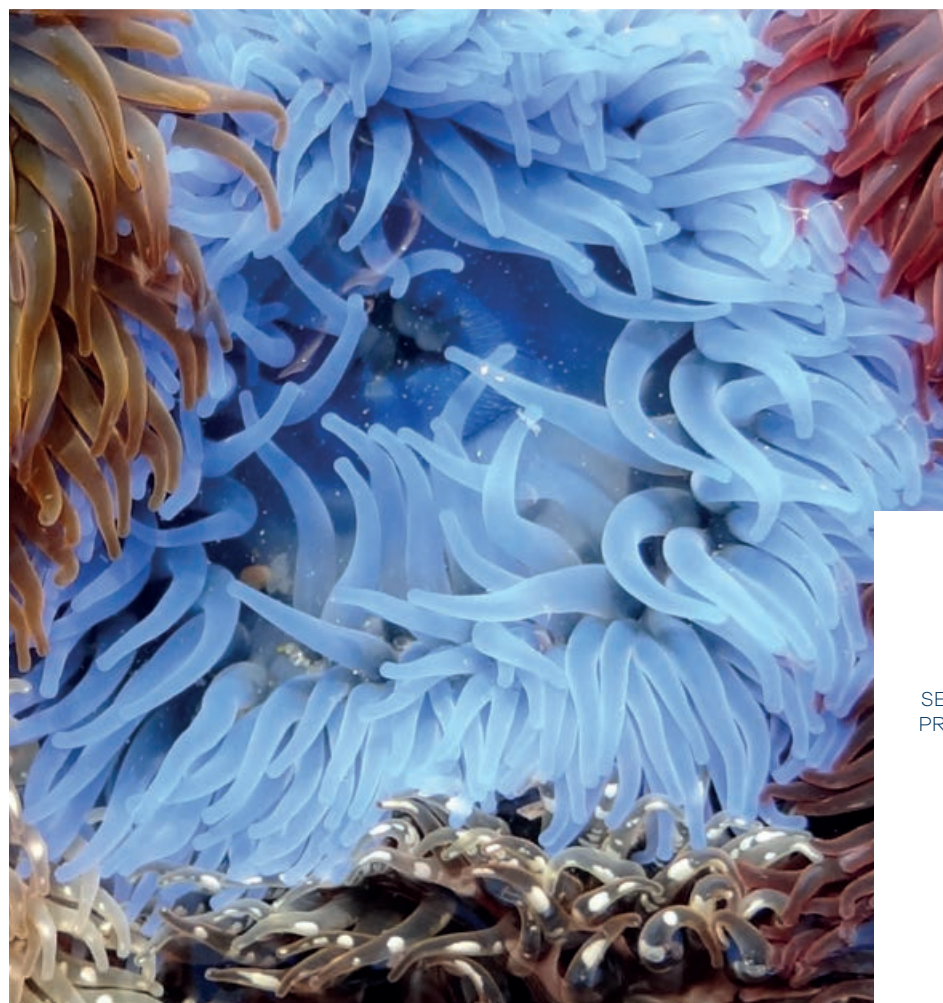
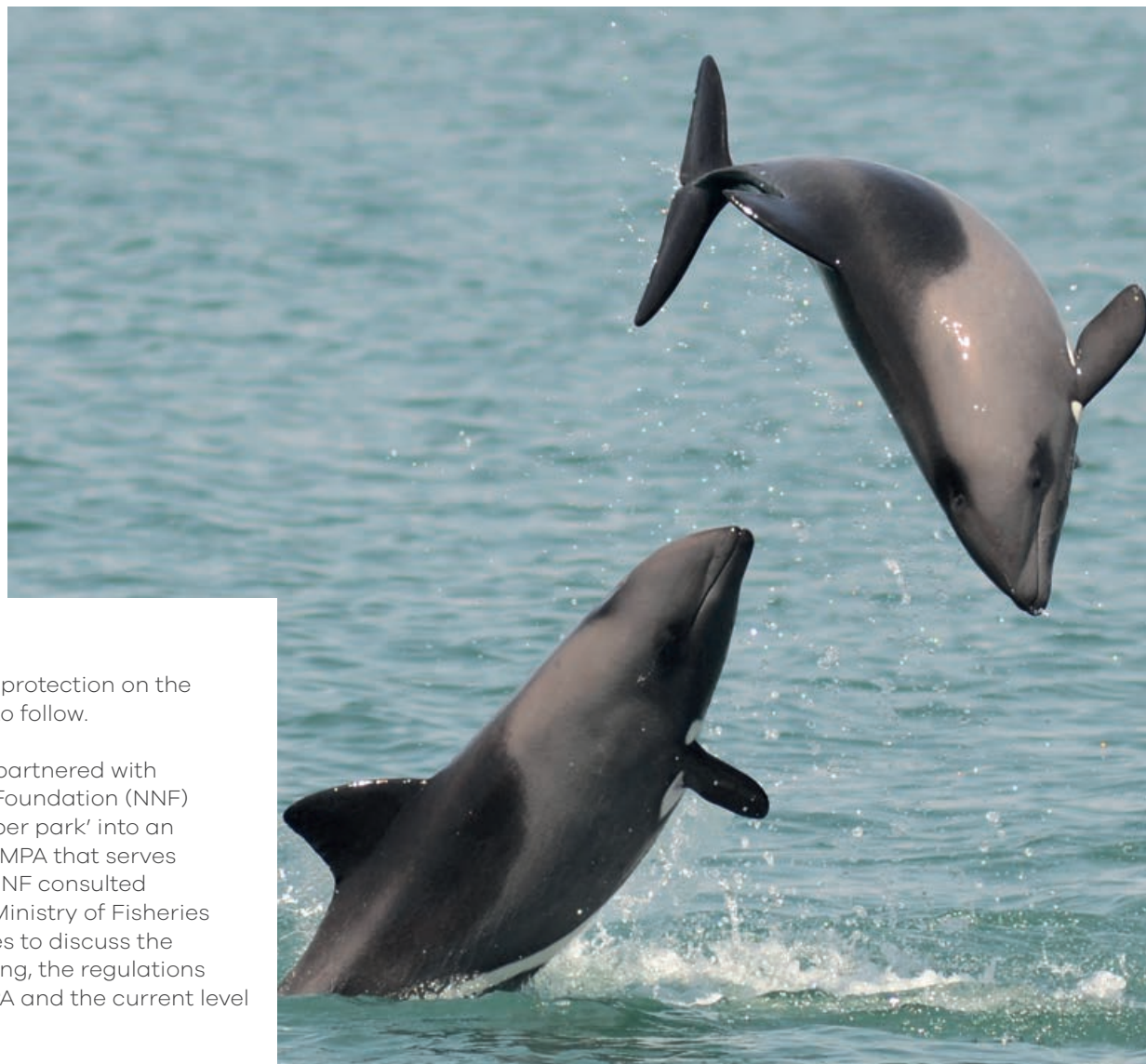
In 2020, Blue Marine partnered with the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) to transform this 'paper park' into an effectively managed MPA that serves people and wildlife. NNF consulted extensively with the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources to discuss the adequacy of the zoning, the regulations that govern the NIMPA and the current level of monitoring.

In 2022, the Namibian government ministries amended the regulations for the NIMPA, with support from the NNF through Blue Marine funding. The NNF has established a strong working relationship with Graca D'Almeida, the Director of Resources Management in the Ministry of Fisheries, who oversees the NIMPA. The Ministry are engaged in improving management of the NIMPA and are working with NNF to do so.

In support of this, we have conducted biological and ecological monitoring in the NIMPA, and produced a report summarising our findings. In 2023, we hope to update and enact the NIMPA management plan with funding through the Blue Action Fund. Alongside this we will increase education and outreach programmes to highlight the significance of the NIMPA.

The Blue Action Fund proposal has passed the concept-note stage and we have held dedicated stakeholder meetings across the country regarding the NIMPA.

Right anemones, and above Heaviside's dolphin, on Namibia's Lüderitz Peninsula, left. Photos Jessica Kemper and Judith Brown



WALVIS RIDGE

AN MPA ON THE HIGH SEAS?

Under the South Atlantic, hidden mountains swim with life

The Walvis Ridge is a 3,000km chain of seamounts (submarine mountains) in the Southern Atlantic. It runs west from the African continental margin off the coast of Namibia to the southern Mid-Atlantic Ridge near Tristan da Cunha. The ridge is a unique geomorphological feature, of special importance to vulnerable seabed-dwelling fish and macro marine life associated with seamounts.

Due to the variation in depths, ranging from slopes to summits and surface waters, it is likely that the area supports a high biological diversity, as well as a high diversity of globally threatened seabirds. Although bottom fisheries occur on the Walvis Ridge, commercial fishing is limited to a relatively small area.

POSSIBLE CANDIDATE

In 2022, Blue Marine began looking at Walvis Ridge as a possible high-seas MPA candidate. This has involved creating an independent baseline description of the biological, oceanographic and socio-economic importance of the area. Our team has included experts in fisheries, benthic ecology and higher predators, as well as blue carbon.

Their findings have been used to create a data portal with access to current information on the Walvis Ridge region, and we are seeking funding for a research cruise on the Ridge to fill the data gaps. In 2023 we will present baseline data to relevant stakeholders to garner support for creating the Walvis Ridge MPA.



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



MEXICO

FIRST STEPS TO PROTECT THE AQUARIUM OF THE WORLD

One day orcas, rays and whales will benefit from an MPA here — but the campaign begins by showing Mexican fishers there's more money in catching tourists than sharks

Off the state of Baja California Sur in north-west Mexico is a truly extraordinary sanctuary for marine life, which includes orcas, mobula rays and nine species of whale. Surrounding the peninsula, however, the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Cortez — described by Jacques Cousteau as 'the aquarium of the world' — are under threat from industrial fishing and the possibility of underwater mining.

In collaboration with experienced local partners, there is an opportunity to create here a highly protected no-fishing zone of 88,000 sq km and to ban all industrial fishing in 192,000 sq km, which would create the largest marine reserve in Mexico. This protection would support

the area's biodiversity, and the coastal fishing communities whose livelihoods depend on it. The MPA could one day form part of the Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor, the largest trans-boundary MPA in the world.

Blue Marine's role in the project is initially to stimulate community engagement and strengthen bottom-up support for the MPA. We will work with our partners to increase highly protected areas in the buffer zone and build capacity of the local NGOs, through exchange programmes and Blue Marine's education, media and economics units.

When the designation takes place, Blue Marine will support management and implementation of the MPA to ensure maximum efficacy. Blue Marine would be instrumental in the development of the management plan, which should be completed within one year of the designation.

In addition, Blue Marine supports a newly created NGO called Orgcas. It is staffed predominantly by young Mexican women, who have completed MSCs and PhDs in Europe and have returned to Mexico to put their conservation skills and their passion to work.

This year, the Blue Marine team held several workshops with the local NGO partners to refine projects, increase ambition and suggest ideas to improve the strategy of the overall project. Our Blue Economics unit has developed models to support financing of MPAs in Mexico.

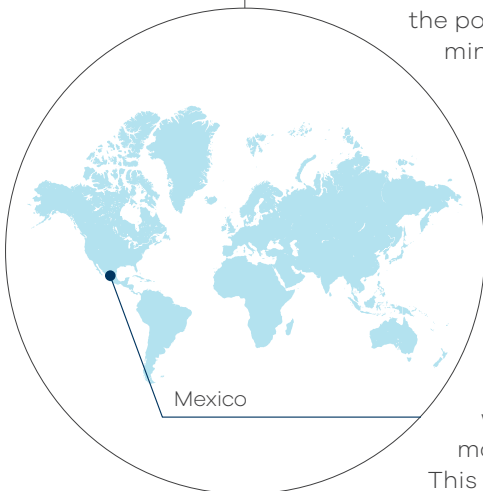
Orgcas are working with fishers in a community in Baja to stop fishing shark, and instead transition to tourism, investing in infrastructure, training, and equipment. Fishers are seeing the

economic benefits and encouraging others to follow suit.

In October, the Blue Marine team were invited as keynote speakers to an international summit in state capital La Paz, where we presented our vision for sustainable MPA financing, the potential of blue carbon projects to protect habitats and raise funding, and how the Baja MPA aligns with our global conservation strategy.

There is huge development in tourism in the area, and fishing communities need to benefit from this changing economy if they are to reduce their take. We are confident that these communities can be convinced to support the MPA if they can understand the long-term economic benefits. This is an area which Blue Marine will focus on in the future.

