



BLUE MARINE  
FOUNDATION

UNITED TO  
PROTECT OUR

OCEAN

2024 REVIEW



# OUR PROJECTS



The places where Blue Marine works with local partners to make a difference.





Cover photo  
and this page by  
Francesca Page

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# A year of progress & challenges in ocean conservation



**In the world of ocean conservation, 2024 was both an uplifting and a frustrating year.**

On the one hand, it was wonderful to see countries as varied as the Dominican Republic, Greece and the Azores commit to protect more than 30 per cent of their waters – bold, laudable moves that will save countless marine creatures from senseless annihilation.

On the other hand, it is disappointing that only a handful of nations have made this eminently sensible move. We are now mid-way through the ‘ocean decade’, yet the world is still moving painfully slowly towards the UN’s 30x30 target – 30 per cent of the ocean protected by 2030. At the current rate of progress (or lack of it), we will not even reach 10 per cent by 2030 – and that was the target for 2020.



Clare Brook  
CEO

2024 REVIEW



**Inset** Blue Marine Trustees, senior management and staff.  
**Left** Humpback whale in Vava'u, Tonga **Photo** Jenny Stock

But there are reasons to believe that 2025 will be the year that the deadlock is broken. Blue Marine has developed innovative approaches to help countries achieve their 30x30 targets. And our legal, investigations and economics teams are increasingly exposing the iniquity of industrial fishing, uncovering the extent to which overfishing is not only disastrous for fish stocks and the climate, but is utterly inequitable. We continue to use media and campaigns to show the public the value of a healthy ocean and the urgent need to protect it and, in turn, encourage more political leaders to follow the example set by the few visionary countries.

Ultimately, it is our team that makes Blue Marine such a beacon of hope – a group of dedicated, tenacious, and highly intelligent people, driven by the urgency of our mission, yet still kind, thoughtful and inventive. It was testament to the exceptional culture of our fast-growing charity that in 2024 some of the leading conservationists in the world came to work with us. With colleagues such as these, partnerships with more than 200 NGOs, and the backing of our wonderful supporters, we are actively proving our value and strength as a global force for marine conservation impact.

**What a year 2024 was. Will it go down as one of the most chaotic and unpredictable in recent history?**

In spite of the turbulence raging around us, Blue Marine has yet again stepped forward with confidence and increased impact. The charity is in rude health, which is a testament to the commitment and brilliance of our executive team and staff.

I know I speak for the Board when I say that we are immensely proud of all that has been achieved this year. In particular we are pleased to see Blue Marine becoming both more strident in its interventions, holding those in power to account for their inaction, and more collaborative, working hand-in-glove with the other many fabulous organisations around the world whose objectives are aligned with our own.



Dr Arlo Brady  
Chairman and Trustee



# B L U E



## Mission

To ensure the effective protection of at least 30 per cent of the ocean by 2030 and the sustainable management of the whole ocean.

To support the livelihoods in coastal communities through the recovery of marine biodiversity.

# M A R I N E ' S

# P U R P O S E

## Vision

A healthy ocean, abundant with life, that supports people and climate.

## Values

We are brave, innovative and pioneering.

We are compassionate, supportive and responsible.

We operate in a spirit of fairness.

We work without bias, with integrity, accountability and transparency.

We show respect for all people we encounter.

We collaborate – with other organisations, NGOs and local communities.

Photo: George Duffield



# B L U E

# M A R I N E ' S

# S T R A T E G Y

**Blue Marine acts as a catalyst, working alongside small-scale fishers, local organisations and governments to deliver effective marine conservation.**

Connection and community are vital to our work. By respecting and fostering a strong sense of attachment between local communities and their marine environments, we encourage people to work together and take care of the sea. Our projects aim to benefit those who depend on them most, while building an increased sense of community ownership. Through this approach, we seek to pave the way for fair and equitable conservation that ensures all voices are heard.

### Our goals

Blue Marine has three strategic goals, which we believe are the most effective way to achieve our mission.



#### Secure effective protection of the ocean

We secure effectively managed marine protected areas that are closed to destructive fishing and other damaging activities.



#### Tackle overfishing and support sustainable, equitable use of the ocean

We tackle overfishing and other damaging activities. We support low-impact fishing and encourage a transition to fishing which benefits local economies and coastal communities without destroying the ocean.



#### Restore vital ecosystems

We restore marine habitats to revive and protect vulnerable and threatened species.



## THROUGH

## THE YEARS

## 2010

With support from the Bertarelli Foundation, Blue Marine brokers a deal to enable the creation of what is then the largest marine protected area (MPA) in the world, around Chagos in the Indian Ocean.

## 2012

Lyme Bay Fisheries and Conservation Reserve project launches on the south coast of the UK, helping fishers to earn more from their catch while fishing more sustainably.

## 2015

Blue Marine and the Great Blue Oceans coalition secure a UK government manifesto commitment to create a 'Blue Belt' around all 14 UK overseas territories. This is hailed by one MP as 'the greatest conservation commitment by any government ever'.

The GB 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 Island in the Pacific.

## 2016

September: the UK government commits to protecting four million sq km of the Blue Belt, fulfilling its manifesto commitment in 2015, campaigned for by Blue Marine and the GB Oceans coalition.

Blue Marine, working with local partners in Azerbaijan, initiates a ban on the import of gill-nets and a programme of gill-net clearance, to enable critically endangered sturgeon to breed in the wild.

## 2017

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.

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

## 2018

The UK Government announces a target of 30 per cent of the world's oceans protected by 2030, aligning with Blue Marine's longterm strategy.

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

After a 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.

## 2019

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 is at the time the largest fully protected marine reserve in the Atlantic, an area almost the size of France.

## 2020

Blue Marine secures a £2 million donation from long-term supporter Peter Lürssen to establish an endowment fund for the Ascension Island community, in support of their vision to establish an MPA.

The community on fellow overseas territory Tristan da Cunha designates 687,000 sq km of their territorial waters as a no-take zone.

Following pressure from Blue Marine, the UK government announces an immediate ban on all electric-pulse trawling and fishing in its waters.

## 2021

Destructive bottom-trawling is banned in four offshore areas of the UK, including the country's largest domestic offshore MPA, the Dogger Bank, following the threat of legal action by Blue Marine.

A bylaw, 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.

After a 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.

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.

## 2023

The UK government u-turns and supports a moratorium on deep-sea mining, following a Blue Marine media and policy campaign. Blue Marine forms part of a ten-partner collaboration to launch the Solent Seascape Project, the first whole ecosystem restoration project in the UK.

The Jersey government announces plans to secure 27 per cent of its waters, supported by Blue Marine research and campaigning.

Following an initiative spearheaded by local fishers, Blue Marine helps secure support from the Greek state for its first permanent no-fishing reserves and seasonal fishing closure on the island of Amorgos.

In partnership with Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance, Blue Marine advocates increased marine protection across the island territories to the Dutch and Island Governments. At the Our Ocean conference in Panama, one of the island's – Aruba – commits to creating an MPA across its entire Exclusive Economic Zone, covering 25,199 sq km.

## 2024

An additional 166,000 sq. km of ocean at South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands are fully protected from fishing thanks to campaigning from Blue Marine, in partnership with Pew Trusts and the Great Blue Ocean coalition.

The Dominican Republic becomes the first Caribbean nation to protect over 30 per cent of its waters, following financial and scientific support from Blue Marine.

In Greece, Blue Marine leads efforts to secure a government pledge to expand marine protected areas to 32%, including a ban on bottom-trawling.

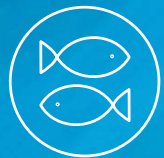
Blue Marine is involved in three major legal cases: challenging UK fisheries law, protecting marine areas in the Netherlands, and supporting the UK in international arbitration against overfishing.

Less than a month after it forms, an alliance led by Blue Marine stops the reopening of longline fishing in the Maldives, ensuring it remains one of the few countries in the world to practise pole and line tuna fishing throughout its waters.



# IMPACT

Measuring the impact of Blue Marine with our partners in 2024



8,841

Number of specimens deployed within active restoration projects

3,897

Number of people completing educational/training programmes



**687 schools reached** through educational activities



5

Reports, papers and case studies published to build a strong evidence to tackle unsustainable fishing

8

**reports, papers and case studies published** to build a strong evidence for marine protection

2024 REVIEW

1.9m views  
**The Sea We Breathe**  
online experience



1,619,073

Number of stakeholders reached with marine conservation messaging through in-person and/or digital engagement work

409



**Number of outreach tools or activities delivered**

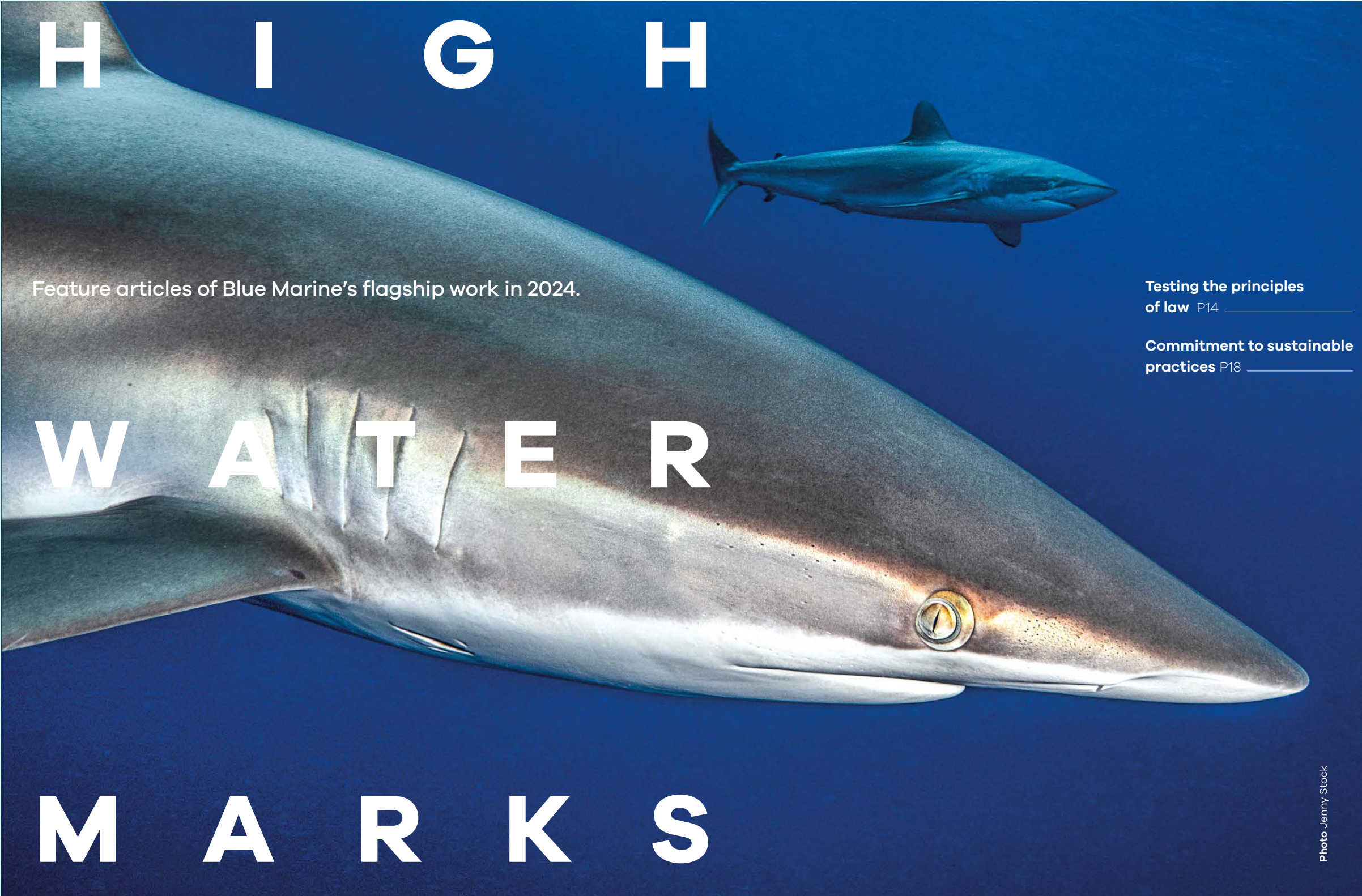


**46,000 Convex Seascape Survey**  
education reach



**469**  
Number of beneficiaries through livelihood support, career enhancement opportunities internships and training programs





Feature articles of Blue Marine’s flagship work in 2024.

Testing the principles  
of law P14

Commitment to sustainable  
practices P18

Short shrift for longlining  
P16

Greece commits to 30%  
protection P20

Photo Jenny Stock



# TESTING THE PRINCIPLES OF LAW

Words by **Tom Appleby**, Chief of Legal Affairs

**In a series of court actions, Blue Marine found itself both suing and supporting the UK government. The outcomes will impact marine protection in the UK, the EU and beyond.**

This year the Blue Legal team embarked on three court actions and assisted on another. Each of the three cases is in a different jurisdiction and we are fighting them on different grounds, but all seek to enforce a key area of environmental law and are based on sound legal research. We have also been able to draw on unparalleled expertise in fisheries and conservation science within Blue Marine, where our team is now one of the most formidable in Europe.

We are suing the UK government for determining its share of the international fishing quota at a level that exceeds scientific advice, and without any appropriate socio-economic justification. We believe this is unlawful under post-Brexit UK fisheries law, and a hearing date is currently set for March 2025. Our lawyers – Richard Buxton and Co, Brendon Moorhouse and David Wolff KC – are leaders in environmental litigation of this nature.

In the Netherlands, we are working with a coalition of environment groups to protect the Dutch sector of the Dogger Bank marine protected area (MPA) in the North Sea from harmful fishing practices. This follows Blue Marine’s successful case in 2022 against the UK government in the Dogger.

