The Ocean Foundation

Annual Report

FISCAL YEAR 2019

FEATURED STORY

International Ocean Acidification Initiative (IOAI)

Photo Credit: Anna Mar, Ocean Connectors

What do you want to do for the ocean?

As the only community foundation for the ocean, we're dedicated to reversing the trend of destruction of ocean environments around the world.

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WHAT'S IN OUR REPORT

A Letter from the President

MARK J. SPALDING

The September IPCC "ocean and ice" report presenting a dire outlook for the ocean, and in turn life on earth, came as no surprise to The Ocean Foundation community—we have shared our concerns about the effects of human activities, and likewise, our work to address those concerns since we were founded. We are proud of what we have been able to do for the ocean, and we are particularly pleased with the momentum we've gained this past fiscal year that carries us forward. The challenges threatening life as we know it on earth are considerable. There are also things we can do to reduce risk and restore abundance.

It will come as no surprise that our work has expanded, and we've added new activities in ocean science and policy all focused on contributing to a blue bottom line -- a healthier ocean. We are proud to share these efforts with you in this annual report on The Ocean Foundation's activities in the fiscal year that ended June 30th, 2019.

Here I share some highlights to give you some idea of the breadth of our activities that are in addition to the features in this annual report. Over the past year or so, we have:

- Served on the organizing committee for the UN High Level Sustainable Blue Economy Conference that brought together 18,000 people in Nairobi who participated in over 300 events, and nine separate conference threads to focus on supporting their coastal communities through initiatives that emphasize what's good for the ocean;

- TOF continued its work with the Jobos Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (JBNERR) in response to disruption from Hurricanes Irma and Maria, helping to rebuild Puerto Rico's natural resilience through seagrass and mangrove forest restoration. Through this project, TOF intends to both offset carbon emissions as part of its SeaGrass Grow charitable carbon offset program and promote the region's natural resilience to extreme weather events and sea level rise in the future;

- Continued our work to promote the development of a management plan for the extraordinary marine life in the Sargasso Sea;

- Launched The Ocean Foundation's "Redesigning Plastics Initiative" with production-focused solutions not only to make plastic less toxic, but also to standardize and simplify the chemical makeup of plastic to eliminate barriers to recycling, increasing incentives to manage plastic waste properly;

- Co-organized the first World Congress on Maritime Heritage (Singapore) intended to help countries understand where and how undersea wrecks might be protected and how any harm from sunken vessels and planes might be mitigated;

- Co-hosted a legal training for U.S. state legislators on offshore drilling and on the power of state governments to protect the health and safety of their citizens, and the integrity of their natural resources;

- Educated country representatives about how to sustainably finance marine protected areas at the 10th Monaco Blue Initiative meeting (Monaco) and at the Fifth International Congress on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (Greece);

- And, we leveraged our knowledge to help governments, individual philanthropists and family foundations, as well as NGO partners better focus their efforts on behalf of our global ocean.

We could not accomplish what we do without our community--our donors, supporters, partners, advisors, board and staff. Thank you all.

For the ocean,

Mark J. Spalding

Our Impact on the Ocean

WHERE YOUR MONEY GOES

Fiscal Year 2019 | Ending June 30, 2019

$1,823,122

TOWARDS CONSERVING MARINE HABITATS AND SPECIAL PLACES

Conserving the places and habitats that are special to the people of the world who rely on them most is important to us and our community.

$1,237,495

TOWARDS EXPANDING OCEAN LITERACY AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Educating future ocean leaders, expanding ocean knowledge, and increasing public awareness are sometimes the first steps towards preserving a healthy ocean.

$2,140,588

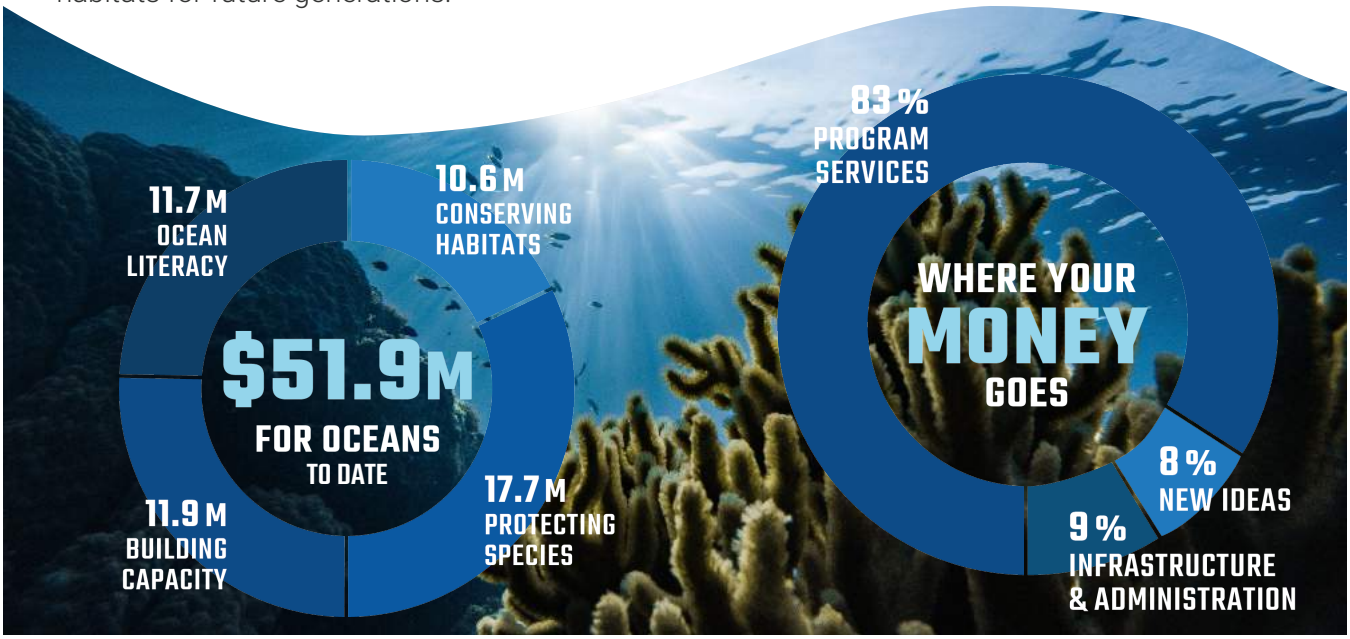
TOWARDS PROTECTING SPECIES OF CONCERN

Protecting species of concern is of utmost importance to us. We strive to protect those species and their habitats for future generations.