A ban on industrial fishing in
192,000 sq km
 would create the largest marine reserve in Mexico



Main image Mexico's Baja California state is home to striped marlin, and **this image**, whale shark

SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

SUPPORTING LOW-IMPACT FISHING

BRITAIN'S

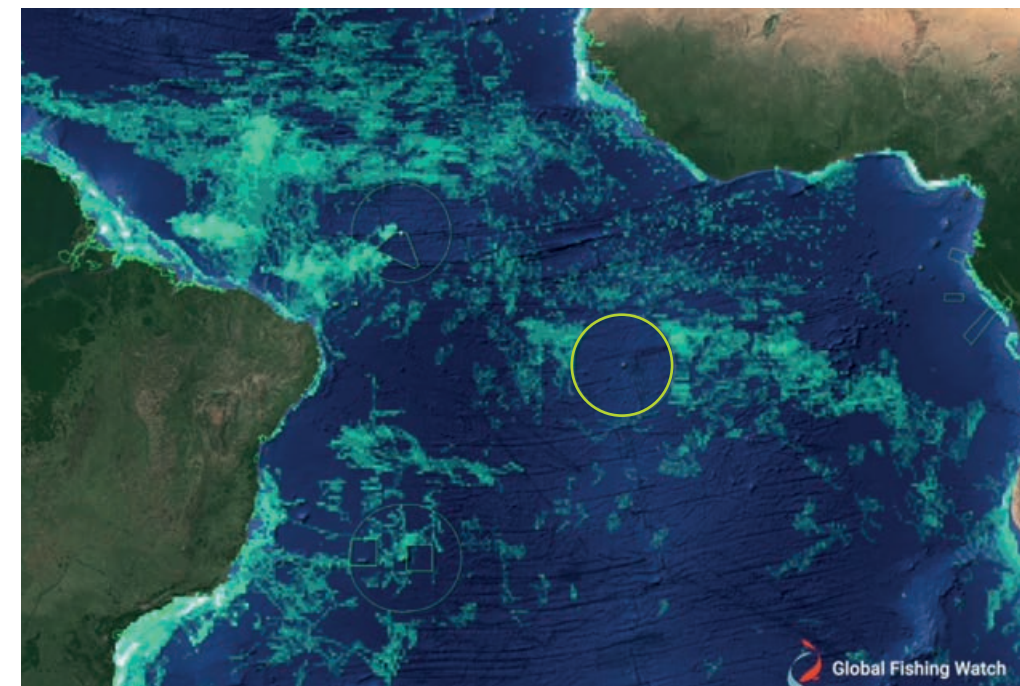
6.8 MILLION SQ KM

OF OCEAN

The UK Overseas Territories have some of the clearest waters in the world — home to turtles, penguins, and the largest coral atoll of all. And with 42 per cent of it fully protected, the UK can say that it leads the world in ocean conservation



Main image diving off Ascension Island. **Below** this Global Fishing Watch satellite image shows the circle of Ascension's MPA protection against the green lines of industrial fishing effort



Because of its UK Overseas Territories, Britain is custodian of 6.8 million sq km of ocean, in some of the most biologically diverse regions in the world. Only a tenth of Britain's waters are around the UK mainland. The rest is spread across 14 global territories that boast some of the clearest waters and the largest fish in the world. They contain breeding grounds for endangered turtles, a third of the world's albatrosses, a quarter of the world's penguins and include the world's largest coral atoll. Some 94 per cent of the unique biodiversity for which Britain is responsible is found in its overseas territories.

Blue Marine has worked with the UK Government and our NGO partners in the GB Oceans coalition to ensure these territorial waters are as highly and effectively protected as possible. Blue Marine and GBO have also worked to secure continued UK Government financial support for the Blue Belt Programme, and to ensure that as much funding as possible reaches the territories themselves.

Thanks to the Blue Belt Programme, 42 per cent of total British waters are fully protected, and the UK government can

justifiably say that it has led the world by attaining the goal of protecting at least 30 per cent of its waters by 2030. It has been a stunning achievement, described as 'the greatest conservation commitment by any government, ever'. Certainly in terms of square kilometres protected, this is true.

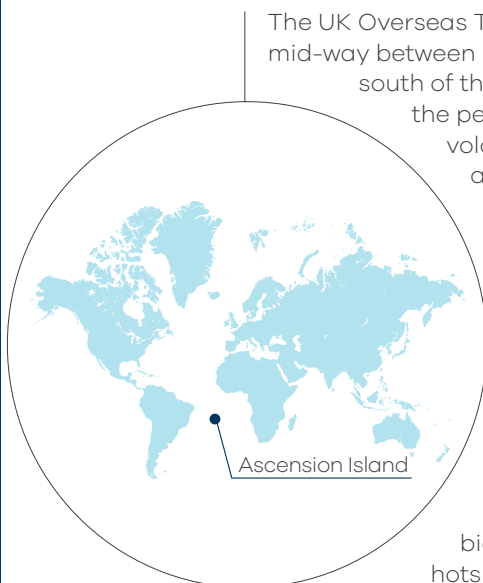
However, these protected areas will be far more effective if the oceans outside them are not scoured of fish. Blue Marine therefore urges the bodies that manage international waters to set fishing quotas within scientific advice, and to create Marine Protected Areas on the High Seas, which cover more than 45 per cent of the Earth's surface.

Finally, Blue Marine continues to press for UK domestic waters to be protected to the same high standard as the overseas territories. Sadly, there is a vast difference in the level of protection; in the UK Overseas Territories, protected areas are either fully no-take or only allow local, sustainable fishing. In UK domestic waters, only 8 per cent of waters are free from bottom-towed gear, and a derisory 0.125 per cent are protected from all fishing. This is an anomaly that Blue Marine is attempting to iron out.

ASCENSION ISLAND

PROTECTED IN PERPETUITY

One of the largest no-take areas in the Atlantic harbours globally significant biodiversity



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 10km across, but its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) extends out 200 nautical miles (370km), covering 445,000 sq km — an area almost the size of Spain.

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 the largest no-take marine protected areas in the Atlantic, inside Ascension's EEZ. As a result, this unique marine ecosystem is now fully protected from destructive long-line fishing, as well as deep-sea mining.

To ensure that the MPA brings lasting benefits to its inhabitants, Blue Marine has established the Ascension Island Marine Protected Area Conservation Trust



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

Main image blackbar soldierfish. **Left** Red Atlantic reef lobster. **Below** endemic Ascension frigate bird nesting. **Photos** Judith Brown



(AIMPACT) — a £2 million endowment fund that will provide income in perpetuity for community, education, environment and heritage projects on the island.

During 2022 we recruited an MPA development and engagement officer, based on the island, who is delivering a comprehensive suite of outreach activities for both young people and the wider community to build knowledge and support for the Ascension MPA. The Blue Media unit sent out filming equipment, and the Conservation team received training in making social media content to publicise the MPA.

In 2022, the UK government also confirmed its continued support for the Blue Belt Programme for 2022-2025 at £8 million per year, which includes management, monitoring and enforcement of the Ascension MPA. Following on-island consultation and stakeholder input, the Ascension MPA Management Plan (2021-2026) was published, setting out high standards of management.

Management of the inshore is currently under consultation, and we are pressing for more stringent controls around sports fishing, no-take areas and the sale of fish to the UK and US military bases. The American base has ceased dumping food waste in the sea. In 2023, we will continue to press for completion of the inshore fisheries regulations so that the entire 200 nautical miles of the Ascension EEZ is effectively managed.



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

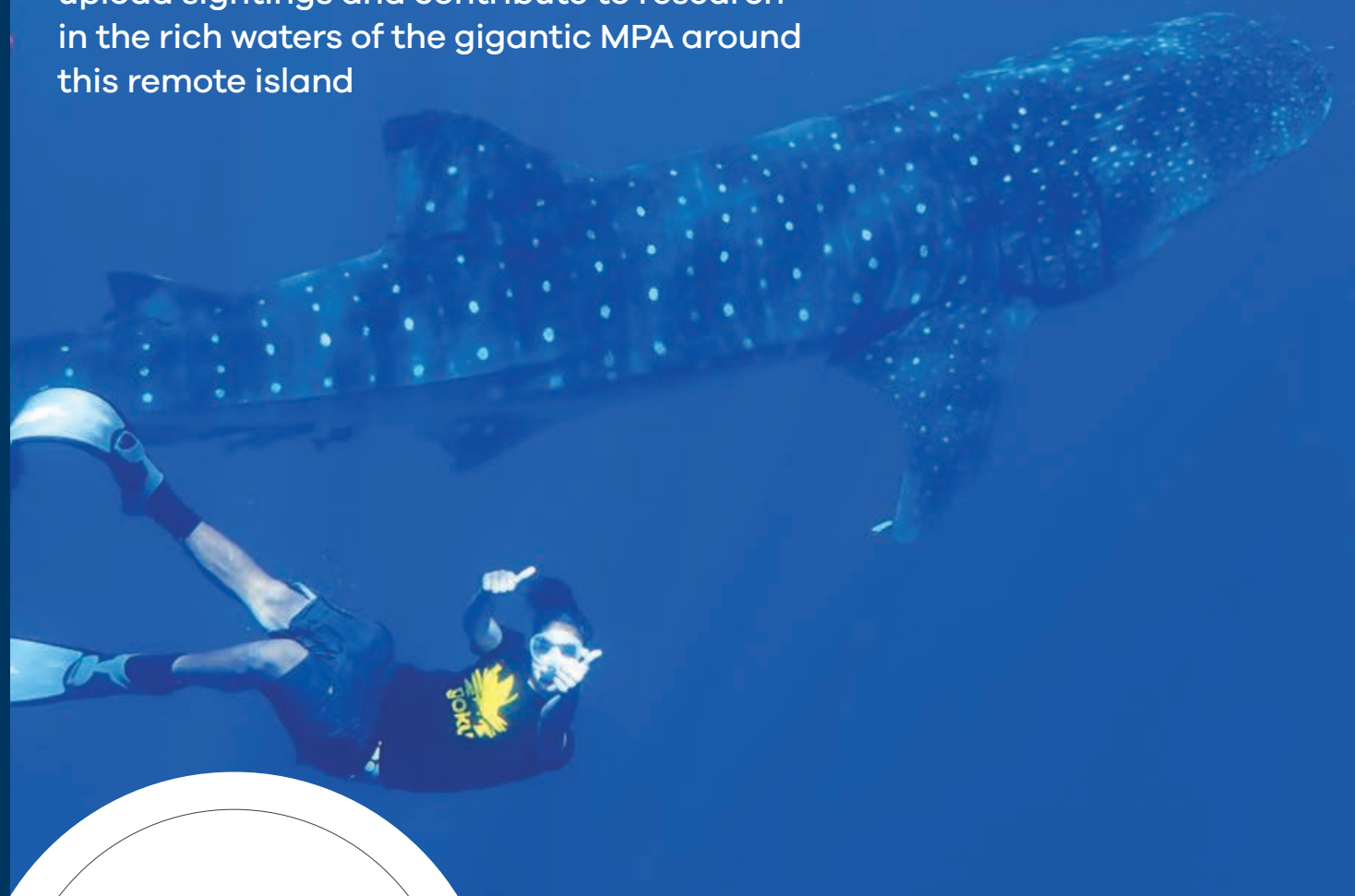


CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH THE SEA

ST HELENA

WHO'S THAT SHARK?

Our new Whale Shark ID app allows anyone to upload sightings and contribute to research in the rich waters of the gigantic MPA around this remote island



The remote South Atlantic island of St Helena — almost 2,000 km west of Africa, and 4,000 km east of South America — 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 where mature whale sharks come to mate. Part of the UK Overseas Territories, St Helena has a sustainable-use marine protected area (MPA) of 444,916 sq km, in which destructive fishing is banned.

Since 2017, Blue Marine has worked with the St Helena National Trust (SHNT) to build and maintain support for the MPA within the 'Saint' community, while establishing St Helena as a globally recognised centre of scientific research. The marine team continues to carry out world-leading research, using deep tags capable of descending to 6,000m, as well as drones to establish where the whale shark need most protection. The area is now recognised as one of the most important whale shark aggregation sites in the world. Blue Marine and the SHNT promote the MPA by filming the remarkable marine life.



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

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



Main image app users can identify a whale shark and learn about its history. **Above and below** the St Helena MPA hosts a magnificent array of marine life



Effective MPA management requires sound policies and legislation, and the government of St Helena has updated and strengthened its laws, with the input of Blue Marine and the SHNT. This has included the prohibition of unsustainable fishing and ending the dumping of inorganic waste.

In 2022, the first images of potential courtship behaviour between a mature male and female whale shark have provided further evidence that the MPA serves as a breeding location. Our new Whale Shark ID app has been completed and accepted by Google Play and Apple stores, allowing anyone to upload photos of sightings to the SHNT marine team, who can identify the shark, and tell them about its history. The shark's updated profile is then fed into the international database of these striking animals.