Fisheries management currently has a unique exemption from EU environmental law, including that governing MPAs, but our research indicates that we may be able to set the exemption aside. This will be a drawn-out case that will have implications across the EU. Our lawyers are leading Dutch specialists Prakken d’Oliveira.

Finally, in October the EU decided to take the UK to international arbitration following the UK’s decision to prohibit sandeel fishing in its part of the North Sea. Sandeels are the base of the food chain and an essential food for seabirds, larger fish and marine mammals.



The EU claims that UK protective measures breach the terms of the EU/UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA)

The EU claims that UK protective measures breach the terms of the EU/UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA).

The TCA gave us just ten days from the establishment of the arbitration tribunal to file an *amicus curiae* brief. To demonstrate that we were not just acting in UK interests, and that there were concerned voices within fishing nations of the EU, we joined forces with French campaign group the Bloom Association. The matter is also sub judice, but our intervention supported the UK’s independent scientific analysis and sought to maintain the primacy of environmental law over fisheries law. Our legal team were specialist international arbitrator Ali Al-Karim of Brick Court, Professor Catherine Barnard of Cambridge University and international arbitration experts Omnia Consulting.

It was a strange irony that in the course of the year we found ourselves both suing and supporting the UK government.

The three cases test the most important principles of European and international marine environmental law. We will have an impact across the entire EU and UK exclusive economic zone, as well as testing some key principles of future UK/EU relations. The international arbitration will have ramifications for disputes across the globe, where there are few cases, so precedent is particularly important.



# SHORT SHRIFT FOR LONGLINING

Words by **Geo Aldana**, Communications Manager

**The longline fishing technique is a menace to wildlife – but in just one month an alliance led by Blue Marine achieved a major victory against it.**

Blue Marine was catalytic in this successful campaign working together with international scientists, influencers and key local stakeholders such as fishers. The campaign demonstrated the power of a strong alliance of organisations, along with the right media pressure, in achieving quick and effective change.

The tuna fishery of the Maldives uses a one-by-one catching method and is recognised as one of the most sustainable in the world. Primarily targeting skipjack tuna, the pole-and-line technique used here has supported the livelihoods of Maldivian people for hundreds of years.

The Maldives has for some time worked to be recognised as a leader in sustainable fishing practices. Thirteen years ago, the island nation became the first country in the Indian Ocean to ban the fishing and export of sharks. However, this progress towards sustainable fishing was threatened by the possibility of the reintroduction of destructive longline fishing.

Although this method is not considered a traditional one, and is not practiced by Maldivian fishers, longline fishing licenses have occasionally been granted, most recently between 2011 and 2019. Each was subsequently revoked due to non-compliance by vessels and irregularities in data reporting.

In August 2024, the Maldivian government released a draft regulation to issue longlining licences and permit the landing of dead shark bycatch. Longlining jeopardises the livelihoods of local fishing communities. Longliners fishing lines – which can be up to 80 miles long – unintentionally trap seabirds, turtles, dolphins and other marine life, a process known as “bycatch”. Longlining catches more sharks than any other fishing method on the high seas. One in five animals caught by longline fishing is not the target species. In response to these threats and the communities’ concerns, the #AgainstLonglining campaign was launched by Blue Marine and local partners including Maldives Resilient Reefs, Maldives Ocean Alliance, Yellowfin Tuna Fishers Union and Miyaru.

Our intention was to support the voices of the one by one local Maldivian fishers and highlight the detrimental impacts of the practice, which include overfishing, high bycatch rates of vulnerable species such as sharks and turtles, and the degradation of marine ecosystems. Blue Marine led the campaign, with support from Maldivian people, scientists, fishers, environmental NGOs and public figures.

In less than three weeks an online petition collected more than 30,000 signatures. The social media campaign generated 8.2 million impressions and received backing from celebrities such as wildlife presenter Steve Backshall. Coordinated by the alliance, more than 170 scientists signed an open letter to the government, expressing their concern.

The most widely shared video from the campaign featured Maldivians – including fishers, scientists and NGO representatives – discussing the dangers of this way of fishing. The #AgainstLonglining campaign played a crucial role in amplifying people’s voices and rapidly mobilised support.

At the end of August, the government formally reversed its plans to permit longline fishing, a decision that reaffirmed the Maldives’ commitment to traditional one-by-one tuna fishing, and to protecting vulnerable species. In less than a month, the campaign had been launched, publicised and supported – and delivered the change it set out to achieve.

In August 2024, the Maldivian government released a draft regulation to issue longlining licences and permit the landing of dead shark bycatch. Longlining jeopardises the livelihoods of local fishing communities

Photo Alex Mustard

LONGLINERS FISHING LINES – WHICH CAN BE UP TO 80 MILES LONG



# COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

OUR SCIENCE TEAM IS ALSO SUPPORTING  
BROADER EXPEDITION WORK IN THE  
CARIBBEAN THAT WILL HELP DRIVE NATIONAL

# 30x30

COMMITMENTS

Words by **Dr Judith Brown**, Projects Director

**The Dominican Republic became the first Caribbean nation to protect 30 per cent of its waters – with the support of Blue Marine.**

In 2022, the Dominican Republic committed to protecting 30 per cent of its waters by mid-2024, setting the stage for a collaborative marine conservation effort. Blue Marine – working alongside Mission Blue and Blue Nature Alliance – embarked on a strategic mission to support this goal through scientific research, stakeholder engagement and technical assistance.

Together with our partners, we focused on two critical areas. The first was Beata Ridge, a submarine mountain ridge in the southern Caribbean Sea that serves as a habitat and migration corridor for diverse marine life including seabirds, whales, and shark species. The second area was Silver Bank – a shallow underwater plateau on the Atlantic side of the Dominican Republic known to be a crucial nursery for the North Atlantic humpback whale.

To gather data essential for the designation of the marine protected areas (MPAs), Blue Marine partnered with the Caribbean Cetacean Society, local NGOs and the Dominican Republic’s Ministry of Environment, and organised expeditions to both locations between January and March 2024. Our Blue Science, Impact and Innovation unit helped coordinate an expedition that fed into the successful expansion of the Silver Bank.

## Our Blue Science, Impact and Innovation unit helped coordinate an expedition that fed into the successful expansion of the Silver Bank

Above Humpback whale and calf. **Photo** Max Bello

The initiatives exemplified a collaborative approach to marine conservation, combining scientific expertise, local partnership, and strategic advocacy to support the Dominican Republic’s goals. By providing training to local scientists and passing on expertise, they also helped to build lasting scientific capacity in the country. Empowering local experts is essential for the ongoing monitoring and management of marine ecosystems, and helps to ensure that conservation efforts are sustained.

The successful establishment of the Beata Ridge and Silver Bank MPAs, and their announcement at the 2024 Our Oceans Conference in Greece, was a significant milestone for the Dominican Republic. The move not only secured 30 per cent protection of its waters, but also provided the country with a global platform to showcase its leadership in conservation and inspire neighbouring Caribbean nations, potentially creating a ripple effect of marine protection in the region.

Another significant outcome of the collaborative process was the establishment of a network that now connects experts from Europe, the UK, and the Caribbean, allowing a diverse range of knowledge, methodologies and resources to be exchanged. Our Science team is also supporting broader expedition work in the Caribbean that will help drive national 30x30 commitments. From the offshore expeditions, we have also learned valuable lessons that we can apply to future conservation efforts, not just in the Dominican Republic but around the world.



Words by **Angela Lazou Dean**, Greece Projects Manager

**The unprecedented marine conservation pledges came as Blue Marine expanded its projects in the country to more than ten.**

In the past three years, Blue Marine has been leading a transformative conservation effort in Greece to restore the health of its territorial waters. We have forged numerous partnerships with environmental NGOs, governmental institutions, and local communities.

Together we have launched more than ten projects across the country, focusing on the creation of new marine protected areas (MPAs), strengthening the management of existing ones, and safeguarding vital habitats and species. Our goal is to have 30 per cent of the country's entire Exclusive Economic Zone protected, and 10 per cent designated no-take.

The results are starting to shine through. In an historic milestone for marine conservation in Greece, the government made an unprecedented commitment in 2024 to expand its MPA network from 20 per cent to 32 per cent, and announced a gradual ban on bottom-trawling within all MPAs by 2030 – the first in Europe.

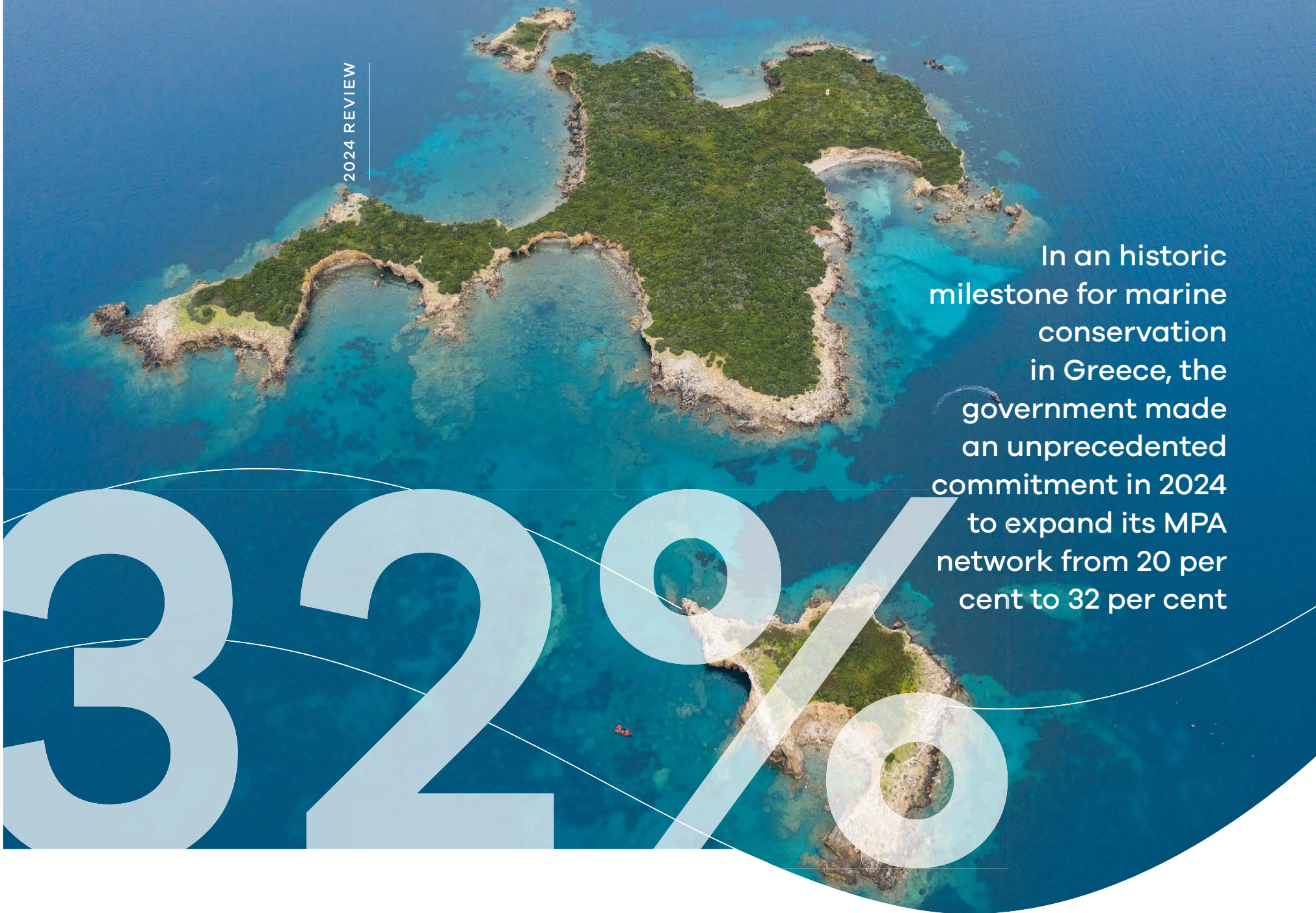
At the Our Ocean conference in Athens in April, the Greek Minister of Rural Development and Food declared the government's commitment to protect the island of Amorgos – a move that aligns with the passionate, long-standing calls made for conservation by the island's fishers.



# GREECE COMMITTS TO 30% PROTECTION

They have been at the forefront of marine stewardship, and are now making history with their initiative, 'Amorgorama'. The project – unique not only in Greece but in the entire Mediterranean – has been supported by Blue Marine every step of the way. Together, we have seen their unwavering dedication bear fruit, and we could not be more thrilled with this remarkable victory.

**Above right** Aerial photo of Formikoula **Photo** iSea.  
**Left** Lefteris, fisher of Amorgos **Photo** Giorgos Moutafis



In an historic milestone for marine conservation in Greece, the government made an unprecedented commitment in 2024 to expand its MPA network from 20 per cent to 32 per cent

Elsewhere, we have been advocating for the inclusion of the biodiverse islet of Formicula, home to monk seal and groupers, in the newly announced Ionian Marine Park. The decision awaits approval from the Prime Minister. We submitted our request for protection of the island of Santorini to the Ministry of Environment jointly with the Municipality of Santorini, the Fishers' association and the local environmental group. Another islet that we mapped with our partners – Velopoula, south of the island of Spetses – has been included in the recently announced Aegean MPA.

Our Blue Climate unit also supported the mapping this year of the distribution and coverage of the Posidonia meadows within Erimitis Bay in Corfu. We simultaneously conducted a baseline assessment of the carbon stocks, carbon sequestration rates and storage, biodiversity surveys and health/condition assessments.

Through this work we have gathered enough evidence to advocate for the protection of Erimitis and the prevention of any development that might threaten this pristine area. We have engaged with local stakeholders to help ensure that future protected areas have appropriate management actions for their vital Posidonia meadows.