$1,618,215

TOWARDS BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF THE MARINE CONSERVATION COMMUNITY

Empowering implementors allows for marine conservation to thrive well into the future.



In addition to hosting donor funds and sponsoring projects around the world, The Ocean Foundation (TOF) also carries out its own programmatic initiatives to meet the growing needs of our world ocean.

Our Initiatives

BLUE RESILIENCE INITIATIVE (BRI)

TOF runs core programs in three areas; advancing climate resilience in coastal communities, focusing on redesigning the way we make plastic, and combating ocean acidification. TOF focuses on areas where we can add value and play a vital role to the contribution of global solutions.

Despite the increasingly severe impacts of climate change on coastal communities, the number of people living on or near the coast continues to grow. Unsustainable development incentives, the desire for beach front property, and competition for limited space all lead to the movement of people into low-lying coastal areas and floodplains that are highly vulnerable to storm events and routine flooding. The expansion of gray infrastructure (e.g. cement) and paved surfaces, especially along the coastline, also results in the degradation and destruction of a community's most enduring and cost-effective defense mechanism: natural coastal ecosystems including seagrass meadows, mangrove forests, coral reefs, sand dunes, oyster reefs, and salt marshes.

Climate change is exacerbating the risks faced by coastal communities. Even the more responsible real estate developments that take into consideration natural stressors by limiting disturbances to the environment are witnessing recurring losses associated with severe weather and flooding. Fisheries that depend on robust estuarine and coastal ecosystems are also suffering from excessive development, pollution, and other human stressors, resulting in major economic losses, food insecurity and the decline of fishing communities throughout the world.

The Ocean Foundation is leveraging its expertise in marine philanthropy, fiscal sponsorship, policymaking, and support for cutting-edge ocean research to develop a new natural infrastructure focused initiative that bridges key gaps between science, policy, and on-the-water intervention activities. The organization has been involved in coastal restoration since 2008 and released the first-ever Blue Carbon Offset Calculator in 2012 to provide charitable carbon offsets for individual donors, private foundations, corporate partners, and events through the restoration and conservation of important coastal habitats, including seagrass meadows, mangrove forests, and salt marshes, which effectively sequester and store carbon.

Although there are many nonprofit organizations, for-profit firms, academic institutions, and government agencies that are pursuing natural infrastructure solutions to enhance coastal security, preserve biodiversity, improve water quality, and store carbon, TOF's approach complements existing efforts while serving unmet needs related to operations, financing, and coordination. TOF aims to develop new approaches to restoring, conserving, and financing natural infrastructure by cultivating social entrepreneurs and decision makers by equipping them with the tools, expertise, and networking support required to reverse the trend of destruction of coastal ecosystems.

50 years of exponential growth in plastic production has created more than 500 years of durable, persistent pollution. The burden of using plastic responsibly should not solely rest on consumers, and consumer behavior change can only do so much.

Our Initiatives

REDESIGNING PLASTICS

By redesigning plastic production before it even reaches the end user, and focusing on recovery, recycling, and true reuse, we will reduce the amount of waste available to fill our landfills and waterways and stop it from even getting into our ocean. By shifting the conversation from why plastics are made, to how plastics are made and what we make from plastic, we can guide manufacturers toward a production-based solution to this global problem.

Our Approach

How can we change the way plastics are made?

Through policy and legislative options focused on production, we can force a redesign of plastic for a true circular economy. With our partners, TOF will:

- Recognize why we have invented, produced and embraced plastics
- Determine which plastics are most important and least replaceable
- Engage decision makers and industry leaders where they are
- Catalyze the development of a legislative and regulatory approach to the chemistry and design of polymers, mixtures of polymers and other plastics ingredients, as well as how plastic products are made

Setting Priorities through a Plastics Hierarchy

Priorities should be set from a volume and social utility perspective. That perspective should be culturally and economically sensitive and address the biggest piece of the problem first: single-use and packaging plastics. In development of a plastics hierarchy, TOF will consider alternatives that do not exacerbate the problem, a just transition strategy, extended producer responsibility (EPR), and a recognition of which industry causes the greatest problem, including by-products such as microfibers and microplastics.

TOF is a member of the Plastic Pollution Coalition and the Break Free from Plastic Coalition, and is working with private businesses throughout the supply chain and waste management, product consumers, municipalities, states and regions to identify a comprehensive framework for redesign.

Join The Ocean Foundation in redesigning the way plastics are made, and what products are made from plastics, and invest in a sustainable future.

In 2002, TOF noticed a disturbing trend within our ocean waters; a clear and ongoing decrease in the pH of the Earth's ocean that was caused by the uptake of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. As CO2 dissolves into the ocean, it alters its chemistry, making it more acidic, and thrusts marine life into a new set of challenging chemical conditions. This prompted TOF to act, and in 2003, TOF's International Ocean Acidification Initiative (IOAI) was launched. The goal was to foster innovation and develop strategic partnerships to empower scientists, policymakers and communities around the world.

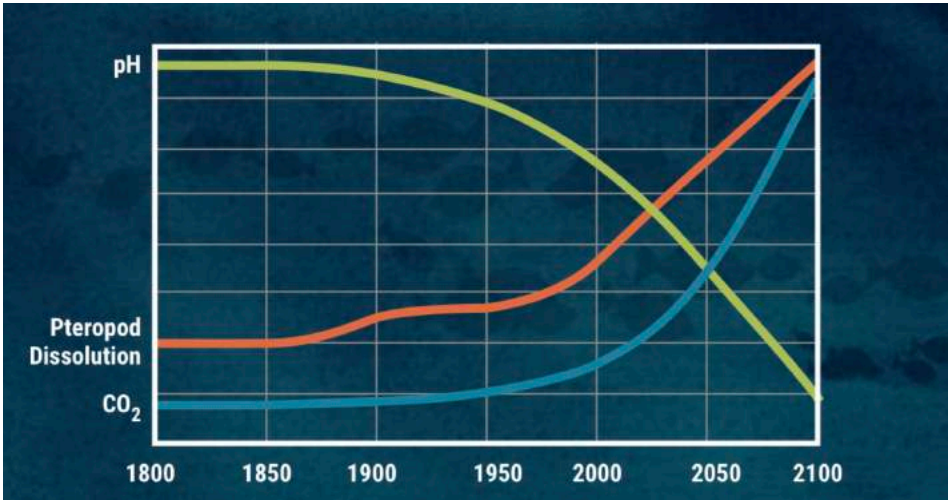
Our Initiatives

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN ACIDIFICATION INITIATIVE (IOAI)