In February 2022 more than 500 people attended SHNT's annual Whale Shark Festival, which inspires the local community about the MPA and its exceptional ecological diversity. We engaged a further 600 local students in marine conservation through presentations and immersive outreach.

Blue Marine also supported the professional development of a locally recruited Marine Intern and SHNT marine staff. Funding has been secured for continued support of SHNT marine team until June 2026. Looking forward, we will continue to work to ensure the new Council are supported in delivering environmentally sound policies, and support the ground-breaking work of the SHNT marine team.

BRITISH ISLES

Blue Marine is delivering ambitious conservation initiatives in a range of projects around the British Isles. It includes the restoration of threatened habitats and species, and the establishment of low-impact, sustainable fisheries that benefit both marine life and local communities. These local projects also inform our policy and legal interventions to urge the UK government to better protect and manage its waters.

NATIONAL MARINE PARKS

OUR 10-PARK PLAN

A network similar to those on land would protect UK waters and bring economic benefits — and there's public appetite for our vision

It is widely acknowledged that the public has been left behind when it comes to the way we protect our domestic waters. Of the 15 National Parks in Britain today, none includes the sea. National Parks on land contribute to the economy and have been found to be important to 90% of people. There is potential for similar principles, practices and rewards for our seascape.

Blue Marine has been seeking to catalyse the creation of National Marine Parks, and in 2019 we helped Plymouth to declare Britain's first NMP. In 2020, we began conversations about the purpose and benefits of NMPs across Britain, and in 2021 we published a 'Vision for National Marine Parks in British Seas'.

The vision gained wide media pick-up, and we established NMP 'champions' in each of the ten locations proposed, as well as establishing a 12-strong national Strategic Working Group. The group met three times in 2022 and is evolving a framework for

NMPs. Its strategic thinkers will be crucial to sustaining momentum and raising awareness of the vision.

Partnering with local facilitators also enabled us to carry out scoping visits to eight locations. These have raised local awareness, provided an insight into the appetite for NMPs, and sparked reviews of current related legislation. We also interviewed 15 key stakeholders around Plymouth Sound to produce a report with practical advice to be shared with other location 'champions' and the Strategic Working Group.

The scoping visits and legal reviews have demonstrated there is appetite and a mandate for NMPs. We will continue to support the working group and propose its National Framework, while encouraging location 'champions' to develop local momentum. We are very excited about where the next steps on this journey will lead.



SUPPORTING LOW-IMPACT FISHING



RESTORING MARINE LIFE

SOME TAKE-UP ON NO-TAKE ZONES

The UK only has four highly protected marine areas (HMPAs). But five more may be on the horizon

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 see extraordinary increases in both the diversity and abundance of marine life. Habitats recover and with this come more fish and other species.

Despite these benefits, there are only four small no-take areas in English waters, covering less than 0.01 per cent of UK waters. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs claims that 38 per cent of UK waters are under protection, yet destructive bottom-trawling still takes place in almost all so-called protected areas.

Blue Marine continues to work hard to see trawling banned in 100 per cent of UK protected areas, and we want to see at least ten per cent of the UK's waters fully protected. In 2022, the government consulted on introducing five trial HPMAs which, if implemented, would cover half a per cent of the UK's waters – a start, albeit a small one. Blue Marine will continue to lobby hard for these (and more) fully protected areas.

Local partners have enabled us to carry out scoping visits to eight locations

Left Plymouth, site of the UK's first National Marine Park. Above might Jersey be next? Photos James Bowden

WHERE THE PARKS WOULD BE

THE SOUTH

Plymouth Sound
National Marine Park Dorset, Solent and the Isle of Wight to Sussex

THE GREATER THAMES

London Gateway, North Kent & South Essex

EAST ANGLIA

Suffolk, The Wash & North Norfolk

NORTH EAST ENGLAND

Tyne to Tees Seascape, Northumberland and Berwickshire

NORTH WEST ENGLAND

Cumbria's Colourful Coast, the Solway Firth and Coastal Regional Parks

THE SEVERN SEA

Severn Estuary and the Bristol Channel

ATLANTIC CORNWALL

The Isles of Scilly

WALES

Pembrokeshire

SCOTLAND

Argyll Coast & Islands

A CROWN DEPENDENCY

Jersey

JERSEY

ONE STEP CLOSER TO A MARINE PARK?

An opinion poll conducted by Blue Marine on the Channel Island found that 85 per cent of its population are in favour of a park



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH THE SEA



SUPPORTING LOW-IMPACT FISHING

A small island that is the southernmost part of the British Isles, Jersey has one of the most diverse marine ecosystems in Northern Europe. Habitats such as seagrass, maerl, kelp and complex reef structures support more than 3,000 known species. It's a vast array of life, which ranges from stunning jewel anemones and pink sea fans to extensive scallop beds, multiple ray species and the largest pod of bottlenose dolphins in Europe.

Unlike UK Marine Protected Areas, where 98 per cent are open to bottom-towed fishing, Jersey's MPAs deliver legal protection through a whole-site approach, protecting 6.5 per cent of its territorial waters from mobile fishing. Since 2018, Blue Marine has been attempting to extend Jersey's MPA network to cover at least 30 per cent of its territorial waters, and to brand this as a Marine Park.

Jersey has experienced significant change recently. With Brexit, the Bridging Island Plan and a new cohort of ministers, we now have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to secure effective marine protection.

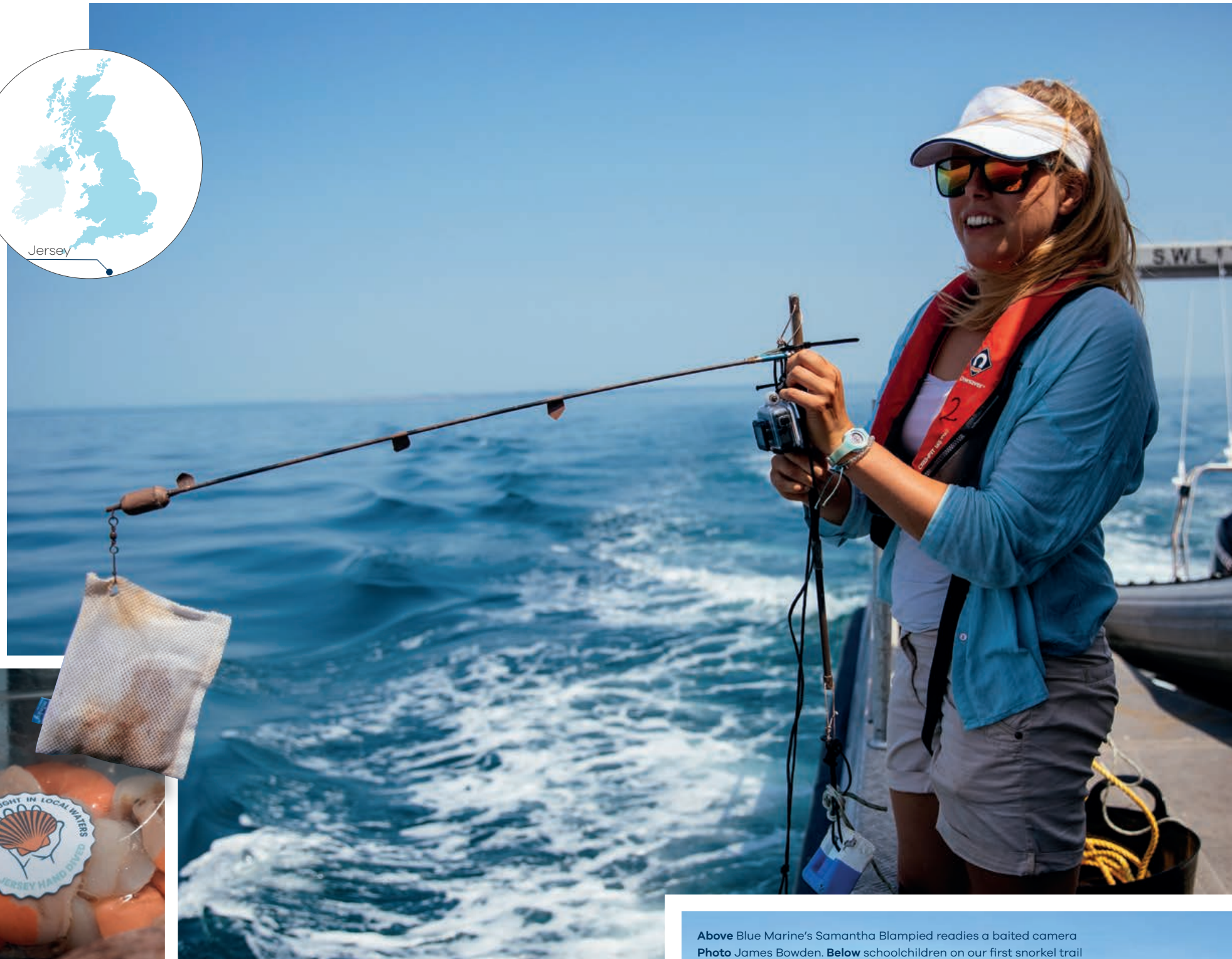
In 2022, the project won a commitment from the island's government to develop a network of MPAs within its upcoming 2023 Marine Spatial Plan. An island-wide poll was also conducted, finding 85 per cent of islanders in favour of a Marine Park. To support this, the project has funded a three-



and-a-half-year PhD, three MScs, a cost-benefit analysis and an initial blue-carbon assessment of Jersey's marine environment.

The project has also worked with the hospitality industry and local fishing fleet to develop a hand-dived scallop label (pictured above) and a Fish of The Month initiative, raising awareness around the seasonality, availability and sustainability of local seafood.

In addition, Blue Marine successfully rolled out its first snorkel trail, supplemented with an education programme in six schools



Above Blue Marine's Samantha Blampied readies a baited camera
Photo James Bowden. Below schoolchildren on our first snorkel trail



reaching 180 children aged 9 to 11. When asked for feedback, one teacher reported: 'I now have a group who want to pursue marine conservation, and others talking about studying marine biology'.

Moving into 2023, Blue Marine will feed into the consultation phase of the Marine Spatial Plan, submitting evidence for 30 per cent protection. The project will also continue to support local research and small-scale, low-impact fisheries, as well as expanding the snorkel trail programme to reach twice the number of children.

BERWICKSHIRE

SEE THE LOBSTERS AND HAGFISH PLAY

A new online observatory will bring vividly to life the rich but vulnerable sea-bed to the east of Scotland



Off the south-east coast of Scotland, cold and warm water currents converge, providing a rare diversity of marine life. The waters here support productive crab and lobster fisheries and provide some of the best diving and recreational fishing in the UK.

Yet despite its importance for people and nature, the majority of the Berwickshire Marine Protected Area is open to bottom trawling and dredging. Blue Marine is working with the local fishing community, divers and conservationists to monitor and manage the MPA.



One of the consultation responses we submitted prompted a closure-to-fishing in the Clyde to protect cod spawning grounds



Left waters here support productive crab and lobster fisheries. Above local beauty spot Coldingham Bay

To complement the MPA project, we are about to launch the Berwickshire Ocean Observatory, to showcase its habitats and species. Composed of two parts, the microsite is designed to encourage curiosity, increase knowledge and inspire the next generation to care for their coastline.

The first section is a continuously evolving archive of high-resolution footage. Here you can see shoals of Bib fish hiding in 20th-century shipwrecks, survey transects of vast coral gardens where squat lobsters play, and watch snakelike hagfish feed on the seafloor. Meanwhile, the Science Centre offers worksheets and fact files aimed at children aged 9 to 12 for use in the classroom and at home.

Blue Marine is part of Our Seas, a coalition of more than 120 marine



businesses, Scottish NGOs, fishing associations and community groups calling for a limit on bottom-towed gear. We produced a briefing document which was sent to all Members of the Scottish Parliament outlining urgent fisheries and MPA policy measures to protect Scotland's marine life and inshore fisheries.

Using evidence from Berwickshire and other UK sites, we submitted eight national and policy consultation responses. One of these prompted a closure-to-fishing in an area of the Clyde to protect cod spawning grounds.

Analysis of over 50 transect survey dives and 45 baited and towed video surveys has produced two reports. Results are being added to our evidence base and will provide a complete picture of current conditions and support greater protection.

LYME BAY

WHERE MODEL FISHERS HAVE THEIR SAY


Blue Marine’s flagship project in Dorset has proved that sustainable fishing and conservation can co-exist. Now a new scheme is giving fishermen a voice at national level

Lyme Bay is a Blue Marine flagship project, one that proves that sustainable fishing can co-exist with conservation. The Lyme Bay Reserve is one of the largest marine protected areas (MPAs) in the UK, and has kept more than 230 sq km safe from dredging and trawling since 2008, helping to preserve rocky reefs and the largest colony of pink sea fans in the British Isles.