There are signs of progress too on our promotion of invasive species for consumption, with the presence of Lionfish increasing in the markets, most recently on Amorgos, where the price of the fish has increased and it is becoming profitable for fishers to catch it.

As we keep up the momentum in Greece, next steps include a monitoring and enforcement plan for Formicula, a five-year management plan for Amorgos, and a campaign to replicate the island's inspirational 'Amorgorama' model.





In addition to our project locations across the world, Blue Marine has developed eight specialist units. These act as global strategies for change, unlocking ocean conservation.

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**Blue Investigations**  
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**Blue Economics**  
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# Blue Legal

Expanding its reach this year, Blue Legal published two research papers: one investigating the effectiveness of environmental law in the EU; another signalling poor quota allocation in the UK and other jurisdictions (quota being the key conservation measure for sustainable fishing).

It is on the strength of our past research that we have been involved in the significant legal proceedings detailed on p14. We are also working on two complaints in international legal forums regarding breaches of conservation law.

Blue Legal has given guidance on marine management to our team in-house, and supported fellow environment groups. The impacts of open-pen aquaculture in Scotland and Greece increasingly concern us, following our involvement with the Seas of Change Conference at Poros in April 2024, and the proposed rapid expansion of Greek aquaculture.

We now collaborate with nine major law firms in London, Brussels and Greece as well as the One Million Hours project. Their expertise has enabled us to examine areas such as subsidy, competition law and state aid, which have profound consequences for the natural world. We also hosted our first event at Somerset House in London, with Professor Steve Simpson of Bristol University exploring the different approaches of law and science.

We now collaborate with nine major law firms in London, Brussels and Greece



Photo iStock

# Blue Investigations

Blue Investigations works to research, expose and combat harmful and unsustainable practices affecting our oceans.

This year, Blue Investigations published results showing Spanish and French tuna fishing vessels turning off satellite tracking for long periods, in apparent contravention of EU, national and international laws. One vessel, owned by Spanish company INPESCA, appeared to 'go dark' in the Indian Ocean for 100 days straight. We reported this to the European Commission, which is investigating.

We also raised it in our objections to the certification by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) of two of the world's largest tuna fisheries. Despite our proof of illegality, the MSC went ahead with both certifications. We raised the issue again with the insurers of the vessels, and will continue to work with the London insurance industry to ensure that it revokes the cover given to vessels that go dark.

In the UK, Blue Investigations worked to uncover how the destruction of biodiversity in its waters is being permitted for the benefit of a tiny number of wealthy people. We scrutinised the fishing quota system, only to find the most valuable opportunities in the hands of a few companies, leaving stocks overfished and thousands of small-scale fishers with scraps. It is time for this inequity to be addressed, and for the UK to become a leader on sustainable fishing.



Main image A tuna purse seine vessel Photo Alex Hofford/Greenpeace. Above FAD Chagos Photo George Duffield

One vessel, owned by Spanish company INPESCA, appeared to 'go dark' in the Indian Ocean for 100 days straight





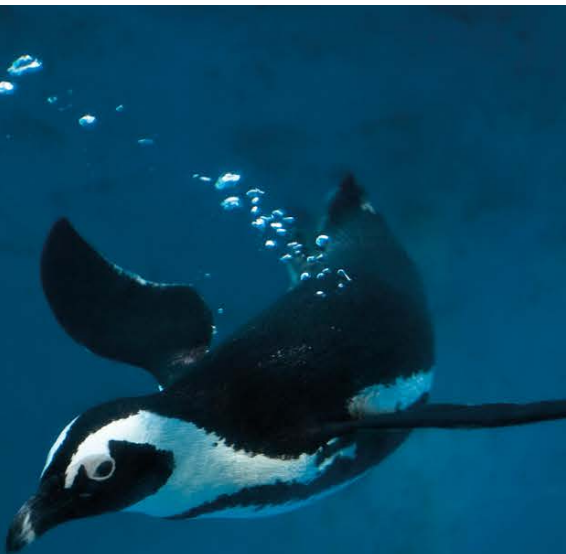
# Blue Media

Blue Media works with almost every project and unit in the organisation, and numerous partners and local communities worldwide. Our mission is to pursue conservation gain by connecting and informing audiences. We tell the stories of the ocean through national and global press editorial, by innovative visual media, and via media campaigns.

In 2024, we achieved significant campaign success in reversing a threat to re-open destructive longlining in the Maldives; activated a global audience, and engaged decision-makers in South Africa, on the plight of the African Penguin; and informed and engaged the British public on three key marine asks for its new government. These stories – and the many others from our project work around the world – had a collective press editorial reach of 21.41 billion views in 2024.

Blue Media's films, including the story of the community-led call for protection on Amorgos in Greece, took to the world stage at the inaugural Our Oceans Film Festival in Athens. A documentary about the trans-boundary marine protected area in the Dominican Republic – made in collaboration with partners – was premiered on the plenary Our Ocean stage.

The unit also continued its policy of using innovative media by adding further 360° virtual reality experiences and launched a series of films in sign language.



These stories – and the many others from our project work around the world – had a collective press editorial reach of 21.41 billion views in 2024



Main image photo | Stock. Left: Blue Marine, Patagonia and NGO partners delivered a petition with over 198,000 signatures urging the UK government to ban bottom trawling in MPAs Photo Duncan Nicholls

# Blue Education

Blue Education drives engagement with conservation by developing tools that inspire a concerned commitment to the ocean in people of all ages.

In a highly productive year we were delighted to welcome to the team a new Education Lead, Victoria Turner. After the launch of 'The Sea We Breathe' virtual reality experience we partnered with communications specialists Earth Minutes who delivered workshops in schools using the VR headsets to ignite student connectivity with the ocean. The first workshops reached 221 students. With the additional Portuguese, Greek and Spanish voiceovers, The Sea We Breathe is available in eight languages and has reached almost 2 million viewers.

In collaboration with Encounter Education we supported the delivery of four online 'Live Lessons' which brought the Convex Seascape Survey into classrooms and connected thousands of students with insights into the ocean, the seabed, climate change and marine careers. The 'COP29 and Climate' lesson was watched by 2,304 pupils from 51 schools in eight countries.

Our education work continued to expand with Blue Marine's project partners in Italy, the Maldives, St Helena, Jersey and Scotland. As part of our collaboration with Namibia Nature Foundation we are also thrilled to launch our first Ocean Literacy Toolkit.







**The Blue Climate unit promotes the value of the ocean as a solution to climate change.**

If we want to solve the climate and biodiversity crises, we need to recognise that they are interconnected, and the ocean is our crucial ally. This year, we launched a new policy brief 'Blue Thread: Aligning National Climate and Biodiversity Strategies' with the Ocean & Climate Platform (OCP), an alliance of more than 70 NGOs and research institutions. The brief encourages the building of a common, long-term strategy for greater integration between the UN Climate and Biodiversity Conventions at implementation level. The ocean has a key role to play in connecting the dots, weaving a 'blue thread' across national strategies.

As well as visiting a series of international projects in which Blue Climate has been involved, we have also pushed forward the development of marine natural capital markets in the UK. For this we launched A Roadmap for Action, in partnership with the Crown Estate, Crown Estate Scotland, Finance Earth, Pollination Group and Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. It presents an opportunity for the UK to set the world standard for excellence when it comes to establishing equitable, transparent, high-integrity and standardised markets for marine natural capital.

**Below** Bagek Kembar mangrove restoration project in Indonesia.



**This year, we launched a new policy brief 'Blue Thread: Aligning National Climate and Biodiversity Strategies' with the Ocean & Climate Platform (OCP), an alliance of more than 70 NGOs and research institutions**

# Blue Policy

**It is as essential to advocate for healthy oceans in the corridors of power as at the water's edge. Blue Policy works to embed lasting change in laws and policies. This was a big year for the unit, despite political focus being on general elections and other issues.**

In the UK we saw 17,000 sq km of reefs protected from trawling, and the implementation of a ban on industrial sandeel fishing in UK waters. A huge victory for marine life and seabirds, the ban is being challenged by the EU, highlighting the need for continued vigilance.

We hosted our first political party event at the Labour Party conference to engage with the new cohort of politicians entering Whitehall. To build on this we held a Christmas celebration for the ocean at the Palace of Westminster to garner support for conservation in Parliament. Bringing together politicians, researchers and a sprinkling of Blue Marine colleagues, the event was a huge success.

In the global sphere we continued to expand our influence, working alongside other NGOs to drive forward the ratification of the High Seas Treaty, and at regional forums to reduce overfishing on the high seas and protect endangered species.



**Above** Clare Brook and Anna Gerlerd, Labour MP for South East Cornwall. **Left** Lord Zac Goldsmith, Blue Marine Foundation Trustee holding 'give our ocean room to thrive' sign

**We held a Christmas celebration for the ocean at the Palace of Westminster to garner support for conservation in Parliament, bringing together politicians, researchers and Blue Marine colleagues**



# Blue Science

Blue Marine’s Science, Impact and Innovation (SII) unit drives conservation through scientific expertise, international project management, and innovative research methodologies.

The unit has focused most recently on coordinating scientific expeditions, developing monitoring frameworks and software, and providing scientific support to projects and partners. This includes working across over 15 of Blue Marine’s international projects.

The SII team has worked to build both internal and external knowledge on delivering 30x30 effectively, especially in a rapidly changing climate. In collaboration with the Blue Climate unit, and led by Professor Ana Queirós from Plymouth Marine Laboratory, in 2024 we produced a report on the importance of climate-smart marine protected areas (marine protected areas designed to enhance ecosystem and species resilience in the face of climate change) and how we can ‘future-proof’ MPA designations in a warming world. This will be released in early 2025.

With the Blue Economics unit, SII is structuring a bond to give sustained financial support to MPAs that work towards a high level of protection through effective implementation, enforcement and management. SII supported Blue Marine’s first organisational impact report, detailing its effectiveness since it began, and we are developing our own monitoring and evaluation software, ‘Mearl’, to help track conservation impact. The Blue Science team also represented Blue Marine at conferences including the UN Ocean Decade of Science, CBD COP16 and Blue Earth Summit.



The Blue Science team has worked to build both internal and external knowledge on delivering 30x30 effectively, especially in a rapidly changing climate

Left Research Coordinator at Blue Marine, Sofia Regalado, in Argentina with a giant kelp. Below Senior Research and Projects Manager Sophie Locke at COP 16

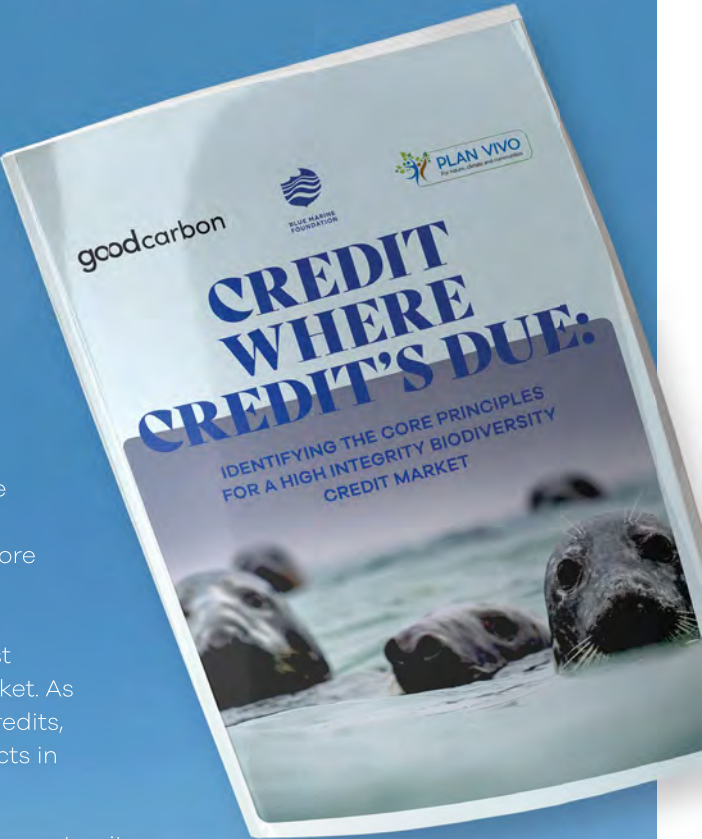


# Blue Economics

Blue Economics aims to quantify the real cost of destructive fishing and develop new ways of directing capital at scale towards ocean protection and restoration. The unit supports the delivery of Blue Marine’s domestic and international projects and pushes forward systemic change through thought leadership on innovative finance.

In 2024, we continued to work on credit development in the Solent. In addition, we were able to push forward the biodiversity credit market through the publication of a report titled ‘Credit where credit’s due: Identifying the core principles of a high-integrity biodiversity credit market’. Following the launch, we hosted a markets workshop with key private-sector stakeholders to discuss the most significant challenges facing the emerging nature market. As we work to establish a market for marine biodiversity credits, we are expanding our development work into our projects in Greece, the Maldives, and Turkey.

Additionally, together with the Science Innovation and Impact unit, we have developed a concept around marine protected area (MPA) impact bonds that will help secure financing for fully and highly protected MPAs aiming to achieve good management.



Below Local women hand gathering shellfish  
Photo Mário Guilamba



As we work to establish a market for marine biodiversity credits, we are expanding our development work into our projects in Greece, the Maldives and Turkey



# PROJECTS

Feature articles of Blue Marine’s flagship work in 2024.

**Major Projects**

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**UK and UKOTs**

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Photo Francesca Page



# Convex Seascape Survey

Photo Francesa Page

**The Convex Seascape Survey is a pioneering five-year research project to understand how important seabed carbon is to mitigating climate change. Around 100 experts from more than 20 institutions are working to identify sediment carbon stores, understand how they form and how secure they are, and to investigate how quickly they can recover from disturbance.**

This year, our scientists used historical data, eDNA analyses and modelling techniques to discover where seabed carbon comes from. We've mapped changes in ocean currents over the past 20,000 years to predict carbon hotspots on continental shelves, and completed the first full carbon budget model of the Patagonian shelf to help researchers understand the carbon exchange between the atmosphere, land, and ocean on continental shelves. Elsewhere, a fieldwork team in Jersey processed more than sixty seafloor core samples in a pop-up quayside laboratory to discover the composition of carbon in the seabed.