Ocean acidification (OA), the unprecedented decrease in the ocean's pH, represents an under-appreciated but existential threat to ecosystems, communities, and economies globally. To ensure resilience in the face of this threat, equally unprecedented action is needed. Building the global capacity to monitor, understand and respond to the changing ocean chemistry is critical to mitigating and adapting to the effects of OA. From the shallows to the depths of our great global ocean, a crisis has been occurring for decades. The ocean is now 30% more acidic today than it was 200 years ago, and it is acidifying faster than at any time in Earth's history[1]. This disruption in our ocean waters also poses an enormous threat to global food security. Studies show that in more acidic waters, shellfish die before they can fully form their shells, crab larvae struggle to develop, and finfish ranging from sea bass to salmon experience disruptions in their sensory system, leading them to be lost or even swimming into harm's way.

Despite this alarming crisis, as a community foundation we noticed the issue was not getting much attention, either publicly or through philanthropic efforts. TOF saw a responsibility to further the need to address ocean acidification in the climate conversation, and awaken lawmakers to what they can do to combat its devastating effects on marine ecosystems. TOF President, Mark J. Spalding, began meeting with funders at conferences and gatherings and with partners commissioned a national poll to assess OA awareness and messaging. Additionally, TOF created draft legislation and helped coach legislators on effective OA policy.

[1] *Feely, Richard A., Scott C. Doney, and Sarah R. Cooley. "Ocean acidification: Present conditions and future changes in a high-CO_2 world." Oceanography 22, no. 4 (2009): 36-47.*



As CO_2 dissolves, the ocean's pH level drops, which harms ocean inhabitants—including pteropods, the favorite food of many fish and one of the most important indicators of ocean health. By the year 2100, over 75% of pteropods are expected to exhibit severe shell dissolution.

Our Initiatives

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN ACIDIFICATION INITIATIVE (IOAI)

GOA-ON

One prerequisite step before helping to mitigate and adapt to the threat of OA is to globally monitor the localized aspects and variability of the threat. To do this, a group of scientists from around the world created and are currently growing a Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON). These scientists are collecting data using a range of ocean observing technologies to study OA. This global network was first suggested at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, also known as Rio 2012, and the first ever GOA-ON meeting was convened later that same year at the University of Washington, which included scientists from all over the world.

According to GOA-ON, the network is "an integrated, international research effort closely linked with other international research programs" and has the stated high level goals of (1) improving our understanding of global OA conditions, (2) improving our understanding of ecosystem response to OA, and (3) acquiring and exchanging data and knowledge necessary to optimize modeling for OA and its impacts.

In order to support this global effort, in 2014, TOF created the Friends of the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON) Fund. This effort was announced by TOF President, Mark J. Spalding, at the first ever "Our Ocean" conference held in Washington, D.C. This affinity fund for GOA-ON was created to help GOA-ON meet the financial support necessary to achieve its goals. TOF was selected by stakeholders as an international, neutral, independent host for this fund, one that can make grants anywhere in the world and act in a nimble and expert fashion.

"By knitting together national and international observing efforts into a global picture, we will inform stakeholders about the changing chemistry of ocean waters. As such, various nations and institutions have deployed their financial and equipment resources to use existing observation platforms in the ocean or to add new platforms."

MARK J. SPALDING, PRESIDENT

“The scientific and policy needs for coordinated, worldwide information-gathering on ocean acidification and its ecological impacts are now widely recognized. The importance of obtaining such measurements has been endorsed by the United Nations General Assembly and by many governmental and non-governmental bodies who have recently assisted the scientific community in developing the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON).”

THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA)

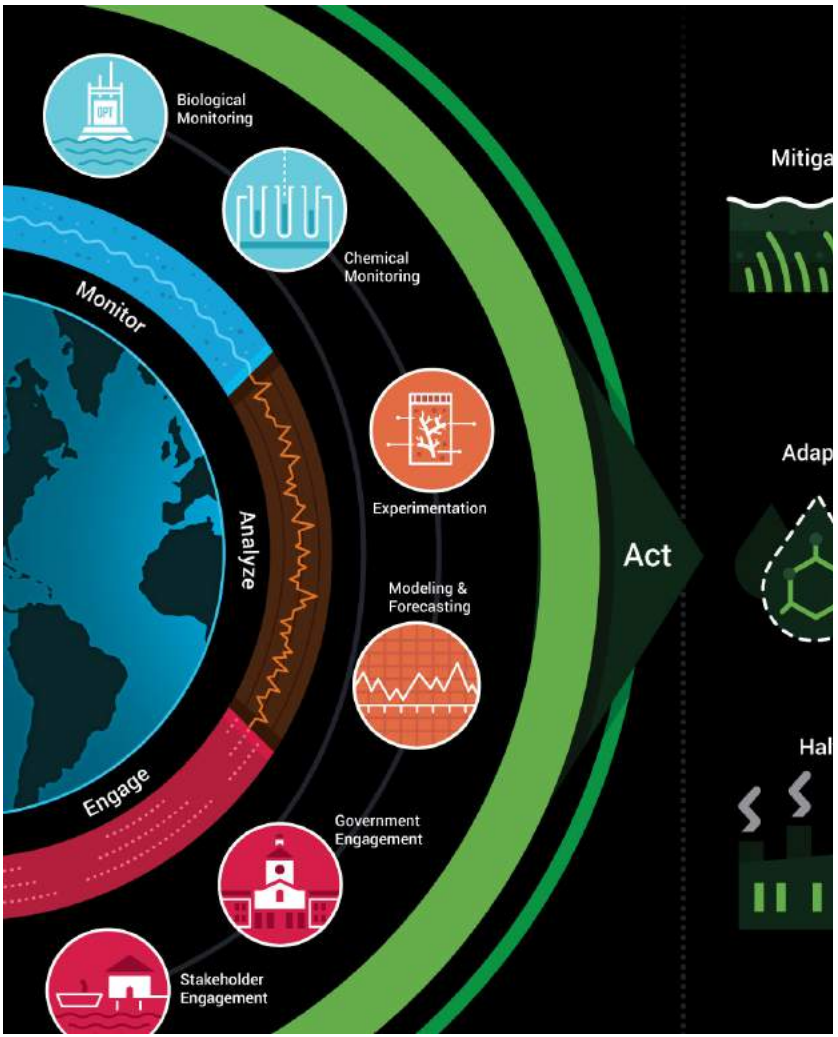
The goal of the fund was to mobilize high-level and international donor commitments, and by creating this affinity group, TOF was able to facilitate the accumulation of funds from government agencies, private philanthropic foundations, and others to support the Network. The Friends of GOA-ON Fund became a new entity with broad international cooperation and a commitment to building capacity in developing countries.