Since 2012, Blue Marine has facilitated a collaboration between local fishermen, conservationists, researchers and regulators to deliver best-practice management of the MPA, while supporting local small-scale, static-gear fisheries who are guided by a code of conduct.

Blue Marine has demonstrated that management through collaboration between stakeholders and inshore fishermen can produce a ‘win-win’ for conservation and fishing, when fishing effort is kept within sustainable limits.

Since 2008, annual monitoring in the Reserve by the University of Plymouth has shown an increase in both biodiversity and biomass compared to trawled areas outside. That trend was set back by storms in 2013/2014, but since then there has been a resurgence in biodiversity, and Blue Marine-funded surveys in 2021 found an abundance of pink sea fans, up 392% since 2008.



SUPPORTING LOW-IMPACT FISHING



SECURING MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

The Reserve has its own voluntary code of conduct, agreed between fishermen and regulators, which aims to manage fisheries within sustainable limits. To support fishermen in the bay’s four ports who adopt the code, Blue Marine secured funding for chiller stores, ice machines, insulated boxes and a van to transport the catch. This ensures that the fish caught by Lyme Bay fishermen reaches market in top condition and can command the highest prices.

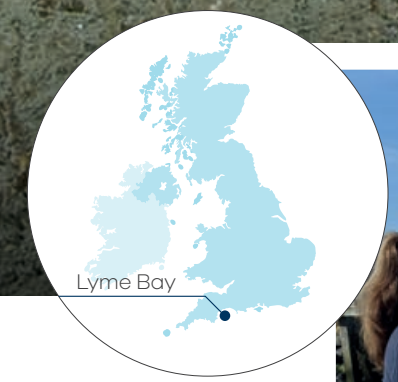
In 2022, Blue Marine supported the establishment of the Lyme Bay Fishermen’s Community Interest Company (CIC), which gives fishermen a voice at regional and national level to push for fisheries management that protects biodiversity

and creates long-term benefits for coastal communities. The CIC has taken on the transport van, and the ports all manage the chiller stores independently, ensuring continuity of these facilities for the benefit of the fishing community.

Lyme Bay is considered a model for collaborative MPA management, and has formed the basis for a BLUEPrint on how to establish and manage MPAs. This is a guide that will share Blue Marine’s experience and insights from more than a decade working with stakeholders in Lyme Bay and MPA projects around the world. It will be published in February 2023.



Main image Pink sea fan abundance has increased four-fold since trawling was banned in 2008 **Photo** Colin Munro Photography **Below** Project manager Mandy Wolfe with local fisherman Aubrey Banfield **Photo** Sam Fanshawe



THE SOLENT

\$5 MILLION TO BRING BACK THE DYNAMIC SOLENT

Blue Marine rallied nine other groups for an ambitious plan to restore this unique seascape, and our pitch for funding was a winner. Meanwhile we continue to fill the area with oysters — each one sorted, counted, and cleaned...

The 30km strait between the Isle of Wight and the south coast of England is unique in the UK and Europe for its complex network of islands, harbours, spits and vast sandbanks. These combine to create the Solent — home to a dynamic and highly valuable system for biodiversity.

More than 80 per cent of the Solent is designated for nature conservation. Its range of habitats — such as saltmarsh, mudflats, oyster, and seagrass beds — is home to species like bass, seahorses, shellfish and internationally important seabird colonies.

The Solent was once the largest native oyster fishery in Europe, but it has since declined due to overfishing, disease, invasive species, habitat loss and poor water quality. In 2013, the fishery collapsed, and Blue Marine has been working to restore a self-sustaining population of native oysters, while demonstrating the benefits to people and nature.

Oyster beds are not the only important habitat to suffer — saltmarsh, seagrass beds, and seabird nesting habitats have also declined. More than 50 per cent of the saltmarsh has been lost since the 1860s, and all 650 hectares of seagrass beds are in poor condition.

Yet collectively these habitats create a resilient seascape. If



properly conserved, they provide numerous ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, nursery grounds for commercial fish, flood and coastal protection and improve water quality.

Blue Marine has assembled a group of partners and existing restoration projects with the aim of revitalising the Solent as a functioning seascape by improving the condition, extent, and connectivity of multiple marine and coastal habitats.

We brought together the nine other organisations in 2021 to develop the ambitious plan, and this year the partnership was successful in securing in-principle funding of \$5million as part of the Endangered Landscapes Programme.

The Solent Seascape Project will start in 2023, and we will begin developing a co-designed vision for the Solent's recovery with key stakeholders and community groups across the area.



The Solent



Above Restoration Science Officer Luke Helmer scatters oysters. **This image** Solent Project Manager Louise MacCullum finds a pipefish lurking in an oyster nursery **Photo** Luke Helmer



RESTORING MARINE LIFE



CONNECTING PEOPLE WITH THE SEA

A BILLION WOULD-BE BI-VALVES

We have been working since 2015 on native oyster populations in the Solent, and have restored more than 100,000 of the bi-valve molluscs through the installation of nurseries. These are filled with adult oysters, and pump larvae to the surrounding environment to boost population — in 2017 more than a billion larvae were released.

In 2021, we also created the first oyster reef in Langstone Harbour, to the north-east of the Solent near Hayling Island. In February 2022, with the help of 70 volunteers, a further 21,227 oysters were sorted, counted, cleaned and placed on to the reef, making it now home to 36,000 oysters.

Monitoring this year also showed species such as cuttlefish, juvenile bass, cat sharks, and even a seahorse occupying the new reef. To highlight the success of the project, we shot and launched a film, 'Solent: the Oyster's Return'.

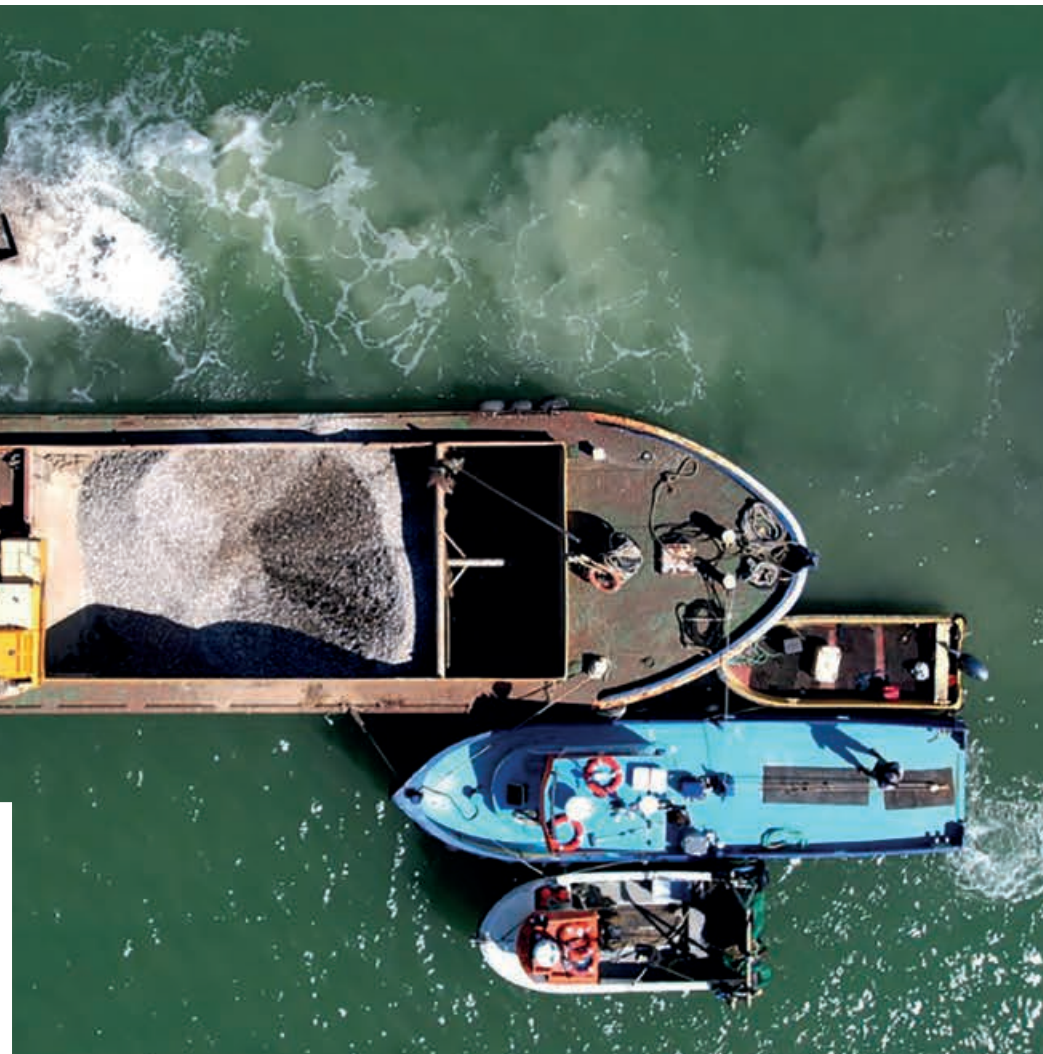
Looking forward, Blue Marine is planning its next reef, to be created towards Southampton in the River Hamble in Spring 2023. The reef will be 0.25ha in size, and will be part of the network planned across the seascape as part of the Solent Oyster Restoration Project.



BLACKWATER

TWICE THE CULTCH, TWICE THE REEF

Old shells and seabed harrowing are breathing new life into a native oyster fishery that dates back to Roman times



more than
60,000
members of the public engaged

Top deploying cultch **Photo** Jim Pullen. **Left** local oysterman Allan Bird **Above** outreach by the Essex Native Oyster Restoration Initiative **Photo** Matt Uttley. **Right** project officer Maria Hayden-Hughes installs a nursery in Wales. **Photo** Celine Gamble

The Blackwater in Essex, in south-east England, supports nationally important populations of native oysters within the Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Colne Estuaries Marine Conservation Zone. The area once had one of the UK's most productive fisheries, dating back to before the Romans, and is one of only a handful of native oyster fisheries in the country.

Blue Marine is a member of the Essex Native Oyster Restoration Initiative (ENORI), a partnership between conservation organisations, industry partners, academia and government. ENORI is undertaking both active and passive restoration work within the Blackwater, in order to bring back self-sustaining populations of native oysters.

Since 2018, ENORI has undertaken physical habitat creation through the deployment of cultch (old shell and stone) and seabed harrowing. This seabed restoration increases the available settlement material for young oysters and recreates lost reef structures. To date, ENORI has created the largest area of restored oyster habitat in the UK.

In 2022, the total area of oyster reef created through deployed cultch has been doubled to more than 15,000m². We have also undertaken a significant outreach programme, which has reached more than 17,500 members of the public.



CONNECTING PEOPLE
WITH THE SEA



SUPPORTING LOW-
IMPACT FISHING



RESTORING MARINE
LIFE

THE WILD OYSTERS PROJECT KICKSTART FOR THE NATIVES

Local volunteers across the UK are helping restore denuded populations

Launched in 2020, the Wild Oysters Project works in North-east England in Tyne & Wear, North Wales in Conwy Bay and in West Scotland in the Firth of Clyde. In each of the sites native oysters are either extinct or denuded, and human intervention is essential to recover these populations. We engage, enthuse and mobilise community groups, schools and businesses to take part in the restoration and be guided by a Working Group comprised of local stakeholders.

Each hub will provide a model for community restoration using Blue Marine's oyster nursery design and our experience of seabed restoration. Oyster nurseries provide a larval source to seabed restoration sites, where we will begin the restoration process by improving the habitat and deploying native oysters.

So far, 141 oyster nurseries, holding more than 4,000 adult oysters, have been installed into marinas and ports. They have released millions of larvae into the local water systems to kickstart the restoration of native oysters.

In our outreach programme, by the end of 2022, we had reached 16,800 students through education and learning modules, trained 185 citizen scientists and engaged with 45,250 members of the public through general outreach.

We are moving on to Phase 2 of the project, applying for marine licences, and plan to start active seabed restoration in all three sites in 2023.



SAVE THE STURGEON

HEALTHY RIVERS
NEED THEIR CLEANERS

Sturgeon provide a natural purification service for waterways — but this ancient fish is on the Critically Endangered list. Our campaign aims to see them back in the UK and thriving

The European and the Atlantic sturgeon once thrived across Europe, and in coastal waters and main rivers in Britain, but have since become among the most Critically Endangered species in the world. Following re-stocking programmes in Europe, however, we are beginning to see the fish returning to UK waters, particularly in the south-west of England.

Sturgeon are crucial for rivers and estuaries because they feed on dead fish and invertebrates, naturally cleaning the environment and contributing to healthy ecosystems. Over-exploitation, habitat degradation and pollution have been key factors in their decline, as well as the installation of weirs, which obstruct their access to oxygen-rich gravel beds for spawning.