Our intrepid colleagues battled strong weather and tides to gather comparative data from protected vs unprotected seabed in Jersey and New Zealand's Hauraki Gulf. This data helps us to understand how activities like trawling affect biodiversity and carbon stores, and how quickly these ecosystems recover from disturbance. We'll be comparing the findings to previous data from Arran and will replicate this study at other sites in 2025. This year, we also returned to Millport, Scotland, to run a second series of bioturbation experiments, looking at the important role of tiny seabed creatures like worms and shellfish in burying carbon in the mud.

**"With all these investigations, we are incrementally adding to the evidence base, demonstrating how we can maximise the ocean's ability to lock away carbon dioxide."**

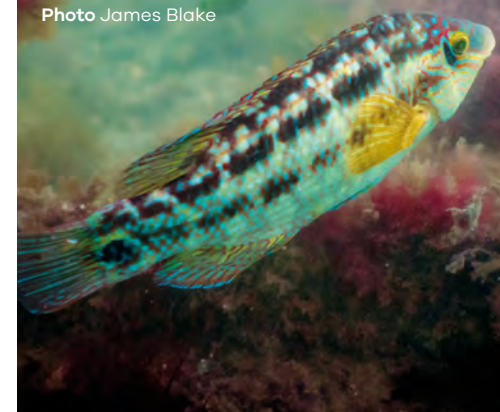
**GAIL FORDHAM, CONVEX SEASCAPE SURVEY RESEARCH PROGRAMME MANAGER**

Our work was highlighted in the Guardian, Forbes and The Sunday Times, at the World Ocean Summit and the UN in Barcelona and New York. Artworks by Chris Levine and Naomi Hart inspired the public to embrace the benthic zone and mud-dwelling creatures, and our education programme reached almost 500,000 students, with 15,000 viewers tuning in for live lessons broadcast during British Science Week and COP 29.



## Solent Seascape Project

**Main image** Volunteers collecting seagrass seed *Zostera marina* Seaview Isle of Wight **Photo** Luke Helmer. **Inset** Corkwing wrasse *Crenilabrus melops* Swanage **Photo** pier Luke Helmer. **Below** Deploying oysters **Photo** James Blake



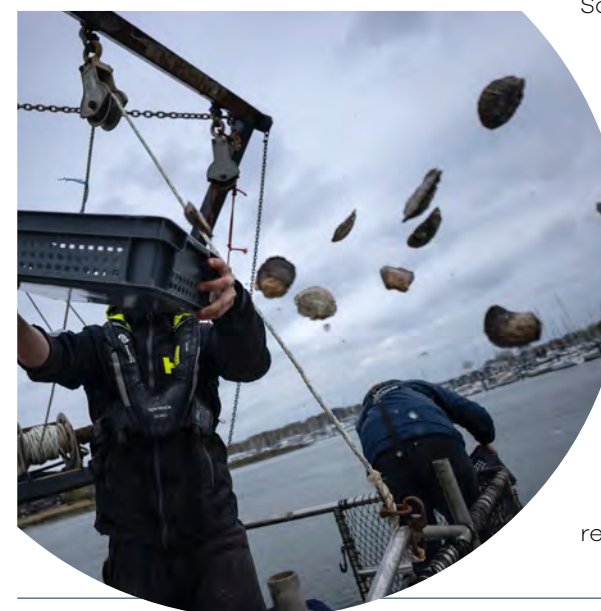
**Restoration work continues on the four Solent habitats we are working with partners to protect. In the River Hamble we trialled the use of biodegradable barriers to protect the saltmarsh. Project Seagrass and Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust conducted seagrass trials on both sides of the Solent to increase this diminishing resource, which is home to endangered seahorses and juvenile fish populations.**

To help seabirds such as terns and gulls, Natural England and the RSPB created ten nesting islands in North Solent National Nature Reserve and across Pagham Harbour, while an additional 5,000 native oysters were added to the Hamble restoration reef. Increased spat numbers indicate these restored populations are reproducing and settling.

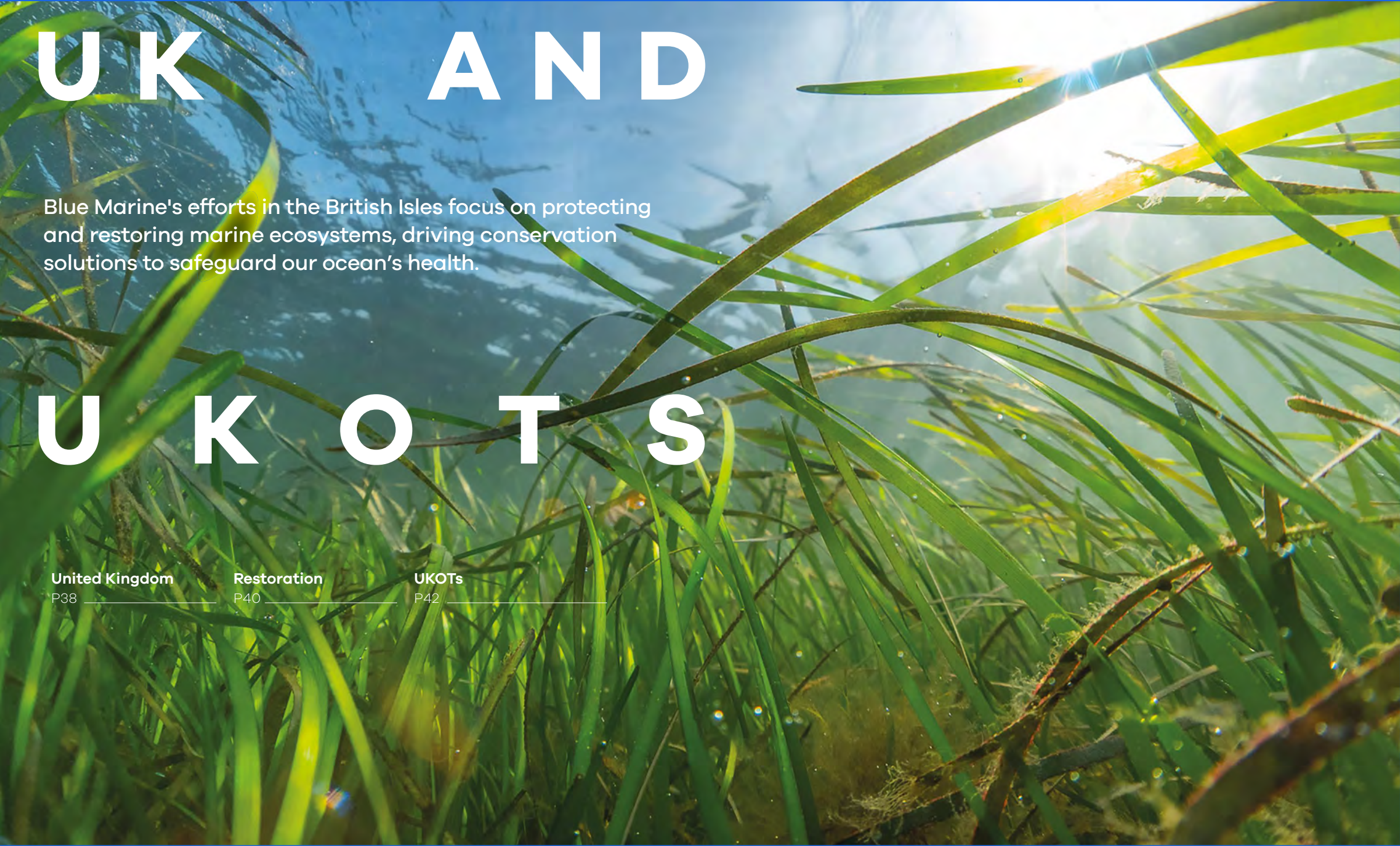
Engaging with a growing audience, team members presented at conferences including ReMeMaRe, and the UN Ocean Decade. The Solent Seascape Project was endorsed as a UN Ocean Decade Action, making it part of a worldwide network contributing to goals for the protection and restoration of marine biodiversity. We also hosted knowledge exchange visits, including for the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Defra.

A new website and increased social media activity have widened our online presence. Nationally we reached millions through press releases; locally we worked with more than 540 volunteers. A new film about our work to protect some of Britain's rarest seabirds was also released.

The Blue Climate unit published two reports to support the project: 'Seagrass vs Water Quality' and 'Restoring Our Seascapes' highlighted the importance of blue carbon ecosystems in the British Isles, recommending policy changes to reduce pressures on them and accelerate restoration.







Blue Marine's efforts in the British Isles focus on protecting and restoring marine ecosystems, driving conservation solutions to safeguard our ocean's health.

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# Scotland, Jersey, & banning bottom-towed fishing in English inshore MPAs

## Scotland, Jersey, and banning bottom-towed fishing in English Inshore MPAs.

In 2024 we saw significant progress towards properly protecting Scotland's offshore marine protected areas (MPAs) when the government published a consultation to manage fishing activities in these waters. It could protect 67,000 sq km of seabed from bottom-trawling. Blue Marine developed a new framework that assesses the impacts of a transition from bottom-towed to lower-impact fishing and other marine activities, which we presented at the World Fisheries Congress in Seattle and European Maritime Day in Denmark. We also partnered with the Our Seas coalition for the launch in Eyemouth of Coastal Testimonies, an exhibition of images and quotes from local people that reflect their perspectives on sustainability and hopes for Scotland's seas. The exhibition has visited numerous locations in the country, giving a voice to ocean communities.

In Jersey, the States Assembly approved the Marine Spatial Plan (MSP) that we have advocated since 2018. Its proposed network of MPAs will cover 23 per cent of Jersey's waters and be closed to dredging and trawling. Promoting appreciation for MPAs, our snorkelling education programme has now reached 840 children, who represent more than 80 per cent of the island's 31 primary schools. We delivered a classroom lesson to a further 300 pupils during the year, with an art project to help explain the MSP. Blue Education also launched 'Jersey Ocean Observatory', an online resource for teachers and parents. On neighbouring Guernsey, Blue Marine's Charles Clover spoke at the literary festival. The island is exploring developing an MSP like Jersey's.

Destructive bottom-trawling is still allowed in many MPAs in the UK. In 2024, Blue Marine has been working to support the Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authorities (IFCAs) to designate bylaws to ban such fishing in inshore areas. We tracked all existing and developing bylaws in England and found at least 20 MPAs undergoing a long review process for approval. Once a bylaw is approved by the IFCAs with local stakeholders, final sign-off often takes 18 months. We also tracked other fisheries bylaws that were sitting with the Marine Management Organisation or Secretary of State waiting for approval. Blue Marine is applying pressure at government level to push bylaw sign-off and has submitted responses of support at the consultation stage backed by evidence we have collected.



# UK fisheries & coastal communities

Promoting benefits and best practice in the UK's marine protected areas (MPAs); protecting UK inshore fisheries; the thriving Sussex coast; and the future of Welsh MPAs.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the UK's first Marine Nature Reserve at Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel, Blue Marine commissioned a film, Safeguarding Our Seas: Lessons from Lundy. Capturing the story of the people who set up the reserve and study the site, and the views of local fishermen, it was first screened in April 2024, and is now touring various film festivals. The film shows how fully protecting even small areas gives marine life space to thrive, and the wide benefits of communities, scientists and fishermen working together.

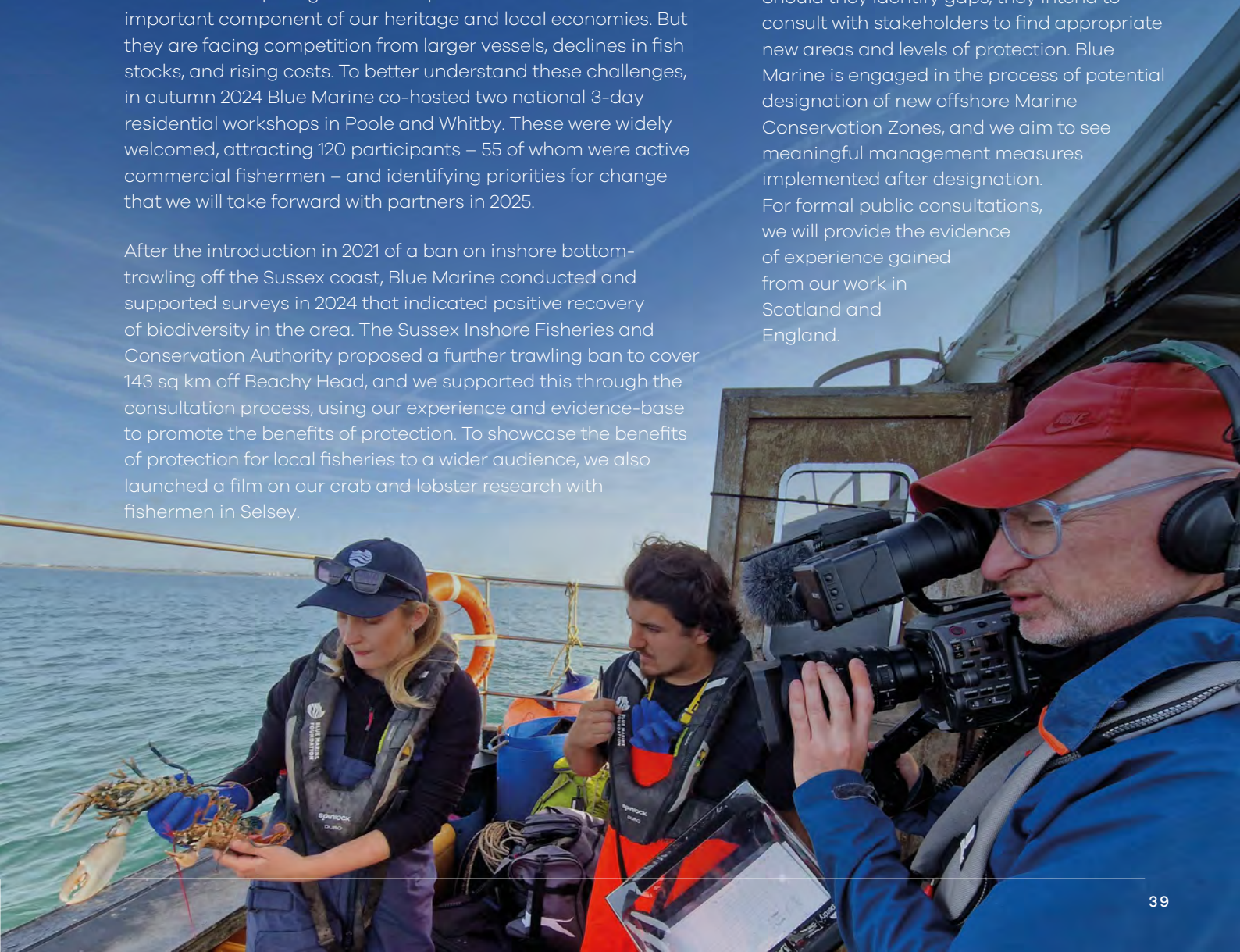
Inshore small-scale fisheries – boats mostly under 10 metres that use low-impact gear such as pots and static nets – are an important component of our heritage and local economies. But they are facing competition from larger vessels, declines in fish stocks, and rising costs. To better understand these challenges, in autumn 2024 Blue Marine co-hosted two national 3-day residential workshops in Poole and Whitby. These were widely welcomed, attracting 120 participants – 55 of whom were active commercial fishermen – and identifying priorities for change that we will take forward with partners in 2025.