Our Initiatives

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN ACIDIFICATION INITIATIVE (IOAI)

Our Program Ramps Up

During the first ever Our Ocean Conference, ocean advocate Alexis Valauri-Orton publicly presented the science and reality behind OA, and what governments could do about it. Her remarks caught the attention of TOF, who had been pushing the issue to the forefront of the climate crisis debate for over fifteen years. The opportunity to harness Alexis' expertise and passion on the issue with TOF's long-standing track record and well established infrastructure emerged, and Alexis was hired to take the OA program at TOF to the next level - focusing the organization's aim through a four-pronged approach.



Monitor: Observing how, where, and how quickly is change occurring

Analyze: Studying current and future effects of ocean acidification on natural and human communities

Engage: Building partnerships and coalitions with stakeholders

Act: Enacting legislation that mitigates OA and helps communities adapt

To combat any problem, we must first understand it. While the effects of OA are felt all around the globe, they can be hard to see if you don't know what you're looking for. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has some of the most sophisticated and technologically proficient OA monitoring equipment in the world. The problem for many nations with developing infrastructure however, is that due to its complexity and substantial cost, many scientists find it impractical to obtain.

The high barrier of cost and complexity leads to a void in data collection, and governments who want to act on the issue are left without the tools to do so.

In order to help countries obtain the crucial science needed for effective policy and conservation efforts, TOF worked to bridge this divide by convening manufacturers, scientists and engineers to simplify the monitoring equipment, reduce the price, and customize each device to the specific location it is intended to be used in. Through these collective efforts, TOF and its partners were able to reduce the price by ninety percent, bringing the new total down to around $20,000 USD.

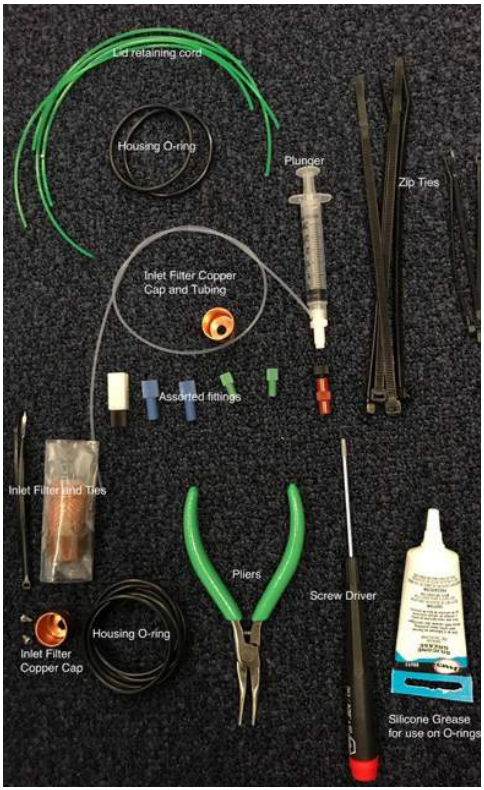
TOF then sought philanthropic support to sponsor sending these OA kits to scientific labs around the world, and convened local workshops and trainings to teach proper equipment use. The results have been astounding.

DELIVERABLE	ACHIEVEMENT TO DATE
Capacity building through the training of 120 scientists in ocean acidification monitoring techniques through six regional training workshops (two in South America, one in the Arctic, one in the Caribbean, one in Africa, and one in the Pacific Islands). Scientists who receive training will be eligible to receive all equipment and materials needed to collect high-quality ocean chemistry data.	6 regional trainings held Over 100 scientists trained One new regional monitoring hub formed
Increased monitoring capabilities through the development and delivery of 12 GOA-ON in a Box Kits.	17 kits delivered to 16 countries
Increased international collaboration and research through support for the Pier-2-Peer mentorship program, regional convening calls, five four-week internships for junior-level scientists per year, for a total of 12 internships and 18 travel opportunities.	9 Pier-2-Peer scholarships awarded 4 travel grants awarded
Increased global policy and mitigation efforts through international and domestic stakeholder engagement, communication to policy makers, and support for drafting legislation (including one policy convening meeting per year, five international policy stakeholder trips, and five domestic policy stakeholder trips, for a total of three policy convenings, 15 international policy stakeholder trips and 15 domestic policy stakeholder trips).	2 regional policy trainings 1 national policy training 1 regional resolution passed Over 50 policymakers trained 1 policy toolkit developed

“Prior to our trainings, OA kit recipients did not have a clear understanding of what was required to conduct monitoring both in terms of equipment as well as research and monitoring design. After the training and as they begin their research with close support from TOF, our partners form long-term, realistic visions for their work which enables them to apply for new funding.”

ALEXIS VALAURI-ORTON, PROGRAM OFFICER

TOF’s International Ocean Acidification Initiative (IOAI) focuses on building the capacity of scientists, policy makers and communities to address OA. To do so, TOF implements regional and national programs with an international strategy by leveraging a network of global partners, catalyzing innovation, strengthening capacity, inspiring policy reform and enhancing public awareness. The key to all of this however, begins with empowering communities near and far with the necessary tools to understand the chemistry in their waters, monitor and analyze those findings, and use that scientific data to create a framework for action.