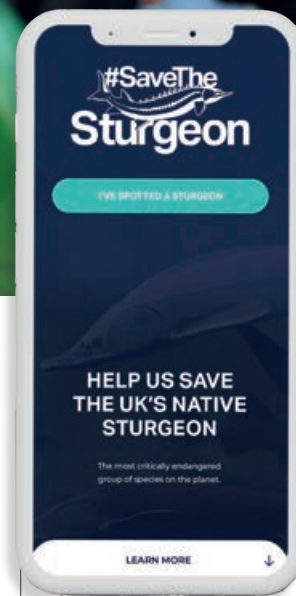
Blue Marine has been building the case to restore the fish, and assessing the feasibility of the Bristol Channel as a potential restoration area. In 2020, we were part of the coalition that set up the UK Sturgeon Alliance, which collaborates on the goal of restoration to Great Britain. Through this network, we are receiving improved engagement with regulators and policy-makers.

In March 2022 we created the Save The Sturgeon website to raise awareness and provide a platform for new and old sightings to be recorded, contributing to the UK database. The rivers Severn, Wye, and Tywi have been assessed for their habitat suitability, and this work has been fed into a preliminary assessment report of the Bristol Channel for sturgeon recovery.



Blue Marine also made a field visit this year to a German hatchery to learn about its re-stocking successes and how they can be replicated in future UK programmes. The Save the Sturgeon website has had more than 5,348 views, with additional sightings being submitted as a result. The Bristol Channel assessment has been completed and will help inform future restoration potential in the area.

Looking forward, Blue Marine will continue to work closely with the UK Sturgeon Alliance to develop a national action plan for European and Atlantic sturgeon restoration. This will identify the strategies needed to ensure that sturgeon returning to UK waters have every chance to thrive.



RESTORING MARINE
LIFE

Above the Save the Sturgeon website has attracted 4,322 users

AT-RISK FISHERIES

SYMPOSIUM
FOR A WHELK

Safeguarding At-Risk Fisheries is a forum for everyone in small-scale inshore fishing. Its ideas will be used to lobby government to protect non-quota species like cuttlefish and crab

Nearly three-quarters of the UK's fishing fleet operates boats under 10 metres. Small-scale inshore fisheries are an important component of local economies and the country's heritage. Where well managed, they provide a local and sustainable source of seafood.

Many inshore fishermen target non-quota species such as whelk, crab, lobster, scallops and cuttlefish. There is insufficient data about these stocks, and little or no management of the large offshore fleet that land the majority of the catch. This leads to over-fishing.

In response to increasing concern among conservationists and the industry itself about declining stocks, Blue Marine launched the Safeguarding At-Risk Fisheries project, focusing on cuttlefish, whelk, crab and lobster. The UK government is currently developing a suite of Fisheries Management Plans for these fisheries, and this provides a golden opportunity to promote the adoption of measures that protect stocks and the small-scale, static-gear fishermen who depend on them.

Over the past year, Blue Marine has run a series of symposiums that have brought together more than 300 stakeholders to share knowledge, research and ideas for ways to manage these at-risk fisheries.

The Cuttlefish Symposium in November 2021, and the Whelk Symposium in June 2022 brought together attendees including fishermen, fisheries managers, government agencies, conservation groups and citizen scientists.

Together they shared information about current stocks, trends in fisheries and the range of management measures in place or needed to reverse the current declines. The Crab and Lobster Symposium in November 2022 saw an attendance of 255.

In the spring of 2023, the Proceedings and recommendations from all three events will be published and input to the government's Fisheries Management Plans.



SUPPORTING LOW-
IMPACT FISHING

Main image the cuttlefish, subject of Blue Marine's first symposium. Whelk, crab and lobster have followed **Photo** Martin Stevens



The United
Kingdom



SUSSEX

REBIRTH OF AN UNDERWATER FOREST

After a successful campaign to ban destructive fishing, divers can see signs of something stirring in the kelp fields of the Sussex coast

Kelp beds used to stretch for more than 40 km along the coast of Sussex, in southern England, providing a habitat for important commercial fish species. Since 1987, however, more than 96 per cent of the area once covered by kelp has disappeared. Years of destructive trawling, combined with increased storm intensity and other human pressures have decimated this underwater forest.

To reverse this decline, the Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (IFCA) proposed a byelaw to prohibit trawling in more than 300 sq km of seabed. Blue Marine worked with the Sussex Wildlife Trust, Marine Conservation Society and Big Wave Media on the 'Help our Kelp' campaign, which gained overwhelming public support for the byelaw. In March 2021, the Sussex Nearshore Trawling Byelaw was approved, creating one of the largest inshore areas closed to trawling in England's waters.

Blue Marine is a key partner in the Sussex Kelp Restoration Project, which arose from the Help Our Kelp partnership, and monitors the effect of the ban on kelp habitats and inshore fisheries. In 2022, local divers and fishermen have observed the early signs of kelp recovery in some areas. Working with Sussex IFCA and the University of Sussex, we have been filming marine life at 28 sites to track the abundance and diversity of kelp habitat species. These surveys will allow us to map changes inside and outside the Byelaw area.

To measure the value of recovery of the kelp habitat to commercial fisheries, Blue Marine is working with local fishermen to study the crab and lobster pot fishery.

Following initial surveys in 2021 off Selsey, south of Chichester, in 2022 we surveyed additional sites off Brighton and Eastbourne, to gain a fuller picture of stocks across the Sussex district.

Despite the removal of trawling, other factors persist. High sediment levels reduce light needed for growth and smother juvenile kelp, as well as commercially important crustacean species. Blue Marine has commissioned a report on the sources, sinks and trends in sediment levels along the Sussex coast, and will bring stakeholders together in 2023 to identify actions to reduce levels of sediment from land and marine sources.

Sussex Coast



RESTORING MARINE LIFE



TACKLING UNSUSTAINABLE FISHING

Below University of Sussex students track the abundance and diversity of kelp habitat species



OFFSHORE WIND FARMS

HARNESSING THE WINDS OF CHANGE

From seaweed cultivation to shellfish habitats, turbines in the sea offer all kinds of opportunities for rewilding

Across Europe, the idea that offshore wind farms can play a role in restoring nature is gaining momentum. Several pilot schemes are underway in Holland and Belgium exploring seaweed cultivation and native oyster restoration. 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.

The potential for rewilding the sea around UK wind farms is considerable since the UK has the biggest offshore wind generating capacity in the world, and the UK government has committed to providing over a third of British electricity from offshore wind power by 2030.

In 2021 Blue Marine developed a methodology to analyse over 50 wind farms and their suitability for restoration or habitat enhancement in the UK. This work built on previous research to assess the viability of placing native oysters within an Orsted-operated windfarm — Gunfleet Sands, in the northern Thames Estuary — to boost populations in a nearby Marine Protected Area.

In 2022 Blue Marine held a successful online event — Opportunities for nature recovery within offshore wind farms around the UK — attended by more than 330 people from 20 countries, to explore the opportunities for biodiversity net-gain policy, species restoration and habitat enhancement. A summary report of the event was published in April and shared across our networks.

We also commissioned MRAG, a marine consultancy, to conduct a review of all the designated wind farm locations in the UK, to illustrate the scale of opportunity for nature recovery within them. This has identified several nature-inclusive design options, and is in the process of developing a decision tool that can be used by wind-farm developers to determine which options might be implemented.

In 2023 Blue Marine will host workshops for all key stakeholders to assess the MRAG study and discuss the technical and ecological viability of the nature-inclusive design options identified for each wind farm. Following these, we hope to identify collaborative opportunities to pilot some of the designs in wind farms across the country.



RESTORING MARINE LIFE



STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

BLUE UNITS

Blue Marine's 'units' are think tanks and operation centres in their own right, but also feed into our projects. As such, Blue Marine is shaped like an octopus, with the head/body representing our projects and the eight tentacles representing our eight units.

Blue Economics P82

Blue Climate P90

Reassess the way the ocean is valued

Blue Education P86

Blue Media P84

Blue Science P88

Raise awareness about ocean life and the challenges it faces.

LEGAL

Blue Policy P78

Blue Legal P80

Blue Investigations P76

Challenge the way the ocean is exploited

ECONOMICS

CARBON

EDUCATION

MEDIA

SCIENCE

POLICY

INVESTIGATIONS

BLUE INVESTIGATIONS

REVELATIONS TO EXPOSE DESTRUCTIVE AND UNSAFE FISHERIES

Through targeted examination, research and reporting, Blue Investigations pursues and combats malpractice in the world’s oceans

Blue Investigations works to research, expose and combat the harmful and unsustainable practices that are wrecking our oceans. In the past this has included campaigning against destructive activities such as electric pulse fishing and deep-sea mining.

In 2022, Blue Investigations has focused on the rampant overfishing taking place in the Indian Ocean. Our work revealed evidence of unauthorised fishing on the part of EU-owned tuna purse-seine vessels, including data which suggest that fishing activity took place in the waters of several developing Indian Ocean coastal states, including Somalia and India.

These reports, which were published in May to coincide with the start of the annual Indian Ocean Tuna Commission meeting in Seychelles, also exposed widespread misuse of the Automatic Identification System (AIS), an important safety tool that transmits a ship’s position.



In 2023 the focus of
our investigations
will expand into the
Atlantic and beyond



THE TEAMS THAT DRIVE OUR STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

Spanish-flagged purse seine vessels operating in the Western Indian Ocean ‘went dark’ by switching off their AIS for an average of almost three quarters of the two-year study period. Some did so for nine months at a time, in likely contravention of EU law and significantly jeopardising crew safety. We are currently investigating the legal implications of this behaviour, as well as the role of the insurance industry in enabling it.

Blue Investigations will continue to target those responsible for the decline of tuna populations in the Indian Ocean in 2023. In addition, we intend to look at the use of harmful and potentially unlawful drifting fish aggregating devices by these fleets. The focus of our investigations will also expand into the Atlantic and beyond, and will include work on shark mortality trends in fisheries across the globe.



Left industrial fishing of tropical tuna **Photo Alex Holford/Greenpeace**
Below why are shark mortality trends on the up? **Photo George Karbus**

BLUE POLICY & BLUE BRUSSELS

MAKING WAVES IN THE CORRIDORS OF POWER

Vital decisions on ocean health are made many miles from the sea. Blue Policy works to ensure that laws and government policies deliver on political commitments

The decisions that determine whether our oceans will be restored and protected — or continue to be overexploited and degraded — are often made in capital cities far from the sea. Blue Policy was set up to ensure that meaningful, lasting change in law and policy are delivered.

It is just as essential that we advocate for healthy oceans in the corridors of power as at the water's edge. Working closely with Blue Marine's projects teams and with our Legal, Investigations and Science units, our Policy team works 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. We work to end overfishing, introduce genuine protection in marine 'protected' areas and lead on Blue Marine's efforts to deliver meaningful change in management of the global oceans.

In 2022, we expanded our reach and influence into the global sphere. We worked alongside other NGOs to produce a global ocean treaty that is the first step in protecting the high seas. We expect this process to be finalised in early 2023.

In November 2022, we held the first Blue Policy parliamentary event – a successful evening in the Houses of Parliament where we were able to deliver Blue Marine's message directly to lawmakers in the seat of UK government.



THE TEAMS THAT DRIVE OUR STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

At our event in the Houses of Parliament we delivered Blue Marine's message directly to lawmakers in the seat of UK government

BLUE BRUSSELS

KEY VOICE IN THE EU

Our team brings campaign energy to the hub of European law

Since the UK left the European Union, Blue Marine's position has become even more significant. Bilateral discussions in Brussels between the UK and other member states, which would have taken place at a government level, are now left to the non-governmental sector.

In 2022, we made sure that the UK's protection of the UK part of the Dogger Bank became European best practice for the management of offshore MPAs. Based on the UK precedent, we have been working with environment groups in Brussels to bring in similar measures in German and Dutch waters, and have an ongoing official complaint with European Commission.

Following our successful use in 2021 of the EU Habitats law to protect seagrass meadows around Italy's Aeolian Islands, we have also been pressing for measures in Greece and France. Blue Marine has also tried at the EU level to broker agreement for a marine park in Jersey.

We have campaigned both in Brussels and the UK for North Atlantic fish stocks to be allocated at sustainable levels, and for appropriate controls over the massive EU distant-water fleet, which is managed from Brussels but insured in London. In the Brussels community of environment groups, Blue Marine is a key voice, providing energy and thought leadership.

Opposite page
cross-party support – (from left) Mark Spencer, Minister of State for Food, Farming & Fisheries; Thérèse Coffey, Secretary of State for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, with Blue Marine's Charles Clover and Clare Brook; Labour MP Alex Sobel.