After the introduction in 2021 of a ban on inshore bottom-trawling off the Sussex coast, Blue Marine conducted and supported surveys in 2024 that indicated positive recovery of biodiversity in the area. The Sussex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority proposed a further trawling ban to cover 143 sq km off Beachy Head, and we supported this through the consultation process, using our experience and evidence-base to promote the benefits of protection. To showcase the benefits of protection for local fisheries to a wider audience, we also launched a film on our crab and lobster research with fishermen in Selsey.



**Below** Researchers and film crew on Sussex potting surveys **Photo** Andrew Woods. **Above** Dan Langford Selsey Fisherman during Sussex potting survey **Photo** Madi Bowden-Parry

The Welsh government is currently assessing the country's network of 139 marine protected areas with Natural Resources Wales and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. Should they identify gaps, they intend to consult with stakeholders to find appropriate new areas and levels of protection. Blue Marine is engaged in the process of potential designation of new offshore Marine Conservation Zones, and we aim to see meaningful management measures implemented after designation. For formal public consultations, we will provide the evidence of experience gained from our work in Scotland and England.





# Restoration

Marine restoration is vital for addressing biodiversity loss and climate change, and aligns with the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration’s 2030 goals. In 2024, Blue Marine advanced this ambition through a series of practical, evidence-based, and replicable projects.

The largest scale of these in the UK is the Solent Seascape Project on the South Coast. This has restored an astonishing 6 hectares of seabird nesting habitat, including 10 new islands that are supporting internationally important species such as Common Terns and Mediterranean Gulls. The project has also used innovative solutions to restore 12 saltmarsh creeks that had eroded. More than 200,000 seagrass seeds were collected, and more than 2,000 mature seagrass plants transplanted, to help restore half a hectare of seagrass beds.

A further 5,000 native oysters have been deployed to the Hamble reef at the Swanwick bend of the River Hamble in Hampshire. The reef has shown significantly higher numbers of spat (oyster larvae), indicating that restored populations are reproducing and settling on or near the reef.



**Below** Completed sediment retention barriers in place as the first tide begins to flood the creeks. **Photo** Luke Helmer



This year, the Shell to Shore initiative was also launched, recycling used oyster shells from five London restaurants for marine restoration projects

2024 REVIEW

Monitoring across the seascape has detected 83 different fish species, including Endangered and Critically Endangered European eel, Tope shark, and Atlantic halibut. There have also been increases in benthic biodiversity at both reef sites in Langstone Harbour and the River Hamble. Restoring these habitats is critical to returning the Solent to a functioning seascape, creating a more resilient coastline, enhancing biodiversity, and improving water quality.

Our work also focuses on other species, and efforts to recover the Critically Endangered native sturgeon are progressing as part of the UK Sturgeon Conservation Action Plan. Expert workshops led by partners ZSL have identified potential reintroduction strategies, and habitat surveys on the Severn and Wye rivers have laid the foundations for future feasibility work.

Innovation and breaking down restoration barriers are key to scaling up efforts. The Solent Seascape Project is working with Plan Vivo to develop the world’s first marine biodiversity certificates, unlocking the potential to finance the project sustainably in the future. This year, the Shell to Shore initiative was also launched, recycling used oyster shells from five London restaurants for marine restoration projects. The project collected almost two tonnes of shell in eight weeks, reducing waste and providing vital material to create new oyster reefs.

**Below and Right** Oyster restoration projects around the UK to establish community ‘restoration hubs’.



**Above** ZSL, Blue Marine, and Vancouver University surveying the River Wye **Photo** ZSL

Increasing restoration requires supportive policy frameworks, and we have established new collaborative relationships with regulators and the government to overcome barriers. A new restoration policy steering committee has been set up, inviting representatives from all Devolved Administrations to develop an action plan to overcome this kind of policy obstacle.

Beyond restoration itself, we also plan to gather evidence to help demonstrate and communicate its benefits. We have gained global recognition as experts in the field, and the Solent Seascape Project was named a UN Ocean Decade Action this year, while our outreach – through films, talks, events, and reports – has engaged more than 20,000 people locally and millions more around the world. With the support of 500 active volunteers, Blue Marine continues to highlight the vital importance of restoring marine ecosystems.





# United Kingdom Overseas Territories

**The Blue Belt: Ascension, St Helena and South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands.**

The UK Blue Belt Programme, which supports 10 UK Overseas Territories committed to ocean protection, continues to be the world's largest and most diverse marine conservation programme, protecting 4.4 million sq km of ocean. As part of the Great British Oceans coalition, which comprises Blue Marine and five other conservation NGOs, we have worked closely with the UK government since 2015 to establish the Blue Belt. This has included advocating for continued and increased funding from the UK government to support these globally significant conservation efforts.

**166,000 sq km**  
**extra protected in 2024**  
**around South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands**

Photo Clare Brook

2024 REVIEW

## The Blue Belt Programme was responsible for one of the largest no-take marine protected area announcements in the world in 2024

The Blue Belt Programme was responsible for one of the largest no-take marine protected area (MPA) announcements in the world in 2024, when an additional 166,000 sq km around South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands was declared fully protected. This is the most biodiverse place in all the UK Overseas Territories, an area where the humpback whale population has rebounded since the end of commercial whaling. These magnificent animals will now be protected from the industrial krill fleets that are extracting vast amounts of protein from the Southern Ocean.

Ascension Island, in the middle of the Atlantic, also has exceptional biodiversity, including one of the largest green turtle nesting sites in the world. Once heavily fished by tuna longlining vessels, Ascension now hosts a fully-protected marine reserve nearly the size of France.

Blue Marine has been working with Ascension for a decade, ensuring that in return for hosting one of the largest and most effective no-take zones in the world, the community receives a regular income. In 2021, Blue Marine established a £2m endowment fund, thanks to a generous donation from Peter Lürssen. The fund delivers an annual return, in perpetuity, to support community, heritage, education and environmental projects on this remote and beautiful island.

In a recent scientific publication, preliminary results from Ascension showed spillover from the protected area to have had one of the highest benefits to nearby fishing areas, in terms of increasing catches of tuna (Lynam et al 2024 'Evidence of spillover benefits from large-scale marine protected areas to purse seine fisheries').

At St Helena in the South Atlantic, Blue Marine continues to support the effective implementation of St Helena's Category VI MPA,

ensuring that it makes genuine conservation gains and benefits the community. The MPA legislation ensures that damaging longlining is prohibited, with only pole and line fishing permitted. To boost support for this MPA and increase on island capacity for conservation, our Blue Education team relaunched a dive scholarship programme this year aimed at engaging young people in ocean conservation and equipping them with some career enhancing skills.

The cost of initial dive training is a significant barrier to many young people in St Helena. By introducing key diving skills to young people taking a Marine Science GCSE, or those seeking experience in the marine sector, Blue Marine is helping to bridge the gap between theoretical and practical skills in marine conservation. Our Blue Media team produced a mini-documentary style video about one of the dive scholars and followed their journey throughout the summer.

Photo Danny Copeland

Photo Clare Brook





MEDITER-

Shark conservation and marine protection across the Mediterranean

RANEAN

Photo Manu San Felix, Vellmar Association, 2024





# Shark conservation; Italy & the Aeolian Islands; seagrass restoration in Formentera

**The Mediterranean Sea is one of the most exploited fisheries on earth, where at least 24 species of sharks and rays are ‘exceptionally vulnerable’. Blue Marine intends to prevent their extinction and ensure their recovery, and supports shark projects in Italy, Turkey, Cyprus, Israel, Greece and Tunisia. We are building collaborations with scientists, fishers, policy-makers and NGOs from all 22 Mediterranean nations to foster a unified approach to shark conservation.**

This year our partners presented findings from Sicily on migration and breeding at the EU Elasmobranch Conference in Greece. We collaborated with Virginia Tech University to establish a scientific monitoring programme across North Africa and with the University of Haifa to urge protection for breeding areas of sandbar shark and a rare population of guitar shark that appears to migrate between Cyprus and Israel. (Manta rays also migrate between Cyprus and Gaza, where they are sometimes fished.) We will use the publication of the guitar-shark discovery in leading journal ‘Frontiers in Marine Science’ to push for an MPA designation.

Meanwhile in Italy, we made significant strides in safeguarding the full range of marine life through partnerships with local stakeholders. Our studies highlighted the importance of protecting the country’s largest loggerhead turtle nesting site. Anti-trawling devices in Puglia protected seagrass and coral; buoys prevented

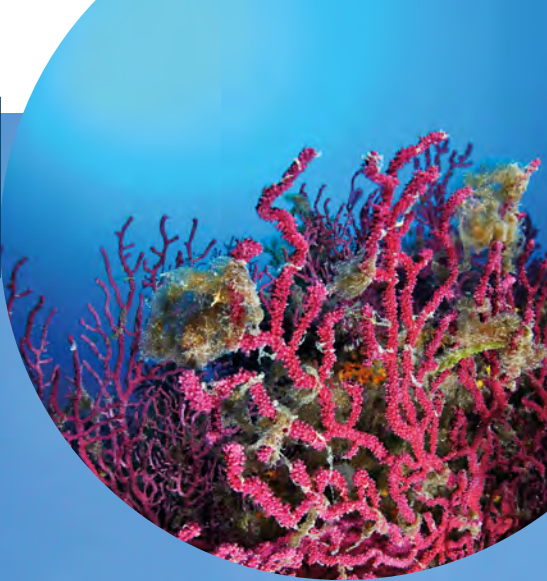
anchoring in Sardinia, where we also removed 1,000 kg of ghost nets. In Sicily, we identified shark and ray hotspots; in the Aeolians, the three mayors of Salina backed our MPA proposals. In the Egadi islands, we established new regulations to protect the largest known aggregation of eagle rays.

Over in Spanish waters, our Blue Climate unit supported the restoration of the Posidonia seagrass ecosystem in the Balearic island of Formentera with local



**Above** Giulia and fisherman in Salina **Photo** Gianfranco Taranto. **Main image** A network of no-fishing zones stretch south from Gokova Bay

2024 REVIEW



The Mediterranean Sea is one of the most exploited fisheries on earth, where at least 24 species of sharks and rays are ‘exceptionally vulnerable’.

partner Vellmari Association. The team identified optimal locations, prepared materials for planting, monitored restoration areas from previous years and gathered data on survival and growth rates and seed germination. The aim is to find the best way to plant Posidonia at scale and in rocky substrate. Seagrass restoration has been poorly recorded and we will publish a report on the results, with a guide for replication of this work in the wider Mediterranean.

## Turkey

Turkey has the largest highly protected network of marine protected areas (MPAs) in the Mediterranean. As well as maintaining this and strengthening enforcement of no-fishing zones, the aim of Blue Marine’s work in 2024 was to use film to show the ecological and socio-economic benefits of this network. With our partners, the Mediterranean Conservation Society, we also established new marine ranger stations, south-east of Bodrum. Hundreds of illegal fishing incidents were prevented by MPA rangers and biodiversity within protected areas is increasing. Shark, ray, grouper and monk seal populations are all recovering steadily. In 2025 we aim to produce more targeted shorter films to inspire others to designate highly protected, community-managed MPAs.

**Above** Scientist monitoring CO2 trapping seagrass meadows **Right** Stingray in Gokova Bay, a marine protected area in Turkey **Photo** Zafar Kizilkaya







I N T E R -

N A T I O N A L

P R O J E C T S

Marine protection and sustainable fisheries for all around the world.



# Namibia



**In the Karas region of southern Namibia is the quiet town of Lüderitz, whose rugged Atlantic coastline is known for its fresh rock lobster, oysters and mussels. On land it is surrounded by the Namib Desert and at sea lies the Namibian Islands Marine Protected Area (NIMPA). The 9,500 sq km of the NIMPA is an area of outstanding marine biodiversity, supporting globally significant populations of seabirds and marine mammals, and important marine industries.**

Despite being Africa’s second-largest MPA, it is threatened by overfishing, mining, pollution, untested phosphate extraction, and live marine mammal harvesting. Since its gazettelement in 2009, insufficient government resourcing and an inadequate management framework have meant that it has failed to protect many of its key values.