Lid retaining cord
Housing O-ring
Plunger
Zip Ties
Inlet Filter Copper Cap and Tubing
Assorted fittings
Inlet Filter and Ties
Pliers
Screw Driver
Housing O-ring
Inlet Filter Copper Cap
Silicone Grease for use on O-rings

Our Initiatives

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN ACIDIFICATION INITIATIVE (IOAI)

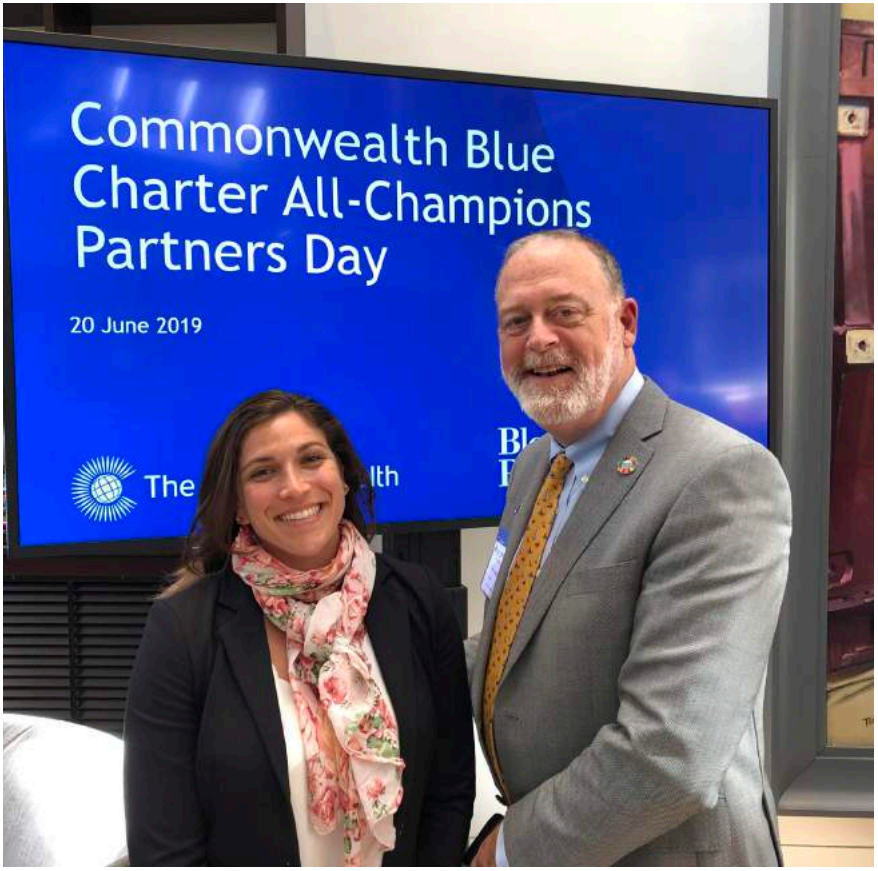
IOAI Receives Funding

TOF's IOAI work caught the attention of experts and funders in the field. One of which, was the U.S. State Department (USDOS), who selected TOF to deliver a program on OA internationally, resulting in the launch of the OceAn pH Research Integration and Collaboration in Africa (ApHRICA), a public-private partnership to expand OA monitoring in Africa through the convening of a regional training workshop, delivery of equipment 'kits' for ocean monitoring, and ongoing mentoring of monitoring scientists. Selected participating countries included Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles and South Africa.

In addition to renewing that program, USDOS also announced the launch of the Ocean Acidification Monitoring and Mitigation (OAMM) program in 2016, which deployed many of the same strategies but focused on building capacity of scientists in the Pacific Islands and Latin America.

"On the one hand it was a clear need. On the other hand, after nearly a decade of trying to get attention for OA, funding to work on OA, it was the first large scale funding to come our way. And, once we focused on it, we were able to nimbly move quickly and make the first trainings happen. Our first capacity building workshop proved we could handle this well and with certainty, so it enabled us to replicate it."

MARK J. SPALDING, PRESIDENT



“It is very rewarding to be a part of the International Ocean Acidification Initiative because it is capacity building in action; my favorite part of the work is hearing about the successes of our partners, and seeing how our initial support helped launched their monitoring programs to become something larger and more impactful.”

ALEXANDRA PURITZ, PROGRAM ASSOCIATE

As TOF continued to replicate these trainings, workshops and scientific data collection globally, international funders also took notice. In 2017, in response to the growing crisis they were seeing in their own backyard, the Government of Sweden supported TOF’s work to provide monitoring kits and equipment, training and capacity building, and on-the-ground support for local scientific researchers to countries and laboratories all over the world.

TOF was also able to hire an additional staff member dedicated to the program, and hired Alexandra Puritz as the Program Associate, to accompany the host of partner organizations, on the ground implementors, scientific researchers and policymakers actively engaged in carrying out TOF’s program.

Our Initiatives

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN ACIDIFICATION INITIATIVE (IOAI)

Where is IOAI today?

To date, TOF has trained over 200 scientists and policymakers on OA monitoring and mitigation techniques, has convened a host of regional workshops and has funded on-the-ground trainings around the world, in places like Mauritius, Mozambique, Fiji, Hawaii, Colombia, Panama and Mexico.

MARCH 2016

Mozambique

First TOF funded OA monitoring training at the Inhaca Marine Biology Research Station that focused on practical field training, knowledge of practices of experimental design, methodology and data analysis.

JULY 2016

Mauritius

First TOF led training on OA monitoring and mitigation techniques.

AUGUST 2017

Mauritius

First time TOF used newly designed kits at an international training.

OCTOBER 2017

Fiji

First time TOF conducted an interdisciplinary training, consisting of two full weeks focused on both policy and science.

2017

TOF put together a legislative guidebook, and model laws that lawmakers could use to design policy action.

2018

Hawaii

TOF held an advanced training at the University of Hawaii in the lab of Dr. Chris Sabine, where twelve scientists from seven Pacific Islands nations strengthened the skills they acquired at the TOF's 2017 workshop in Fiji to focus on data quality control and analysis troubleshooting.

2018

TOF was invited to join the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) expert group on OA.

2018

TOF strengthened and expanded the community of stakeholders by establishing the Pacific Islands and Territories Ocean Acidification (PI-TOA) Network and elevating the importance of OA in regional policy instruments in Latin America and the Caribbean.