Photo above
George Karbus

BLUE LEGAL

IN PURSUIT OF JUSTICE FOR THE SEA

When protection needs enforcing by law, it's the Blue Legal team who lead the way. This year they won two major victories — and safeguarded 12,331 sq km of ocean

At Blue Legal, we press for the proper creation and enforcement of law at sea, and conduct interventions to protect the marine environment in the UK and beyond. This year the unit has had two significant and strategically important victories. We have directly helped to protect an astounding 12,331 sq km of ocean (an area over half the size of Wales), through actions to protect the Dogger Bank, east of the UK, from bottom trawling, and the Severn Estuary, to the south-west, from the impacts of Hinkley Point C nuclear power station.

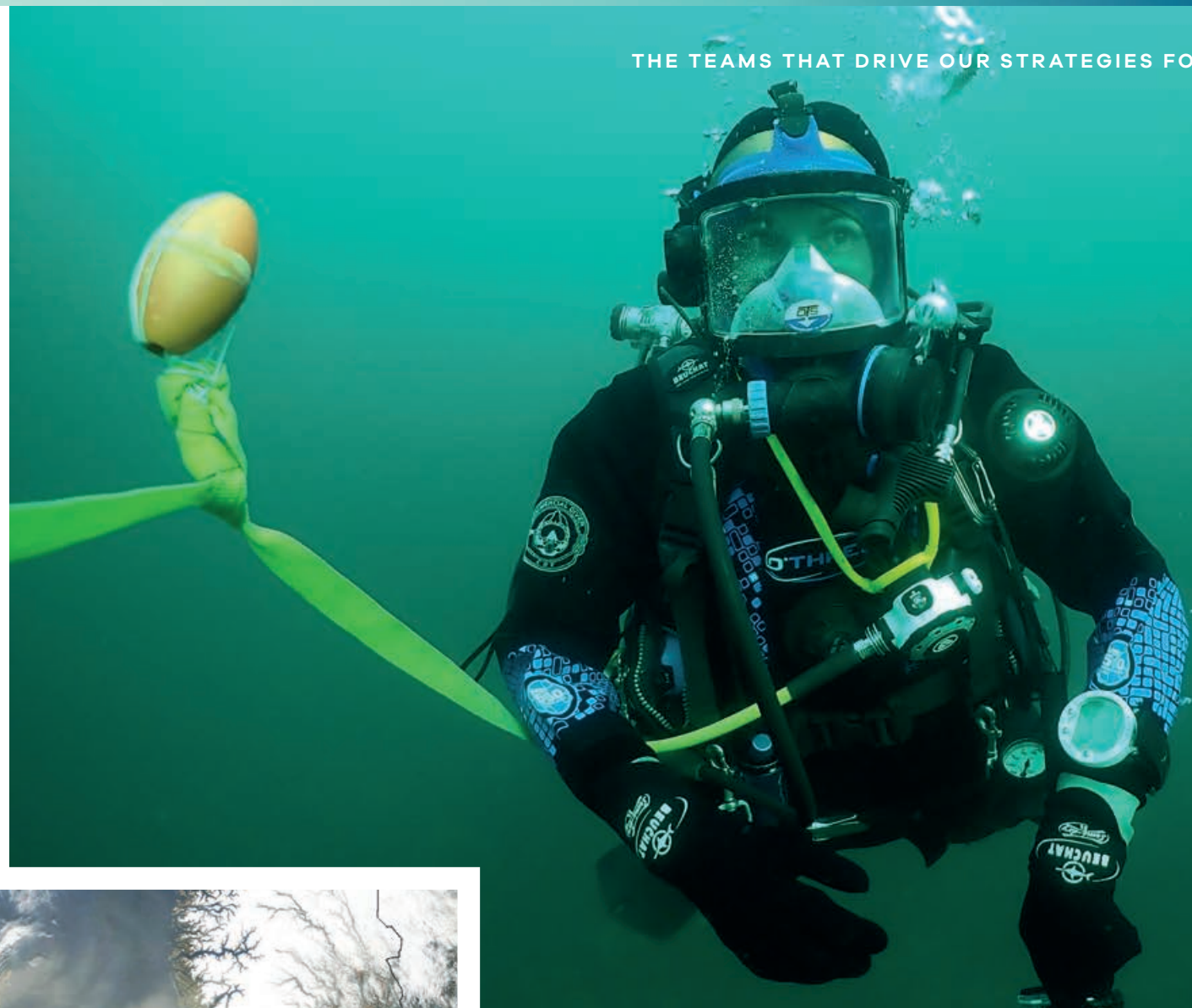
The Dogger Bank is a huge sandbank in the North Sea, which was once a fertile range of hills occupied by early farmers. Our legal action here has excluded damaging bottom-towed fishing gears. Both of these cases have helped to establish legal precedent, with the Dogger case helping to create an important benchmark and trigger government agencies to protect the UK's entire suite of offshore Marine Protected Areas — at 250,000 sq km, an area far larger than Great Britain. Our legal and policy teams are now deeply engaged with government officials to ensure this is done properly.



THE TEAMS THAT DRIVE OUR STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE



To date we have commented on laws in 30 different jurisdictions. Next year we are looking to expand our team



The Dogger Bank straddles UK and EU waters, and our work has also been a catalyst for action in Brussels, where Blue Marine's legal unit and other EU NGOs are making sure that the UK precedent is continued in Europe, notwithstanding the UK's departure from the EU. We hope to be able to report success there next year.

At Hinkley Point we are working to ensure that, at the very least, large infrastructure projects need to pay environmental compensation for the harm they cause to MPAs. At Hinkley this is through its huge cooling system, which is directly abstracted from the Severn Estuary, a vital fish nursery area, despite its brown waters.

Over the year we have also worked hard to stop fishing beyond scientific advice in the UK and EU; to stop vessels in the Indian Ocean switching off their Automatic Identification Systems to evade regulations; and to stop the indiscriminate use in the Indian Ocean of drifting fish aggregating devices. These are used to catching fish illegally on the high seas, in

pursuit of the yellowfin tuna — a stock on the verge of collapse.

In Scotland, we have also sought to bring the salmon farm industry under better control, following damning reports by the Scottish Parliament. We have shared the results of a Blue Marine-organised survey that demonstrated high levels of seabed contamination by copper in a former salmon farm site, and the Crown Estate Scotland has agreed to change its leasing arrangements to increase the financial obligations on its tenants.

We remain concerned about salmon farming, and there are other avenues that we are investigating which relate to the operation of salmon farms in Scottish waters. Any of these could result in more formal legal action next year.

In addition, the Legal Unit provides support to projects across Blue Marine: to date we have commented on laws in 30 different jurisdictions, and over the next year we are looking to expand our team.

Above our salmon survey work in Scotland sparked changes in the law. **Left** outline of Dogger Bank, now fully protected

THE TRUE COST OF OVERFISHING

In the oceans exploitation is valued higher than protection — but that just doesn't add up. The team at Blue Economics has the figures to revolutionise this way of thinking

Main image
subsidies currently disadvantage small-scale fishers. **Right** the Blue Economics team: Sriram Natarajan, Clare Brook, Emily Norris, Kaija Barisa

The focus of Blue Economics is to quantify the real cost of destructive fishing, and at the same time to develop new ways of directing capital at scale towards ocean protection and restoration. Now in its second year, Blue Economics has seen growing interest and demand for our work from both Blue Marine's corporate partners and our internal project managers.

We are involved in developing the first biodiversity credit in the UK for our Solent Seascape project with various partners. Through this work we hope to catalyse the market for biodiversity credits and apply the methodology across an increasing number of Blue Marine's projects.

Alongside biodiversity credits, we have been researching, developing, and modelling sustainable finance mechanisms for a range of international projects. These include tourism fees, revolving funds and carbon credits. Following two project trips to Turkey and Mexico these models are now being finalised.

In the UK, Blue Economics is helping provide the evidence base for a just transition away from harmful bottom-towed gear. We have completed an in-depth analysis on a transition away from bottom-trawling for nephrops (langoustines) in Berwickshire, which will be used as a template to explore other case study

transitions next year. These will then be supporting documents for our campaigns and further mission to end all bottom-trawling in UK MPAs.

Alongside our project work, we have been providing internal and external think-pieces on a range of subjects. We have written, and are publishing, a blog series covering:

- The blue 'natural' economy
- Overpaying for overfishing: bottom trawling
- Overpaying for overfishing: subsidies
- Fishing for funding: supporting the small-scale
- Fishing for funding: financing large-scale protection
- Blue carbon: giving credit where it's due
- Nitrates and biodiversity
- The future of fishing: what you can do

These blogs show the ways that in the oceans exploitation is valued higher than protection —and how this mindset can be changed.

SUBSIDIES — TWO BREAKTHROUGHS

Government fishing subsidies support the exploitation of our oceans and nature. It's a problem that is centuries old. But 2022 saw two important breakthroughs. In June, the World Trade Organisation produced an agreement that would ban the subsidising of illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing — as well as subsidising the pursuit of overfished stocks — by ending subsidies for fishing on the unregulated high seas.

Then in December at COP15, a global agreement was reached that by 2025 harmful subsidies will be identified, eliminated, and phased out or reformed in a 'proportionate, just, fair, effective, and equitable way'. It also called for a reduction of these subsidies by at least USD 500 billion by 2030. The process will start with the most harmful incentives, while in parallel scaling up investment and 'positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity'.

Blue Marine is delighted that governments are beginning to see the value in protecting our natural resources. We want to use this momentum to channel private and public finance into conservation projects, and to demonstrate what value this can have for climate, nature, and people.



BLUE MEDIA

INSPIRING, ENGAGING, ELEVATING

From films with Jude Law to our Ocean Awards, opinion polls to campaigns for Greek shoppers, Blue Media spreads our message in myriad ways

Blue Media uses films, press and social media campaigns to engage audiences, inspire action and amplify the work of Blue Marine. The team works closely with external partners, and collaborates with internal projects and units to add impact and effect change.

In 2022, we held regulators and decision-makers to account for both protection of species and habitat. We secured the support of Hollywood actor Jude Law for our campaign #BringBackBritishCod, which urged the UK government to set responsible and sustainable quotas, and gained 10,000 public signatures in 12 weeks.

This followed Blue Media's support for the campaign by our colleagues on Blue Legal that led to the protection of the Dogger Bank and three other sites, doubling England's area of highly protected ocean from four to eight per cent. Further afield, Blue Media used press exposure in the UK and continental Europe to support Blue Investigations as it exposed the flagrant unauthorised fishing of yellowfin tuna in the Indian Ocean.

Shining a light on stories of success, Blue Media released a series of documentaries and short films. Ascension: Ocean of Life, celebrated the island achieving a 440,000 sq km MPA in its waters. Solent: The Oyster's Return documented the process of oyster restoration, from volunteers in the biosecurity lab to the



building of the new reef itself. Other films showed the success of our marine management projects in Turkey's Gökova Bay and elsewhere. All of them aimed to inspire viewers with proof that marine protection really works – for everyone.

Blue Media also works to change behaviour around marine protection. In Greece this year we partnered with iSea for the campaign #PickTheAlien, encouraging consumers to eat invasive species such as lionfish and not more vulnerable apex predators like groupers and swordfish. In the Maldives, we launched #GentleToGiants and our Whale Shark Code of Conduct films with Maldives Whale Shark Research. These urge people visiting shark sites to choose tour operators that support a code of conduct. We hope to roll this out in St Helena and Madagascar, too.

Back in the UK, we ran a public poll in partnership with Jersey National Trust that showed overwhelming support on the island for a marine park. We took the

results to the Jersey government, and there has since been a commitment to extend the island's MPA network. Hopes for the marine park are still high. Meanwhile in southern England our #SaveTheSturgeon campaign, with mobile-first web development and short animations, reached 350,000 people and urged them to log sightings of these magnificent 'dinosaur fish'.

Finally, on a global stage, Blue Media produced and managed content from the 2022 Ocean Awards, which reached 1.6 million on social media, inspiring the next generation of ocean activists. And at the close of the year, we pushed the narrative around the ocean at COP27 through a film about blue carbon, supported again by Jude Law through a powerful narration.

Left a still from our film about the women fishers of the Gökova Bay MPA in Turkey. **Below** Matt Jarvis shoots oysters for a Blue Marine film about our restoration programme. **Below right** our opinion poll on Jersey drove the case for a marine park



BLUE EDUCATION

ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE TO GET INVOLVED

Blue Education uses celebrity-narrated websites, 'makerzines' and augmented reality to inspire the ocean advocates of tomorrow

Most people around the world receive little to no education about the ocean, primarily due to the under-representation of marine topics in school curricula. Individual connection with the ocean is also highly variable and accessibility is unequal.