With our partners Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) we are supporting the Namibian government to achieve effective management of the NIMPA, and improve the livelihood opportunities of coastal communities. In 2024, we facilitated training and a workshop whose focus was the revised management plan and regulations for NIMPA, and which included government staff and wider stakeholders.

Our Blue Economics unit supported the NIMPA+ project by producing two economic reports together with the Namibia Nature Foundation. One of these – ‘Scoping Report on Potential Finance Mechanisms and Blended Finance Options for the NIMPA’ – was presented to the Namibian Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources and will be used to support the writing of a sustainable finance plan. The Blue Education unit also created its first ever Ocean Literacy Toolkit, to reinforce the long-term conservation goals in Namibia through contextualised marine education.

The Namibian government has committed to designating ten per cent of the country’s Exclusive Economic Zone as MPAs. To support this, we hope to use the lessons learned and models generated from NIMPA to inform the designation of two new MPAs by designating Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas. Candidates for this include Cape Fria, a strong upwelling cell 1,000 km north of Luderitz within a bio-geographic transition zone, and the Namibe, a region shared with neighboring Angola.

**Above** Luderitz coastline and islands of the NIMPA. **Below** Heavisides dolphin – endemic to the Benguela ecosystemn **Photo** IStock



# South Africa

**Found along the coast of South Africa and Namibia, the African Penguin faces possible extinction within the next ten years. Its numbers have plummeted by 97 per cent over the past decade, and there are now fewer than 10,000 breeding pairs. The penguins are being driven toward extinction by unsustainable pressures on their habitat and food supply – primarily due to climate change and industrial fishing that targets sardines and anchovies, the penguins’ main food source.**

In September 2024, in partnership with the Southern African Foundation for the Conservation of Coastal Birds (SANCCOB) and BirdLife South Africa, Blue Marine launched the #SaveAfricanPenguins campaign. This calls on the South African government to establish effective no-take fishing zones around the six key African Penguin colonies, to ensure that there is enough prey to sustain the species. In addition, the campaign asks the government to enforce existing marine pollution regulations and close legal loopholes that currently allow pollution, including noise pollution, to interfere with penguin breeding.

To promote #SaveAfricanPenguins, Blue Marine premiered a campaign film, narrated by Zandi Ndhlovu, South Africa’s first black female dive instructor. We collaborated with environmental action platform OnlyOne to launch a petition, supported by key South African influencers and

organisations, from professional cricketer Rassie van der Dussen, to the travel curation site Secret Cape Town. So far, the petition has gathered more than 25,000 signatures.

This campaign has attracted a combined press editorial reach of 523.3 million, including pieces from Forbes, Oceanographic, The Sunday Times, The Telegraph and The Mirror. We have secured 87 pieces of online, print, and broadcast coverage, with titles including some of the most widely read and watched in South Africa, and total social media reach of 1.8 million.

In the coming months, working with our partners SANCCOB and BirdLife SA we will coordinate an international open letter from leading global scientists, urging the South African and Namibian governments to adopt stricter protections, to protect this iconic species – before it is too late.

**Below** Once one of South Africa's most ubiquitous seabirds, the African Penguins have lost 97% of their population **Photo** IStock



The campaign has attracted a combined press editorial reach



# Mozambique

In the south of Mozambique, Blue Marine is working with the charity Love The Oceans towards a more sustainable future for Jangamo Bay, home to many species of sharks, rays and humpback whales. Initiatives include a female-led aquaculture project, and this year we undertook trials on the growth and survival rates of mussels, testing the feasibility of on-growing them. Love The Oceans secured a memorandum of understanding with the government to allow the installation of aquaculture equipment in 2025.

Through research the project identified 12 elasmobranch species, all on the ‘red list’ of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and nine meso-predators, although in alarmingly low numbers. Protection of the ecosystem is urgently needed in Jangamo, and scientific evidence is vital in advocating for sustainable management. The sustainable fishing project continued its community-led approach to eliminating net fishing, producing media assets in the local dialect and advocating for better prices with lodge-owners and tourists. In November, Love The Oceans won the 2024 Gender Just Climate Solutions award at COP29 for their gender equity work, which included the aquaculture project.

Blue Marine is working with the charity Love The Oceans towards a more sustainable future for Jangamo Bay



Above BRUV Research Photo Mario Guilamba



Above Over the Swell team with Blue Marine - scoping trip 2024 Photo Fiona Llewellyn

# São Tomé & Príncipe

Off Africa’s western coast, island nation São Tomé and Príncipe (STP) is home to migrating populations of whale sharks that are under threat. Blue Marine has teamed up with Over the Swell, a group focused on whale shark conservation and engagement with fishers in STP.

With our support, Over the Swell has recorded more than 70 official whale shark observations. This data has been presented to the STP government, resulting in whale sharks being included as a protected species in two new government decrees that now await Ministerial approval.

In July 2024, Blue Marine undertook a successful scoping trip to São Tomé to connect with local partners, meet government representatives, understand the local context of the work, and see the challenges facing fishing communities.

Education and outreach are key here. Over the Swell has recruited and trained four local ex-spear fishers as conservation rangers, and a further 20 fishers. With their help, it has engaged more than 3,000 artisanal fishers, explaining the importance of sharks in the local ecosystems, and the use of more sustainable fishing methods.

# Dutch Caribbean

The Dutch Caribbean comprises six tropical gems – Aruba, Bonaire, Curaçao, St Maarten, St Eustatius, and Saba, which host unique and globally threatened biodiversity. Recognised internationally for its biodiversity, the Caribbean has the largest concentration of marine species in the Atlantic.

Since 2020, Blue Marine has been working with local partners, the Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance (DCNA), and the Nature Park foundations of the six islands, to safeguard their distinctive ecosystems and varied wildlife. These initiatives strive to expand marine protected areas (MPAs) within the Exclusive Economic Zones and coastal waters of the region, establish sustainable funding for conservation efforts, and support local projects.



Above Ailochroia crassa. Main image Aerial view of Kim Sha beach and Pelican Key area

Throughout 2024 Blue Marine and DCNA provided extensive technical and stakeholder engagement support to the Curacao government in drafting a new Nature Policy Plan for the island. In October, the plan was approved by ministers, and was due to be published before the end of the year. The plan includes the marine conservation and management commitments and objectives that Blue Marine recommended, and sets a high ambition for protection in Curacao.

In partnership with the St Maarten Nature Foundation, we completed the first stage

of St Maarten’s MPA legislative review, and presented the findings to Parliament, laying the foundation for increasing inshore MPA coverage. This includes designating ‘Little Key’ island, a critical mangrove habitat in Simpson Bay lagoon, as a protected area.

Now in its third year, our ‘small grants programme’ for the Dutch Caribbean continues to run successfully. Highlights in 2024 included: Aruba Conservation Foundation finalised designs for its new Marine Conservation Centre; Bonaire installed 16 acoustic receiver stations to track 21 tagged species; Curaçao’s Carmabi Marine Education Centre engaged more than 1,250 students; Saba’s Marine Field Station welcomed more than 100 visitors, including the Dutch royal family and EU delegates; St Eustatius began demarcating marine reserve boundaries; and St Maarten monitored seagrass habitats to support marine spatial planning.

Blue Economics is also supporting the Blue Nature Alliance in designing a two-day sustainable finance workshop aimed at policymakers and MPA delivery partners. This workshop will help provide a roadmap for sustainably financing MPA ambitions in the region.

Throughout 2024 Blue Marine and DCNA provided extensive technical and stakeholder engagement support to the Curacao government in drafting a new Nature Policy Plan for the island





# Argentina, Chile, St Vincent and the Grenadines and St Kitts and Nevis

In Argentina, we support local NGO Rewilding Argentina in their mission to protect 30 per cent of the waters of Chubut province in Patagonia and ultimately 30 per cent of the country's Exclusive Economic Zone. In 2024, a 10-year collaboration was formalised with the Chubut provincial government, to begin designating MPAs, initially protecting 400km of Patagonia's productive Atlantic coastline from destructive bottom trawling. We are supporting our partners to publish the first ever open-access vessel registry that details the fishing fleet operating in national waters.

In protected areas of neighbouring Chilean Patagonia we supported the campaign of local partner Defendamos Chiloé to close more than 420 salmon farms, which are linked with plastic pollution, ecosystem degradation and the intensive use of antibiotics. This helped persuade the government and two salmon-farming companies to withdraw nine aquaculture concessions from national parks. Another Defendamos Chiloé campaign had an impact on votes on the use of coastal space in several districts vital for marine biodiversity in Patagonia. We also continued to support Patagonia Projects and their vessel 'Saoirse', with a focus on cetacean monitoring.

After previous research and input from Blue Marine, the Caribbean nation of St Vincent and the Grenadines declared a ban on conch fishing during the three-month spawning season. In 2024, using local conch divers as part of the team, we searched for potential conch nursery grounds around the islands of

Bequia and Isle à Quatre. With the support of local communities, Blue Marine and the St Vincent and the Grenadines Nature Fund have now proposed four nursery rest areas where high numbers of juvenile conch were recorded in seagrass beds.

In 2024 Blue Marine began working with local NGO Blue Conscience in the smaller Caribbean state of St Kitts and Nevis, whose 9,500 sq km of coastal waters have degraded in the past decade due to losses in coral and fish abundance and spiking macro-algal growth.

Initial meetings indicated good support for marine conservation from local communities and government. We will be collaborating with Blue Conscience to ensure effective and equitable marine protection for near and offshore waters and to increase support for fisheries regulations.

Top Avistaje ballenas x Marke Friedrich - Rewilding Argentina. Above Monitoreo Tiburones - Mariana Cassini, Patagonia. Inset Boats in Nevis Photo Jake Edmiston

2024 REVIEW

# Mexico, Panama, Costa Rica and Uruguay

Our goal in Mexico is to protect the seas around Baja California Sur with 'Dos Mares' – a marine protected area (MPA) of 192,000 sq km, which allows sustainable fishing and aquaculture but prevents unsustainable industrial fishing. Local NGO partners Orgcas have collected data to inform the justification; fishers and tourism operators have sent letters of support to the Ministry; a new small-scale fisheries commission, DEPESCA, lobbies the government relentlessly. Baja's shark-fishers have mostly transitioned to tourism but other artisanal fishers are struggling to survive, because the industrial fleets are overfishing migratory species such as tuna, marlin and sardines. The director of Mexico's commission for protected areas, shows great support for the initiative and negotiations at a political level continue to look for a solution that will save coastal fishing communities and fish stocks from collapse.

Right Sea of Cortez Photo George Duffield. Below Panama's coastal wetlands are being protected to save manatees from extinction



Our goal in Mexico is a marine protected area of

For our new project to protect manatees in Panama we are working with the Smithsonian Institute and the Ministry of Environment to designate MPAs along 500 miles of coastline. We have already assessed manatee numbers in both Panama and Costa Rica and secured the designation of a new Panamanian protected area at Changuinola, home to the country's largest manatee population.

The Panamanian government supports marine conservation and has protected more than half its seas. The Eastern Tropical Pacific Marine Corridor – the trans-boundary reserve of which Panama is part – will be a focus for Blue Marine, supporting initiatives to improve enforcement and monitor ecological recovery. In Costa Rica, government co-operation has proved more elusive.

Uruguay's rich marine ecosystem is host to at least 100 shark and ray species, 31 cetacean species, 38 seabird species and large breeding colonies of South American fur seals and sea lions. The government has pledged to create 30 per cent MPAs by 2030. In 2024, Blue Marine worked with Mar Azul Uruguayo (MAU) and local partners to monitor MPAs, develop a monitoring buoy and launch an awareness campaign on marine biodiversity.

A key achievement was the creation of Isla de Los Lobos, Uruguay's first MPA, which will protect 63,000 fur sea lions. A new MPA that will protect a 10,000 sq km hotspot for sharks is being presented to the government and artisanal fishers are increasingly releasing sharks alive, rather than selling them for little profit. A partnership was created between the navy, non-profit Skylight and MAU to monitor illegal fishing. This has already led to the arrest of an industrial vessel which was poaching sharks and tuna. Media coverage of these initiatives instilled national pride in Uruguay's unique marine ecosystems for the first time.





# Maldives

**In collaboration with local NGO Maldives Resilient Reefs (MRR), Blue Marine has made significant progress in increasing marine protection in the Maldives. Notably, our #AgainstLonglining campaign with other partners halted issuing new longlining licenses (see full story on page 16).**

Other highlights include MRR and the Blue Science unit's baseline socio-economic assessment in Laamu Atoll for the Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy. The team surveyed 171 resource-users across 10 local islands and two tourist resorts to gain insights into local marine ecosystems. Work with Laamu Hithadhoo Council is underway to establish an innovative Community Conserved Area on the island. The adaptive management of the sustainable resort-reef fishery programme is ongoing at Six Senses Laamu and Baa Amilla resorts. This work will continue into 2025 with the addition of innovative vessel-monitoring technology with local fishers to improve sustainability. A seafood sourcing survey conducted with 30 resorts provided valuable insights for expanding the programme across the industry.

Our online education platform, Masmahaa-Veshi, now includes ten modules and has engaged more than 100 fishers and 200 community members on sustainable fishing practices and the benefits of marine protection. Blue Marine has also formalised a Memorandum of Understanding with MRR over the next four years, to support the continuity of impactful conservation efforts

in the islands. We are in discussions with the government and partners to support the 30x30 ocean protection targets.