2018

Awarding nine "Pier-2-Peer" scholarships to mentor and mentee pairs in 16 countries, enabling collaboration and learning exchanges such as the partnership between Dr. Koffi Marcellin Yao [Abidjan Oceanography Research Centre, Côte d'Ivoire] and Dr. Abed Hassoun [National Council for Scientific Research, Lebanon] on a project entitled ROAM-AFRICA, "Relationship between the carbonate system trends/Ocean Acidification and Marine organisms in the Gulf of Guinea - Africa."

2019

Colombia

Advanced interdisciplinary training workshop on monitoring and mitigation techniques that covered policy as well as science.

2019

China

Peer to peer partner workshop on monitoring and mitigation techniques.

2019

Mexico

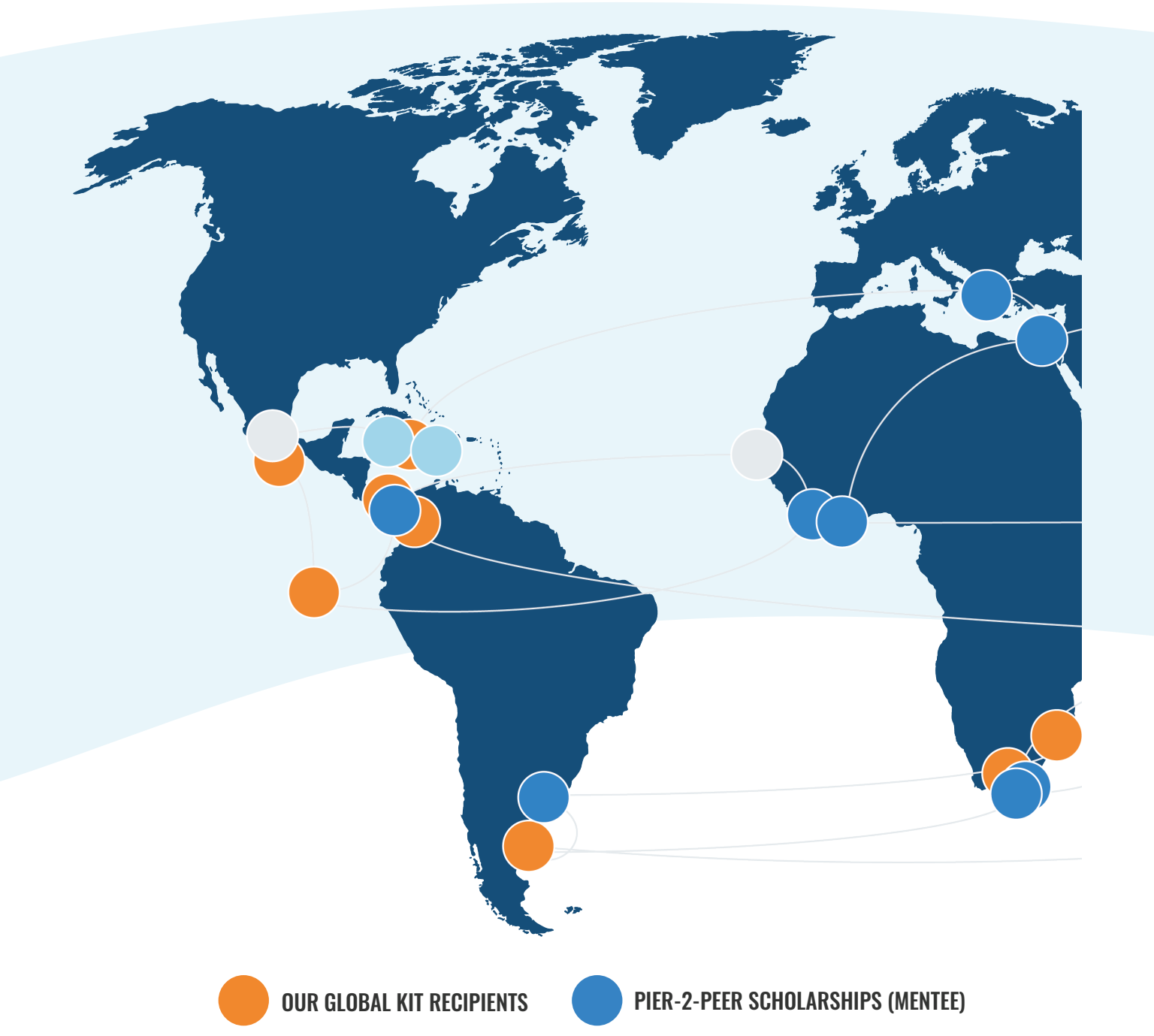
TOF provided an OA policy training for the Mexican Senate delegation.