Blue Education aims to bridge these gaps by delivering free and accessible resources to people all over the world, inspiring them to become ocean advocates. Blue Education has supported the development of educational programmes in six project sites and has created a multi award-winning website, an app, an interactive booklet and numerous learning resources that are freely available online.

In late 2021, Blue Education launched The Sea We Breathe, an immersive website that communicates the link between the ocean and climate change. Narrated by actor and writer Stephen Fry, the site has now reached over 1.1 million users from more than 180 countries and regions. It has won eight awards, including a prestigious Webby award for Best Non-profit Website.

This year, Blue Education helped to develop a pilot 'Ocean Observatory' in Scotland, featuring high-resolution footage from Berwickshire's MPA. Using this resource, we aim to encourage young people to get involved with marine science and data collection.



Blue Education supported the Maldives team to create an engaging educational website for fishers and school children to learn about the importance of their local coral reefs. The site hosts a series of fun quizzes, which will be tested in schools across Laamu atoll.

In the Channel Islands, to complement the rollout of the Jersey Snorkel Trail, we created a bespoke education package covering topics such as blue carbon, local species identification and marine food webs.

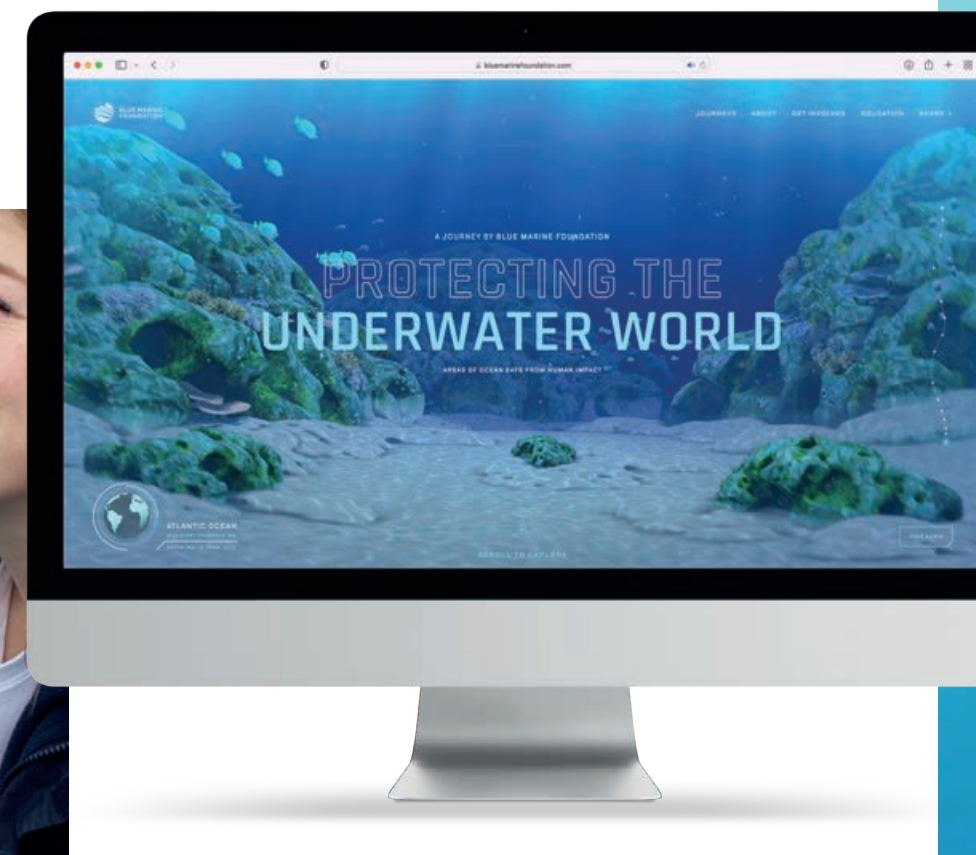
We have now distributed more than 5,200 copies of our interactive 'makerzine' called An Ocean Adventure. To increase the impact of this popular resource, we have created a new edition of the makerzine featuring Italy's Aeolian Islands.

Below School session in the Solent. **Right** The Sea We Breathe – seen by 1.1 million. **Below right** a makerzine

THE TEAMS THAT DRIVE OUR STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

In 2023, Blue Education will further explore the use of virtual reality, augmented reality and video games in marine education, all of which have the potential to reach vast audiences, including those with disabilities or socio-economic barriers. These tools can encourage pro-environmental behaviour and battle eco-anxiety.

In partnership with global yachting event The Ocean Race, The Sea We Breathe will be featured at 'race villages' around the world in 2023. And following the success of the Aeolian Islands marine education programme, we will aim to replicate and expand this into other areas of the Mediterranean.



HOW WELL PROTECTED ARE MARINE PROTECTED AREAS?

There's nothing like robust scientific evidence to drive policy change. For the Blue Science unit, that means rigorous enquiry and analysis — plus a strict methodology to determine MPA compliance

Marine conservation is best achieved when underpinned by robust scientific evidence. A sound scientific foundation helps Blue Marine to strengthen the case for increased marine protection and achieve long-term conservation wins. Blue Science is a dedicated unit that provides strategic scientific evidence, position papers and academic research publications to support Blue Marine's ambitions and drive policy change.

This year, Blue Science kick-started its primary research project, 'How well protected are the UK's Marine Protected Areas?'. The project is underpinned by the '30 by 30' target, which is essential to protect marine biodiversity and the ocean's integral role in mitigating climate change.

The UK appears to have taken a leading position on this, designating hundreds of MPAs, which cover 38 per cent of the country's home waters. Despite this, the MPA network remains poorly protected from potentially highly damaging activities. This makes it hard to determine how much protection is present on the water.

The Blue Science Unit is using 'The MPA Guide: A Framework to Achieve Global Goals for the Ocean' to evaluate the UK's MPAs, both in home waters and its overseas territories (UKOTs). This is a globally applicable MPA-evaluation method, first published in 'Science' in September 2021 by leading marine scientists. Research findings are also feeding into Blue Marine's UK-based research on destructive fisheries, many of which are operating within MPAs.

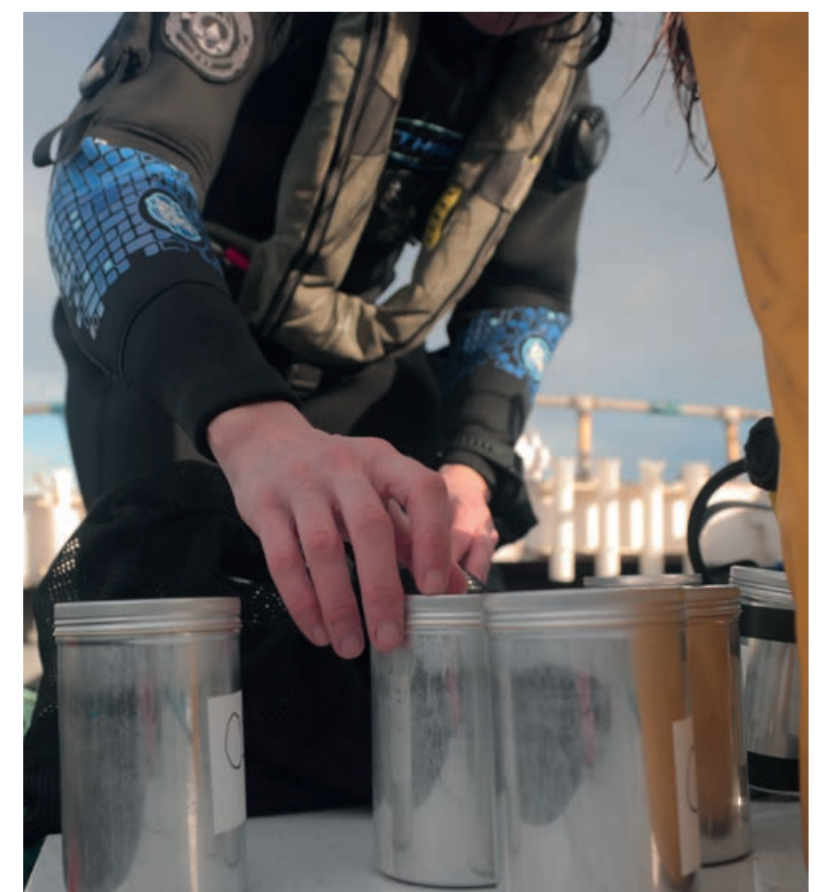
Blue Science is also working with the team behind MPAtlas. Created by the Marine Conservation Institute, MPAtlas is a key resource for accessing and analysing

information about global MPAs. We are using one of the site's databases that applies the MPA Guide methodology to designations, which will help accelerate our analysis of UK and UKOT MPAs. The project is also being supported by a number of postgraduate students who have focused on MPA Guide assessments in the UK for their Masters dissertations.

Looking forward, Blue Science aims for this research to inform the general public about the reality of marine protection in the UK, and drive progress on achieving 30 per cent effective ocean protection by 2030.

Main image Periclimenes or glass shrimp, widely found in reef ecosystems. **Photo** AlexTattersall. **Right** collecting data in a marine protected area

The UK has designated hundreds of MPAs, covering 38 per cent of its waters. But the network remains poorly enforced



BLUE CLIMATE

THE OCEAN IS OUR SECRET WEAPON

A single idea drives the team at Blue Climate — that the world has no greater ally in its existential struggle than the ocean's natural ability to sequester CO₂

THE TEAMS THAT DRIVE OUR STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE

BLUE MARINE AT COP27

'BLUE-ING' THE PARIS AGREEMENT

A reminder that marine protection is climate action

At the UNFCCC 27th Conference of the Parties, in November 2022 in Egypt, the ocean had its first permanent home in the Blue Zone. Blue Marine was a founding partner of this pavilion, and it was here that Gabriella Gilkes presented the Convex Seascape Survey to an audience 500 strong (see p18), while our development director Dan Crockett spoke on three panel events. Our Blue Climate unit also contributed to the launch of the High-Quality Blue Carbon Principles, which will help ensure the blue carbon market is transparent and equitable.

The importance of 'blue-ing' the Paris Agreement was central to many discussions, and was reflected in landmark announcements including: Egypt extending protection to 2,000km of Red Sea coral reefs; President Macron of France calling for a ban on deep-sea mining; and nine countries, including the US and UK, joining the Global Offshore Wind Alliance.

The conference also saw an historic victory for a loss and damage fund to assist developing nations vulnerable to climate change, but disappointing progress in emissions reduction to bring us closer to 1.5 degrees. Despite this, COP 27 was an important step for the recognition of the ocean as a climate change solution, and reminded the global stage that marine protection is climate action.

Below Blue Marine's Maddie Millington-Drake, Dan Crockett and Gabriella Gilkes

Kelp is at hand forests of the algae absorb large amounts of carbon. **Photo** Martin Stevens

At the Blue Climate unit, our aim is to prove the value of the ocean as a climate change solution. Our vision is for the blue carbon sinks and flows in our waters to be valued and protected for the carbon sequestration and other benefits they provide.

We want to achieve large-scale biodiversity protection and restoration through better understanding of blue carbon habitats and build blue carbon opportunities within Blue Marine's projects. We also want to contribute to the development of a trustworthy and equitable voluntary carbon market. The voluntary carbon market is a growing sector, where organisations buy carbon credits in order to offset their emissions.

To this end, in 2022 we co-founded the UK Blue Carbon Forum, a group of more than 60 research institutions, government agencies and eNGOs, to share evidence and ambition, and try to inform policy on this

topic. We consider this forum an excellent tool to drive policy change in the UK.

We also co-founded and are supporting the Verra Seascape Carbon Working Group. Verra is the largest developer of carbon standards and climate action. The group aims to provide evidence and support for innovative seascape blue carbon projects, such as quantifying disturbance to carbon sequestration from trawling and dredging.

We are supporting the Blue Carbon Initiative Kelp Carbon Working Group, which is seeking to create a consensus around kelp as a blue carbon habitat. Our intention here is to understand the process by which a new carbon sink will be considered by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Blue Marine has positioned the Solent Seascape Restoration Project as a key

example of blue carbon habitat restoration. The project will examine and develop innovative economic structures around blue carbon credits, biodiversity credits and potentially nitrate credits. These credits are units that measure recovery in biodiversity due to conservation action.

In June 2022, the blue carbon seascape first displayed by Blue Marine at COP26 in 2021 was replicated at the UN Ocean Conference in Lisbon. In November, at COP27, we were co-founders of the conference's first 'ocean pavilion'. In addition, we hosted a side event, where we presented the Convex Seascape project.

The UK Blue Carbon Forum has grown considerably in its first year. It is now working closely with government agencies to drive policy change. In 2023 we look forward to convening the entire Forum in person, rather than online, for the first time.