The Blue Climate unit supported MRR and the University of Northumbria in research into mangrove die-back, and specifically the significance of climate change, increasingly frequent extreme weather events and rising sea levels. This work will help guide our engagement with the Maldivian government about conservation, restoration and rehabilitation of mangroves in the coming years. Our Blue Education unit also collaborated with MMR to develop a seagrass education model for Maldivian children, which is now on Masmahaa-Veshi.

Meanwhile Blue Economics explored a number of financing mechanism that might be deployed to support marine conservation. We presented these to several departments and conducted an in-person presentation to the relevant ministries during a visit to the Maldives by our Economics Adviser in March.



**Right** James Blunt, Sofia Blunt, Blue Marine's Trustee, Shaha Hashim, Maldives Project Manager and the Maldives Resilient Reef team, Blue Marine's local partner. **Photo** Sophie Nasif

# Indonesia, Philippines and the Caspian Sea



**Inset** Oceanus Conservation, co-founder Camille Rivera, using a drone for mangrove restoration monitoring

**The Bird's Head Seascape marine protected area (MPA) in Indonesia is home to the most diverse ocean life on Earth. To prevent illegal fishing in the Raja Ampat archipelago to the north, Blue Marine is aiming to replicate the successful enforcement model developed on our projects in Turkey. Construction of two community-ranger boats began this year and we held initial meetings with the MPA authorities to discuss how best to spread knowledge to resorts, homestays and live-aboards of a code of conduct for all water-based activities in the region. We also met with Papua University about engaging local students to conduct socio-economic surveys in villages around Raja Ampat and recruited students to monitor fish markets for illegally caught species.**

In the Philippines our Blue Climate unit is leading a collaboration with local NGO Oceanus Conservation to restore abandoned aquaculture ponds to healthy mangrove forests. In 2024 we supported the restoration of ten hectares of sites in Surigao del Sur province. We identified a diverse range of mangrove species, and surveys found the local community and government unit supportive of the restoration programme.

A group of 27 community and government members were trained in how to restore the conditions required for mangrove rehabilitation by raising the soil level in the ponds. By the end of year one approximately 25,000 trees will have been planted. To support long-term conservation of restored areas, local people will be supported to develop alternative livelihood models.

In the Caspian Sea, Blue Marine aims to protect six critically endangered species from extinction, and presently we are focusing on Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan. Our work to date has seen all gill nets banned in Azerbaijan, along with the designation of the country's first ever MPA and Hope Spot in a nursery area for sturgeon. Millions of juvenile sturgeon and Caspian salmon have been released into the Caspian Sea and the Cure the Kura project initiated with our partners to restore upriver spawning grounds.

In Turkmenistan we signed a memorandum of understanding with the government for Blue Marine to advise on how the country can best designate 30 per cent protection in its Exclusive Economic Zone, focused in areas important for sturgeon and Caspian seals.





# Brussels

**Blue Marine’s work in Brussels continued to expand in 2024. We supported the EU Permagov project in its review of EU marine environmental law, and reached out to collaborative projects in Brussels and wider Europe to enhance our work on bottom-trawling bans in marine protected areas (MPAs). We are part of a collaborative legal effort across multiple EU member states to make the Habitats Directive – the key 1992 law creating MPAs in Europe – finally apply to fisheries.**

We began litigating in the Netherlands (see p14), worked with our NGO partner BUND in Germany, and also with ClientEarth and the Environmental Justice Foundation in the Mediterranean. Our *amicus* brief on sandeels (see p15) involved close liaison in a short space of time with the Bloom Association and with other NGOs across the EU – the result of relationships carefully established over time.

Our work is not just about restricting activities. We are part of an ambitious project led by Doggerland in the Netherlands to restore the Dogger Bank in the North Sea, following centuries of damage by fishing vessels and the annihilation of the huge oyster reefs which once covered its southern flanks.

We had meetings with our Italian colleagues at Blue Marine and MedReact about a general complaint to the European Commission – about bottom-trawling in European waters.

This was funded by the Environmental Justice Foundation and ClientEarth, and was linked to our Italian project objectives and grant proposals. We provided evidence of illegal fishing in Italian waters. This will bolster the general legal complaint from these partners.

We also participated in a restoration workshop near Amsterdam with Doggerland to further their legal challenge through the Dutch courts over protection of the part of the Special Area of Conservation controlled by the Netherlands (see photo below).

We met BUND to support their legal challenge filed in November 2024 over the protection of their part of the Dogger Bank and other cases. For the arbitration case on sandeels, which needs support from EU NGOs, we conducted legal and ecological research. As the year came to a close, we also attended our first meeting of the marine expert group of the European Commission, to give advice on MPA management measures.

**We participated in a restoration workshop near Amsterdam with Doggerland to further their legal challenge through the Dutch courts over protection of the part of the Special Area of Conservation controlled by the Netherlands**

**Below** Rewilding the Dogger Bank Workshop November 2024 **Photo** Wijk aan Zee



# High Seas, Walvis Ridge & Great Whales

**The high seas encompass almost half the planet and two thirds of the ocean. If we are to safeguard 30 per cent of the ocean by 2030, it is essential to include them in protected area proposals. The High Seas Treaty, or BBNJ Agreement, was adopted in 2023. So far 107 countries have committed to ratification and 15 have ratified. Once 60 have ratified, the process to designate areas for protection can begin.**

Blue Marine is working with Namibia Nature Foundation to protect the Walvis Ridge, a 3,000km chain of seamounts rich in marine life. We commissioned an assessment of the Ridge, which gathered knowledge of the area, including usage. The report outlined key scientific considerations, as well as who to engage with for presenting a proposal.

A plan for the Ridge will involve huge collaboration. So far, we have led initial stakeholder engagement events at the International Marine Conservation Congress in Cape Town and CBD COP16 in Cali. We were also observers at the AGM of the South East Atlantic Fisheries Organisation, a management body that covers the area.

The greatest short-term threat to the recovery of species such as blue whales, right whales, sei whales and fin whales is accidental impact by shipping. To help prevent ‘strikes’, Blue Marine has partnered with Whale Guardians™, a league of ports, industry and conservation groups dedicated to rerouting ships around seasonal aggregation and migration areas.

There has been high rate of compliance – and ports in Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and Chile have begun to alter routes. In September, Anglo Eastern – the world’s largest ship-management company – became a member and partner of Whale Guardians™.

Whale Guardians™ has acquired access to historical data using the Automatic Identification System (AIS) ship tracker, which can help create safer routes.

Blue Marine partner the Great Whale Conservancy continues to survey blue whales around Ensenada, Mexico’s second-busiest port and will produce a routing document in 2025 to protect them. Meanwhile we plan to develop software with Belgian logistics company Bogerd Martin, which is currently creating a map to enable shipping to avoid habitats.

**So far 107 countries have committed to ratification and 15 have ratified. Once 60 have ratified, the process to designate areas for protection can begin.**

**Photo** George Duffield







# FUNDING

Strong growth and efficient operations

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<b>Ventoux Challenge and London to Solent</b> P70	<b>Our People</b> P72	<b>Finance overview</b> P74	

# & FINANCE

Photo Francesca Page



# Thank you



Photo George Duffield

The work we do relies on the goodwill of our donors and supporters. We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the Blue Marine cause – their generosity is the starting-point for all our conservation efforts.

We would like to extend special thanks to: the Convex Group for supporting the Convex Seascape Survey – a bold research project which is significantly advancing our understanding of the ocean's function as a carbon sink; the Don Quixote Foundation for helping to drive forward 30x30 in the Dutch Caribbean, Mexico and Turkey, as well as targeted support for our legal and

media teams; the Endangered Landscapes and Seascape Programme for their support of the Solent Seascape Project; CVC for supporting our work to develop the UK blue carbon market; UBS Optimus for supporting work in Greece, Italy and Ascension Island; and Cristina Stenbeck, whose flexible funding provides the foundation for all of our work.

We would also like to thank: Avilan Ocean Foundation, Blue Nature Alliance, East Head Impact, Flotilla Foundation, James Blunt and Chris Evans, Mike Sharp, the players of the People's Postcode Lottery, Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors and Oceans 5, and Travelopia for their dedicated support.

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Major partners are essential to Blue Marine's progress and global impact, and have made significant contributions to restoring the ocean to health.









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Our corporate partners provide vital core support that underpins our work around the world.







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We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to our Trust and Foundation partners for their generosity, and for believing in our vision and work.

















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Photo George Duffield

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Rolly and Françoise Van Rappard  
Simon Pickard  
Sofia Blount  
Steve Edge  
William Salomon



# Art for the Ocean

Artists including Marina Abramović, Ai Weiwei and David Bailey donated works for a fundraising sale hosted by Christie's.

This year Blue Marine held its first ever fundraising art auction. On 10th October, during London's Frieze art week, auction house Christie's hosted Blue: Art for the Ocean, a sale to benefit Blue Marine's projects for ocean conservation and the goal of 30x30. The auction took place online and live during Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art Sale.

Preparations for the auction began a year in advance. The work of the organising team and art committee attracted the involvement of high-profile, international artists including Marina Abramović, Ai Weiwei, Peter Doig, David Bailey and Annie Morris. This gave Blue Marine not only an exceptional fundraising opportunity, but also the chance to raise awareness of 30x30 in the art community, and position Blue Marine in the contemporary art space.



**Left inset** David Bailey, Small Flower (blue), 2008. **Main image and above** Princess Eugenie, Ambassador for Blue Marine, visited Christie's to support "Blue: Art for the Ocean," an exhibition that featured works from 35 global artists **Photo** Liz McAulay. **Right** Annie Morris, Stack 3, Cobalt Turquoise, 2024

In the week before the sale, Christie's dedicated their annual 20/21 Century Art summer party to Blue Marine, putting on a spectacular event to launch the auction. The night included a live musical performance that took place in front of a new work made by Marina Abramović for the auction.

The acclaimed performance artist led the auction campaign with a video piece created on Fire Island in New York. The film and resulting limited-edition photograph depict her standing on a beach in a red dress, arms outstretched, 'giving her unconditional love to the ocean'. Speaking about the work, Abramović said: 'We are all responsible for the ocean. As a human collective we have more consciousness and energy that we can give to the environment.'

In total the auction raised £715,000 for Blue Marine's work, generating 51 pieces of editorial coverage in print and online, with a total potential reach of 1.841 billion views. We are deeply grateful to the committee and the 32 artists who, as genuine ocean advocates, so generously donated their time and work, and to Blue Marine ambassador Princess Eugenie, who helped promote the campaign.







# Blue Marine Yacht Club



**The BMYC Monaco auction and raffle raised more than €400,000 for Blue Marine and its projects around the world.**

Momentum continues to build as more of the global yachting community and supporting donors join the Club to give ocean conservation their backing. Blue Marine hosted its 2024 BMYC Monaco event in September, featuring an exclusive live auction and raffle at the Monaco Yacht Club, with auctioneer Harry Dalmeny, Senior Director and UK Chairman, Sotheby's.

BMYC members and guests were joined by the Club's Founding Patron, HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco and His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. HSH kindly spoke on the night about his long-standing support for Blue Marine, and the organisational ties with conservation work in the Mediterranean that he shares with us.

The night was generously sponsored by long-term major partner Lürssen GmbH, and champagne sponsor Adnams.

After inspiring speeches by Blue Marine's Head of Partnerships, SJ Skinner, and Director of Projects, Jude Brown, guests were invited to enjoy the wonderful live auction, whose prizes were on display before them. The night got off to a racing start with an ocean-themed helmet worn by Valtteri Bottas, F1 driver for Stake F1 Team Kick Sauber, in the Monaco GP, and specially designed for Blue Marine by Tiffany Cromwell, UCI Women's World Tour cyclist Canyon//SRAM racing. Fifty per cent of proceeds from the sale of the helmet were donated to Fondation Prince Albert II, to support its work in the Mediterranean.

*"My involvement with Blue Marine reflects my deep and long-term commitment to ocean conservation, which is vital to life on Earth. We take pride in the many projects we have supported over the years and look forward to those yet to come. At the Blue Marine Yacht Club Auction this year, during the Monaco Yacht Show, I personally supported a number of Blue Marine's projects, and I hope, by doing so, I'm helping set an example for the yachting industry by encouraging the community to support the Blue Marine Foundation, which is making a tangible difference for the future of our oceans."*

**PETER LÜRSSEN,  
CEO LÜRSSEN, 3-STAR  
BMYC MEMBER**



**Far Left** Valtteri Bottas / Tiffany Cromwell 'Ocean themed' helmet on show at the auction. **Below** BMYC Founding Patron, HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco, sharing his support of Blue Marine and passion for the oceans. **Bottom Left** Blue Marine's Head of Partnerships, SJ Skinner, welcoming guests and introducing them to Blue Marine

Other beautifully crafted, one-of-a-kind auction lots and raffle prizes were generously donated by: Alexandra Llewellyn, Steppes Travel, David Shilling, Benedetta Dubini, Four Seasons Yachts, Jake Chapman, Wallien, Aspinal of London, Olly and Suzi and Greg Williams, Monica Vinader, Christopher Ward, John Pearce, Brown-Forman Old Forester Whisky, and Louis Vuitton.

## About the BMYC

The Blue Marine Yacht Club (BMYC) was launched in 2012 by His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, its 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 that loves and relies on the ocean, and which can direct major resources into tackling the problems the ocean faces, while also helping to slow 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.

To join the BMYC is to team up with a committed 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 Club please contact:**  
[sara-jane@bluemarinefoundation.com](mailto:sara-jane@bluemarinefoundation.com)  
**+44(0)7435 289410**



### BMYC Supporters:





# Ventoux Challenge & London to Solent

In September, we took on the infamous Ventoux Challenge, conquering one of Europe's most demanding climbs, and cycled the 420km from Mont Ventoux to Monaco.