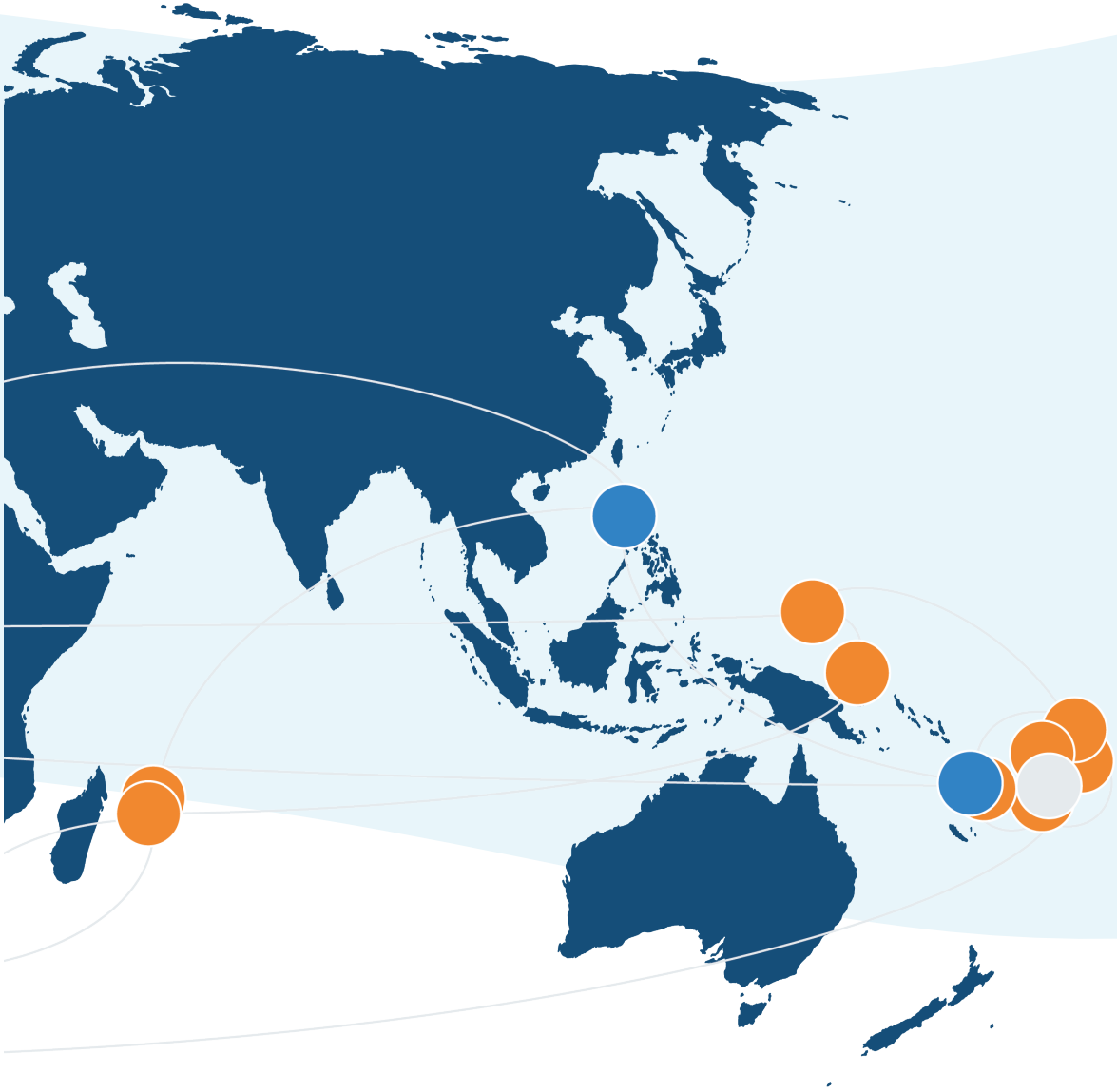
TOF's work combating OA has emerged as one of the leading NGO efforts worldwide to monitor what is happening in our ocean waters, analyze the effects, engage with our partners and act collectively.

Our Initiatives

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN ACIDIFICATION INITIATIVE (IOAI)

Our Global Reach





OA POLICY TRAININGS

REGIONAL RESOLUTIONS ON OA

OUR GLOBAL KIT RECIPIENTS

- Centro para el Estudio de Sistemas Marinas- Consejo Nacional de Investigaciónes Científicas y Técnicas (CESIMAR-CONICET)
- Pontificia Universidad Javeriana
- Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL)
- University of the West Indies, Center for Marine Science
- Universidad del Mar
- Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI)
- The University of the South Pacific, Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development
- Palau International Coral Reef Center
- National Fisheries Authority, Nago Island Mariculture and Research Facility
- The National University of Samoa
- Government of Tokelau, Ministry of Climate, Oceans, and Resilience
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade, Tourism, Environment and Labour
- The University of the South Pacific, Emalus Campus
- Mauritius Oceanography Institute
- University of Mauritius
- Eduardo Mondlane University
- Rhodes University, South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity

PIER-2-PEER SCHOLARSHIPS (MENTEE)

- Rhodes University
- Rhodes University, South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity
- Universidad de Costa Rica
- Abidjan Oceanography Research Center
- Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Desarollo Pesquero
- University of the Philippines, Marine Science Institute
- Nigerian Institute for Oceangraphy and Marine Research
- Hellenic Center for Marine Research
- The University of the South Pacific, Emalus Campus
- Port Said University

OA POLICY TRAININGS

- University of the South Pacific
- Instituto de Investigaciónes Marinas y Costeras (INVEMAR)
- Senate of the Republic of Mexico, Committee on the Environment, Natural Resources, and Climate Change

REGIONAL RESOLUTIONS ON OA

- Wider Caribbean Region (based in Jamaica)
- SPAW Protocol of the Cartagena Convention (based out of the UN Environment Caribbean Environment Programme)

Our Initiatives

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN ACIDIFICATION INITIATIVE (IOAI)

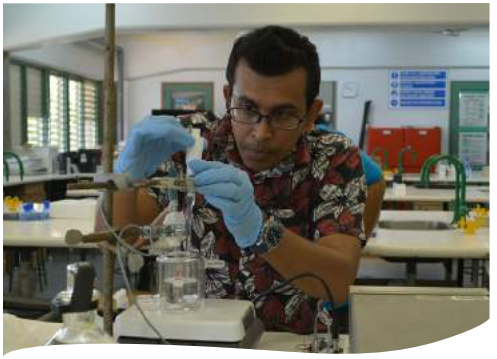
Our Partners

OUR PROGRAM, TRAINING, AND TECHNOLOGY DESIGN PARTNERS

- The Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network
- The International Atomic Energy Agency's Ocean Acidification International Coordination Centre
- NOAA's Ocean Acidification Program
- The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission
- Christopher Sabine, University of Hawaii
- Andrew Dickson, Scripps Institution of Oceanography
- Sophie Chu, Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory
- Kim Currie, New Zealand National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research
- Sam Dupont, University of Gothenburg
- Bronte Tillbrook, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization
- Sunburst Sensors
- Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP)
- Commonwealth Marine Economies Program
- Martin Hernandez Ayon, Universidad Autónoma de Baja California
- Leticia Barbero, Atlantic Oceanographic and Marine Laboratory
- Melissa Melendez, University of New Hampshire
- Nelson Lagos, Universidad Santo Tomas
- Chris Langdon, University of Miami
- Burke Hales, Oregon State University
- Bill Dewey, Taylor Shellfish
- Cesar Toro, IOCaribe

OUR POLICY PARTNERS

- National Caucus of Environmental Legislators
- The International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification

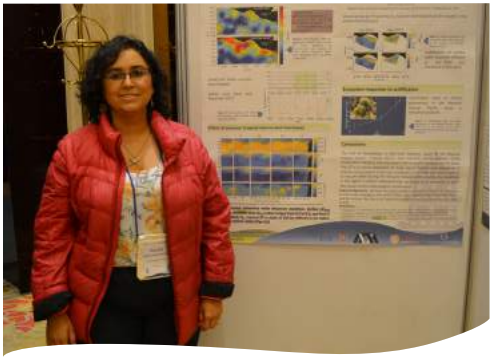


“The ocean is the heart of the Pacific. If the heart stops, the Pacific stops. If the ocean dies, the Pacific dies. We now have the first data on OA to translate ocean data into policy and climate action. We could not have done this without TOF.”