FUNDING & FINANCE



THANK YOU



Blue Marine would like to express our gratitude to all our donors, who support and enable all the work we do. In particular, we would like to thank Barclays, which is supporting a portfolio of Blue Marine's projects with a generous donation of £5 million over three years. Now in its third year, the donation has enabled extensive areas of ocean to be protected, increased recognition of the ocean in the climate conversation, and contributed to a shift in the way the ocean is valued.

Blue Marine would also like to extend a special thank-you to our major donors, who have supported our work over a number of years: Rolly van Rappard and Françoise Wanninkhof, Peter Lürssen, Winch Design, the UBS Optimus Foundation, Alex Beard, Cristina Stenbeck, CVC Capital Partners, James Hopkins, Family Kalbassi, Kaltroco, Mike Sharp, Paul Sykes, VITA Yachts and Six Senses. Finally, special thanks to Blue Marine co-founder and trustee, George Duffield, who has worked so hard to locate new sources of funding.

Photo George Karbus

MAJOR PARTNERS

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



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Corporate partners provide Blue Marine with core support and a global platform from which to raise awareness of our ocean and our mission.

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TRUSTS AND FOUNDATIONS

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

The Don Quixote Foundation is supporting our work in Turkey, the Dutch Caribbean, Blue Legal, Blue Media, Blue Brussels and other MPA work. UBS Optimus Foundation supports our work on Ascension Island, in Italy and in Greece, while the Garfield Weston Foundation provides core funding to underpin all of our project work.

Our UK work is generously supported by funders,

including the Hampshire Foundation, which supports our work to improve UK MPAs; the John Ellerman Foundation, which supports both our UK and overseas territory projects; and NFWF and the EQ Foundation, which help us to restore native oysters in the Solent.

Several trusts and foundations also support our units, with the Waterloo Foundation supporting Blue Investigations' work to tackle overfishing in the Indian Ocean, Flotilla Foundation supporting our work to value the ocean as a climate change solution, and Postcode Planet Trust supporting Blue Education to inspire the next generation of ocean advocates.



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Photo George Karbus

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BLUE MARINE YACHT CLUB

DEBUT AUCTION RAISES £1 MILLION

Momentum builds behind the Club as more
superyacht players pledge to join

At the 2022 Monaco Yacht Show in September, we hosted our first ever Blue Marine Yacht Club (BMYC) auction at Le Meridien Beach Plaza hotel, in the company of founding patron HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco.

The night was generously sponsored by long-term major partner, Lürssen GmbH, and partner UBS Optimus, with unique prizes donated by our other wonderful partners Adnams, Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance, MOKE International and Steve Edge Design.

Two exclusive Blue Marine Electric MOKEs sold for €250,000 each, and thanks to the UBS Optimus partnership, Blue Marine also received 10% match funding on top of the winning bids, bringing the total raised to more than £1 million. As more superyacht players pledged to join, it was a night to feel the momentum building behind the BMYC.

'I am proud on becoming a new three-star BMYC member. It is critical that we come together — and gratifying to know my donations to Blue Marine are used so efficiently in building a better future for our oceans.'

**DAVID & MELISSA MACNEIL,
FORT LAUDERDALE, USA, 3-STAR
MEMBERS AND WINNERS OF THE
ORIGINAL BLUE MARINE MOKE**

'I've covered many miles under sail, and I'm increasingly aware how lucky I have been to enjoy the sea. It is vital that the world's oceans are in a fit state not only to be enjoyed by yachtsmen, but to support the species that live there. That's why I've become a BMYC member, supporting Blue Marine's invaluable work to improve and maintain our oceans.'

NICK EDMISTON, CHAIRMAN EDMISTON, 1-STAR MEMBER



HSH Prince Albert II of
Monaco with Blue Marine Co-
founder Chris Gorell Barnes

The second Blue Marine MOKE was bought by 3-star BMYC member Peter Lürssen, who decided live on the night to donate it to The Prince. He gratefully received the gift, and we hope to see it zipping around Monaco, raising more awareness for our oceans.

'We can look back on 2022 with pride. With the help of a colleague, we ensured the funding of all of Blue Marine's project asks, enabling progress of marine conservation projects all around the world. Blue Marine is making a tangible difference.'

PETER LÜRSSEN, CEO LÜRSSEN, 3-STAR MEMBER

'Since the launch of our partnership with Blue Marine Foundation in 2020, UBS clients have committed and donated more than 10 million Euro. We match all client donations with 10 per cent.'

**ALEJANDRO VELEZ, COUNTRY HEAD,
UBS MONACO**

MAKE MINE A MOKE

Due to the buzz around the Blue Marine MOKE, MOKE International will produce a limited edition of 30 ocean-themed electric MOKEs, with a slightly different design to the original. Buyers were confirmed off the back of the auction, and will literally be driving ocean awareness. Each sale includes a donation to support Blue Marine's 30 x 30 mission, to have 30 per cent of our oceans protected by 2030. We expect them to sell fast.



THE GROWING FAMILY OF THE BMYC

New BMYC members were also welcomed on board, as guests signed up on the night, wanting to be part of this influential group that is so united in its mission to protect the future of our oceans.

'Blue Marine impacts and inspires in all the incredible work they do, and it is a privilege for our family to support their progress via the Blue Marine Yacht Club. Protecting and restoring life in the oceans is now crucial — and we want to help in any way we can.'

**JAMES KALBASSI, CEO PARAGON
BROKERS, 1-STAR MEMBER**

3-STAR MEMBERS DIG DEEP TO RAISE A FURTHER £500,000 FOR OCEAN CONSERVATION

On the night, BMYC 3-star members Peter Lürssen and Lars Windhorst decided to match fund and sponsor all the project asks circulated at the event, committing to £251,200 each, and raising a further £500,000 for ocean conservation.

'At sea, ship-owners experience first-hand the importance of preserving this vulnerable ecosystem. As a shipyard we deal every day with the importance of the oceans. We are delighted to be a new member of the BMYC, and support Blue Marine's mission.'

PHILIPP MARACKE, CEO NOBISKRUG, 3-STAR MEMBER

ABOUT THE BMYC

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, connections, and expertise. This enables Blue Marine to unlock new project areas, increase global marine protection and restore vital sea habitats — which protect vulnerable species but also absorb and store carbon.

Joining the BMYC is a commitment by a group of people who have a unique ability to influence the way the ocean is managed for years to come.

For further information about joining the BMYC please contact:
E sarajane@bluemarinefoundation.com
T +44(0)7435 289410

BMYC Supporters:



'THE PAIN WAS WORTH IT!'

Covering over 1,000km — and 15,000m of elevation — the plucky pedallers in 2022's London to Monaco ride surpassed £2 million raised in five years



In September 2022, Blue Marine, with cycle tour partner Just Pedal, ran the fifth edition of its annual charity bike ride, London to Monaco (L2M).

With the ride put on hold for two years over the pandemic, the L2M team and a hundred eager, ocean-loving cyclists finally took to the roads once more, to pedal a thousand kilometres and climb more than 15,000 metres of elevation — all in aid of marine conservation.

Thanks to returning corporate teams Winch Design and Amels, plus new joining teams Lürssen and the DreAMBoat crew, our sponsors Y.CO and Lürssen, and all our other L2M 2022 riders, we raised more than £300,000, bringing the total amount raised in five years to over £2 million.

This would not have been possible without phenomenal support from DreAMBoat, which involved the entire yacht crew deciding to donate their annual charity fund of \$200,000 (from The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation) to the ride and Blue Marine.

MIKE KRETSCH, L2M 2022 8-DAY RIDER, DREAMBOAT TEAM

"What an incredible experience. Thank you to Blue Marine and Just Pedal for putting together a truly world-class event. From the logistics to the catering, and of course the amazing routes — absolutely faultless. Hands down some of the best roads we have ever ridden, and to be riding for such a good cause put the cherry on top. The pain was worth every minute of this event. Well done — and see you next year!"

IN FIVE YEARS OVER...

£2M

raised for marine conservation projects around the world

3.5M social media reach

460
RIDERS FROM
FROM **15**

different countries have taken part



L2M 2022 ROUTE

UK › HOLLAND › BELGIUM › FRANCE › MONACO





SHOOTS UP HILLS

Jeremy Lewin, above, from the Winch Design team, rode the entire eight days on a sustainable bamboo bike made by Winch Design. An ocean of thanks goes out to Winch, co-founders of the London to Monaco ride, and one of our longest-standing supporters. They entered a team for the fifth year, raising an amazing £26,000.

EVENT PARTNERS

Special thanks to our L2M Event Partners, who make the magic happen every year. Without them, the ride would not be the success it is.



Special thanks to our 2022 Major Sponsors and Corporate Teams:

Y.CO **LÜRSSEN**
AMELS **DREAMBOAT**
WINCH DESIGN

Thanks to our 2022 Goodie Bag Sponsors:

REEF KNOTS **Elizabeth Scarlett LONDON** **Shade**
ALL-NATURAL SUNSCREEN

... AND IN 2023, WE'RE MOVING UP A GEAR

Hold on to your handlebars for the unveiling of our new L2M route, which will cover a Lycra-busting seven countries in eight days, including the UK, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy, and Monaco.



A ROYAL WELCOME

Below at the finish line, outside the Prince's Palace in Monaco, the 86 riders were welcomed personally by H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco. **Left (l-to-r)** Blue Marine Co-founder George Duffield, CEO Clare Brook, Prince Albert, Head of Partnerships Sara-Jane Skinner, Monegasque Minister Plenipotentiary Bernard Fautrier. **Main image** hard yards for healthy oceans. **Photos** David Churchill



Special thanks to our event partners:

PRINCE ALBERT II OF MONACO FOUNDATION

ICON CONNECT

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ADNAMS SOUTHWOLD



Steve Edge Design Ltd.

David Churchill Photographer

DRONE EXPOSURE

MONACO YACHT SHOW

London to Monaco 2023 will take place September 19-26.

Visit london-monaco.cc to join or sponsor the 2023 ride.

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

TONY CASTRO DESIGN



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FINANCIAL REPORT

GROWING TO ACHIEVE OUR MISSION

Blue Marine’s robust financial position reflects an organisation trusted to deliver by donors and project partners alike

In the financial year to 31 March 2022, Blue Marine continued to grow impressively in terms of income, expenditure towards achieving our mission, the number and scope of projects we are undertaking and the number of staff we employ.

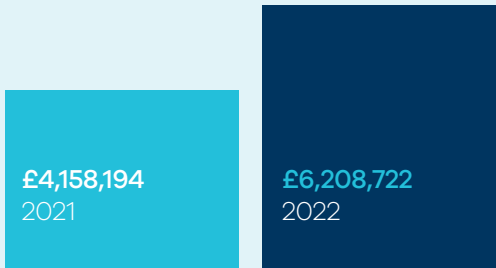
Income reached £7.8m in the year, up 19% on the previous year (not including the £2m endowment fund secured in 2021), and is projected to grow by a similar amount in the coming year. Expenditure increased even more rapidly, as we were able to catch up on fieldwork following the pandemic, and expanded our resources to deliver the growing number and scope of projects.

Reserves remain strong, both for resilience of core operations and for enabling the organisation to respond to opportunities and challenges with agility. The reserves have supported the development of Blue Marine’s eight strategic units, and we have created a Project Action Fund to deploy unrestricted reserves quickly to projects where a fast injection of funding can unlock and secure new opportunities and conservation successes.

Blue Marine’s finances support our position as a bold and ambitious organisation, trusted by donors and project partners to deliver tangible impacts against our mission.



FUNDS DISTRIBUTED



‘FREE’ RESERVES



OUR SIZE

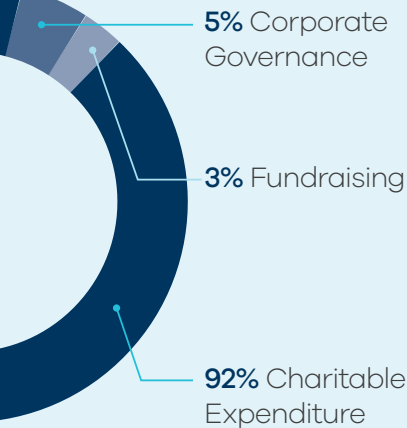
1,099
Total square feet of office

36
Employees

SOURCES OF INCOME



HOW IS EVERY POUND SPENT AT BLUE MARINE?



1 Corporate Donations £3,661,523	2 Donations from Individuals £559,932	3 Donations from Private Foundations £1,990,312	4 BMYC Donations £598,353
5 Donations in Kind £819,918	6 Auction and Events Income £58,936	7 Gift Aid £49,112	8 Other Income £75,214

FOR EVERY
£1
SPENT
GENERATING
FUNDS, WE
SECURED
£42



Photo George Karbus

Editor Tom Horan
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