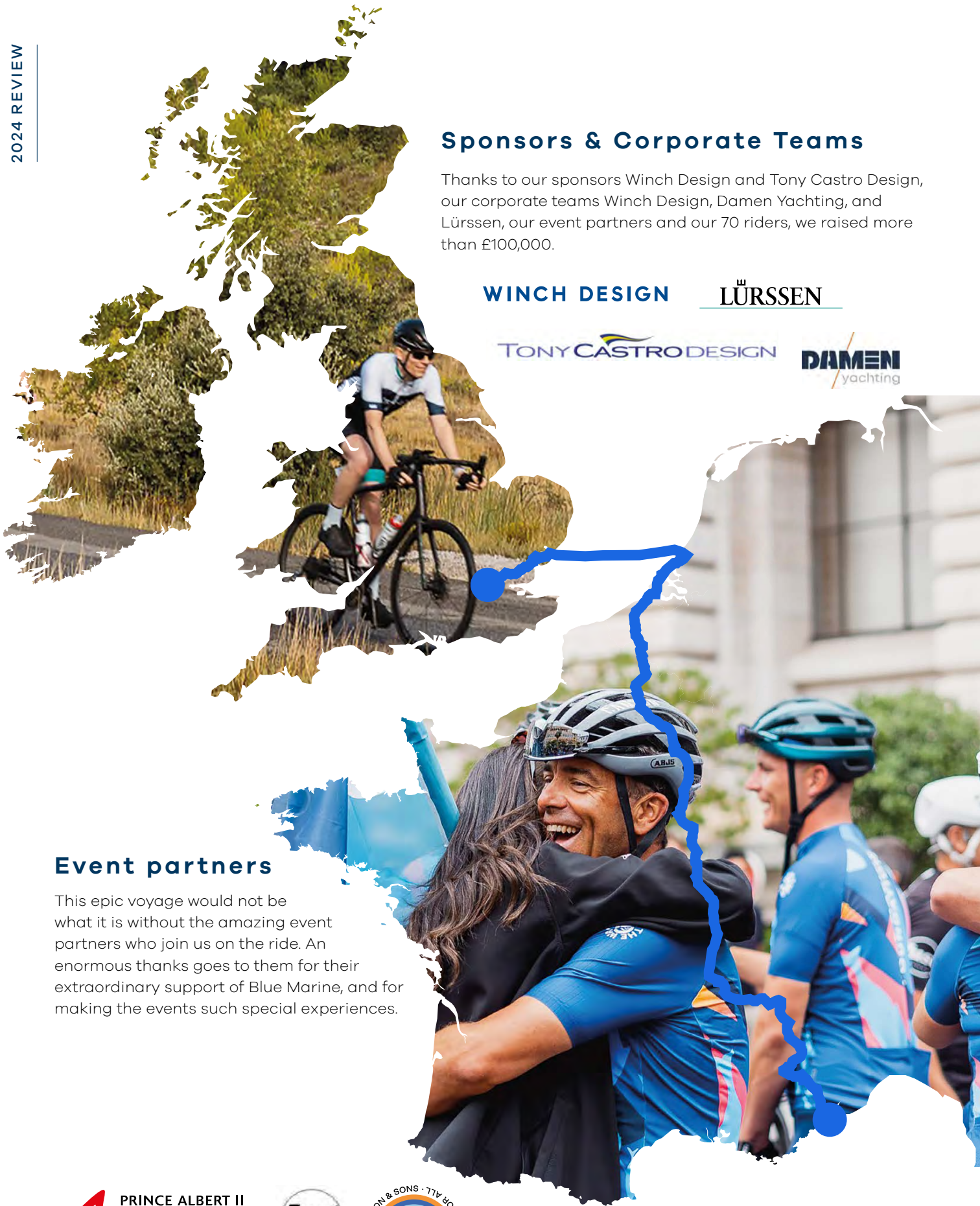
We were expertly guided by Just Pedal and fuelled by the exceptional coffee from Climpson and Sons, and were joined by teams from Lürssen and Damen Yachting, donning the stunning new kit designed by Steve Edge Design and made by Kalas. Upon reaching Monaco, we celebrated with Adnams champagne at the finish line and enjoyed a fantastic afterparty at Icon Connect, all captured beautifully by Tom Austin and Drone Exposure, sponsored by Tony Castro Yachts. Our arrival coincided with the Monaco Yacht Show, where all riders received complimentary access.

Additionally, we launched our inaugural London to Solent bike ride, sponsored by Winch Design, featuring teams from Winch Design and Burgess. Cyclists enjoyed a scenic route from west London down to Chichester Harbour, culminating in a dinner and a presentation on the Solent Oyster Restoration Project. Together, our 70 cyclists raised over £100,000, supporting our long-standing projects in Lyme Bay and the Maldives, focused on sustainable fishing and conservation.



## Join us in 2025!

On 21 June 2025, we invite you to join us in the Solent for the Solent Wave, an exciting multiactivity day, including cycling, sailing or boating and a nature trail. This new venture promises fun for everyone, so mark your calendars, come down to the Solent and get involved. Contact us: [hamish@bluemarinefoundation.com](mailto:hamish@bluemarinefoundation.com)



## Sponsors & Corporate Teams

Thanks to our sponsors Winch Design and Tony Castro Design, our corporate teams Winch Design, Damen Yachting, and Lürssen, our event partners and our 70 riders, we raised more than £100,000.



## Event partners

This epic voyage would not be what it is without the amazing event partners who join us on the ride. An enormous thanks goes to them for their extraordinary support of Blue Marine, and for making the events such special experiences.





# Our People

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BLUE MARINE TEAM

Charles Clover  
Senior Advisor  
David Hutton  
Head of Finance

Rory Moore  
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Emily Norris  
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Office Manager  
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UK Conservation Engagement Co-ordinator  
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Solent Seascape Project Coordinator  
Kaija Barisa  
Senior Blue Economist  
Aisling McGarrigle  
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Solent Seascape Project Communications Officer  
Tim Bryant  
Convex Seascape Survey Social Media and Communications Officer  
Jasmine Finbow  
Fisheries Policy Officer  
Eric Harris-Scott  
Solent Oyster Restoration Project Officer  
Suneha Jagannathan  
Development and Impact Officer

2024 REVIEW



Alea Laidlaw  
Information Officer  
Kathryn Smith  
Jersey Project Officer  
Ritika Susarla  
Economics Intern  
Florence Richardson  
Assistant Management Accountant  
Daniel Wyllie  
Assistant Management Accountant  
Francesco Marzano  
UK Project Assistant

CONSULTANTS

Jenny Baker  
Laamu Project Manager  
Brittany Baschuk  
Senior Campaign Strategist

Mark Beeston  
Senior Blue Carbon Consultant  
Matt Jarvis  
Filmmaker  
Max Bello  
Global MPA Specialist  
Giulia Bernardi  
Senior Italy Projects Manager  
Adrian Gahan  
Government Affairs Advisor  
James Glancy  
Mediterranean Shark Project Manager and Blue Marine Film Maker  
Shaha Hashim  
Maldives Project Manager  
Vreni Haussermann  
Consultant

Tom Horan  
Editorial Consultant  
Andy Mann  
Communications Expert  
Sam Mead  
Software Engineer  
Caitlin Meenan  
Senior Project Associate  
Ambra Messina  
Italian Projects Communications Manager  
Hassan Moosa  
Laamu Project Officer  
Linda Meade  
Head of People  
Rupert Murray  
Filmmaker  
Sriram Natarajan  
Blue Marine Economics Consultant

Mo O'Connell  
Labrys – Partnership Advisor  
Lisa Samos  
Arts and Events Consultant  
Jordan Sutherland  
Development Associate  
David Tudor  
Senior Programmes Consultant  
Appin Williamson  
Research and Impact Adviser  
Andrew Woods  
Operations and Risk Adviser  
Harry (Seungheon) Yang  
Project Intern/Consultant  
Afaaz Zahid  
Resort Research and Fisheries Officer





# Finance overview

Funding deployed for Blue Marine’s charitable activities in the financial year ending 31 March 2024 was up 32 per cent on the previous year, and we maintained our lean structure with operational expenditure up 25 per cent. This reflected the trust placed in us by our ever-more diverse circle of donors and partners, from whom income was up 8.5 per cent on the previous year.

We were delighted to be recognised with awards for good financial management, efficient financial operations and modern financial practices. Building on our success in the Transformation Project of the Year award from ERP Today in September 2023, we won the Outstanding Contribution to the Earth award at the Digital Revolution Awards in May 2024. This celebrates ‘disrupting the status quo and harnessing the power of cloud technology to tackle the global climate emergency’.

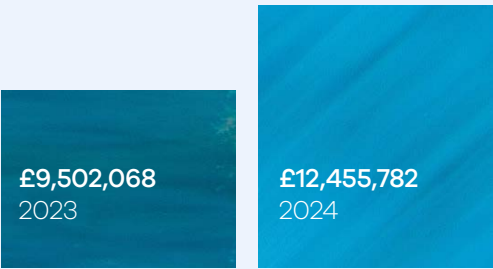
Our commitment to continuously improving our processes ensures that administrative costs are well controlled. Modern automated systems and powerful reporting packages deliver accessible reports to budget-holders and provide decision-makers with accurate, near real-time financial information and analysis.

The finance and operations team also began working more closely with some of Blue Marine’s global partner NGOs this year, fulfilling our ‘hub-and-spoke’ model by giving them support, and building local capacity in some of the world’s most promising locations for marine conservation.

## HOW ARE FUNDS SPENT AT BLUE MARINE?



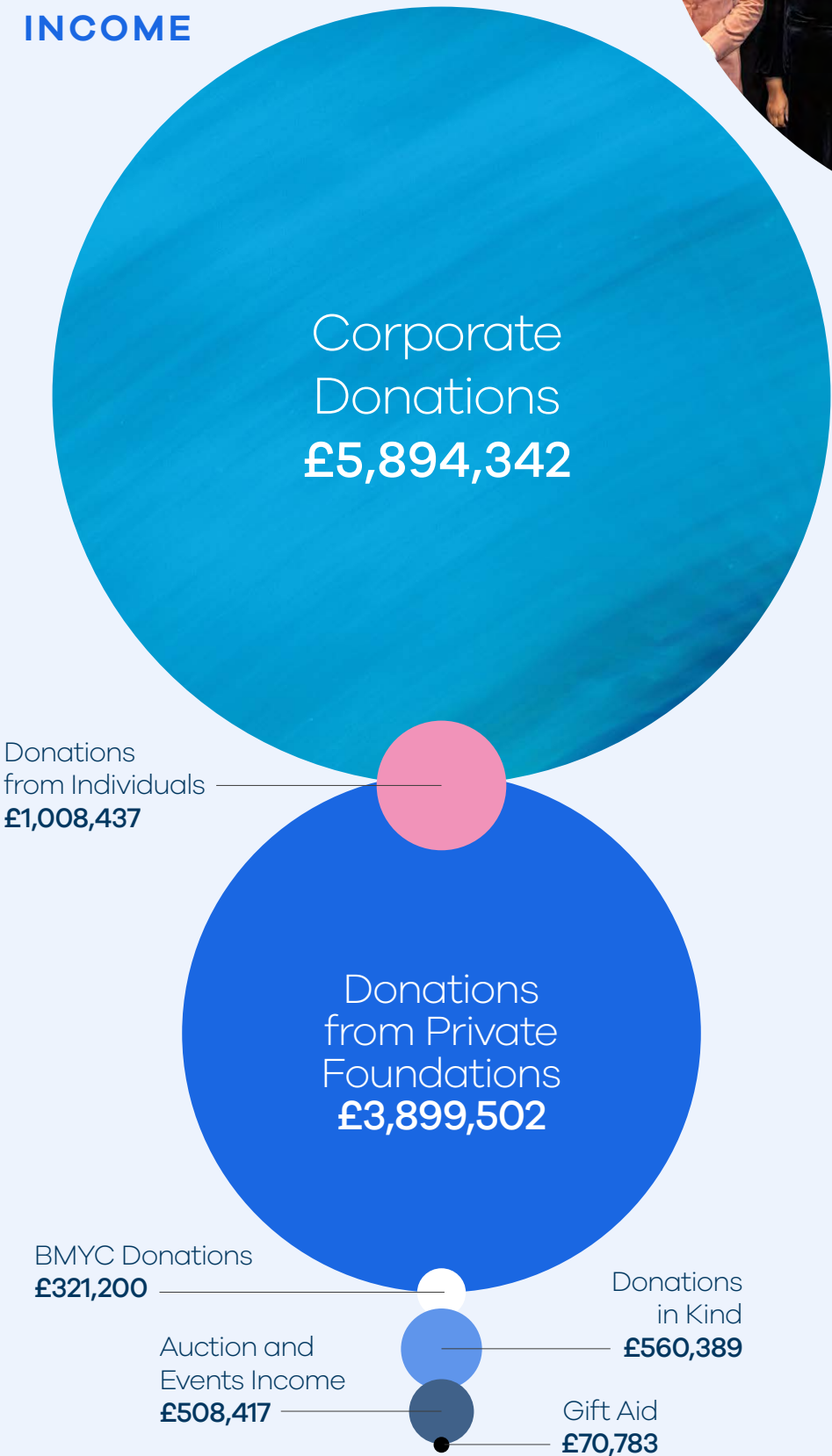
### FUNDS DISTRIBUTED



### ‘FREE’ RESERVES



## SOURCES OF INCOME



Above Blue Marine was recognised for its 'Outstanding Contribution to the Earth' by the Digital Revolution Awards.

## OUR SIZE

56  
Employees

27  
Locations around the world

50+  
Programmes





[www.recyclenow.com](http://www.recyclenow.com)

Design Hutchagency.co.uk

All paper in this review is FSC accredited

Photo George Duffield



**"Blue Marine is simply  
unstoppable in its mission  
to protect the ocean"**

STEPHEN FRY, BLUE MARINE AMBASSADOR



**BLUE MARINE  
FOUNDATION**

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

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