Ajay Singh, Fiji

“I was able to leverage more funds to expand the availability of sensors to other places in South Africa, and am now serving as advisor on their deployment. Without TOF, I wouldn’t have had the funding or equipment to do any of my research.”

Carla Edworthy, South Africa



“TOF is educating our politicians on the importance of OA and because of the equipment they provided, I no longer have to send samples out for analysis.”

Dr. Cecilia Chapa Balcorta, Mexico

Our Initiatives

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN ACIDIFICATION INITIATIVE (IOAI)

Our Program

Over the past seventeen years TOF has made some incredible strides towards pushing this issue to the forefront of the marine conservation dialogue, and have helped equip scientists and institutions around with the necessary tools to understand, analyze, monitor and act, but perhaps the greatest success of TOF's IOAI program is the work being done today by our project partners.

In Ecuador, the Ecuadorian Government is supporting a national coastal monitoring initiative at seven different monitoring spots. This is led by the National Fisheries Institute and the Oceanography Institute. These institutions will be working with Dr. Jorge Rafael Burmudez Monsalve to incorporate ocean acidification monitoring into this initiative and training researchers on how to incorporate pH and total alkalinity parameters into monitoring using the GOA-ON kit. The government supports this initiative in the sense that the staff working on the monitoring program are permanent staff with their time and salaries covered to work on this. Overall, this monitoring program will look at the impact of climate change on fisheries, harmful algal blooms, and dynamic productivity.

The launch of the Pacific Islands and Territories Ocean Acidification Network (PI-TOA), a new regional monitoring group of Pacific Islands and Territories within the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON).

In Fiji, TOF funded and designed a scientist-led blue carbon pilot project to monitor ocean chemistry before, during, and after a mangrove restoration to improve understanding of the local mitigative properties of blue carbon resources with respect to OA.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The Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region (more commonly referred to as the Cartagena Convention), unanimously supported TOF's recommendations at the December 2018 meeting in Panama of the Science and Technical Advisory Committee of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (the SPAW Protocol).

The Cartagena Convention has been ratified by 25 United Nations Member States in the Wider Caribbean Region, and covers the marine environment of the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea and areas of the Atlantic Ocean. In order to get these OA recommendations adopted, TOF worked through the various steps of the Cartagena Convention system itself, working with country delegations on the resolution that was ultimately adopted.

The first step was a presentation by TOF on OA to the Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) for the Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) Protocol to the Cartagena Convention. That led to the STAC formally recommending that the matter be taken up by the SPAW Protocol nations at its next meeting. In the following months, TOF worked to educate the delegations and other interested parties participating at the Cartagena Convention COP, which included providing additional education on OA by hosting webinars for delegation staff. TOF then assisted in drafting the resolution on OA for the convention's hosting governments, Honduras and Mexico, providing detailed information to their delegations before the convention.

At the SPAW Protocol meeting, the parties decided to adopt the STAC recommendation without amendment and on the second day of the Cartegena Convention COP, TOF provided a presentation on the science, effects and policy opportunities related to OA. Immediately thereafter, Honduras and Mexico submitted for consideration the resolution to address OA as a regional concern for the Wider Caribbean, which was adopted in full.

The first edition of an international legislative toolkit was published in 2017, annotating all known legislation addressing OA and identifying pathways for OA- focused legislative and policy initiatives for national and sub-national policymakers.

The Ocean Foundation received the Ocean Tribute Award from Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, Messe Dusseldorf, and Deutsche Meeresstiftung German Ocean Foundation in recognition of the success of TOF's Initiative in addressing one of the greatest challenges facing our blue planet.
To address the seafood sector component of the Initiative, TOF is working to identify viable aquaculture methods through cost-effective strategies to adapt to and mitigate the effects of OA on seafood production. Earlier this year, TOF prepared the white paper on OA for the Commonwealth Secretariat's Blue Charter. The paper offered detailed strategies for policymakers and a synthesis of the available science and policy.

Left: TOF Program Officer Alexis Valauri-Orton accepting the award.

On the 8th of January 2019 (or 8.1) to symbolize the current pH of the ocean, TOF launched the first ever International OA Day of Action at the House of Sweden. The event was held in partnership and with support from the Governments of Sweden and Fiji, whose joint leadership on ocean conservation included co-hosting the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 Ocean Conference at the UN in 2017.

As the effects of ocean acidification are felt globally, global solutions are required from a diverse array of stakeholders and communities. TOF is grateful to be working together with so many incredible partners to combat this global crisis.

Our Initiatives

INTERNATIONAL OCEAN ACIDIFICATION INITIATIVE (IOAI)

The Future

Ocean acidification poses a current threat to the commercial viability of global mariculture, and, in the longer-term, the base of the entire marine food chain through its devastating effects on shell-forming organisms. The complexity of climate change vulnerability as well as the growing impacts from OA require collaborative measures that integrate science and policy development into the overall planning process. There is an acute need for projects that safeguard wellbeing, protect property, reduce damage to infrastructure, conserve seafood spawning grounds, and benefit ecosystems as well as the economy. In addition, building institutional and scientific capacity within communities with a focus on risk reduction is a critical element and key component of a community's climate resilience strategy.

"We need to pay attention to the signals. Focus on the very real concerns about climate disruption of the ocean's systems, the loss of ice, and ocean acidification rather than focusing on false flag issues to sow fear, uncertainty, and doubt for short term political gain."

MARK J. SPALDING, PRESIDENT

Without meaningful change in policy, CO2 emissions could make the ocean up to 150% more acidic by 2100. The ocean is a vital life force for all of humanity. The global threat of ocean acidification is real. The good news is, so are the solutions to combat it. The time for collective action is now, and TOF is proud to be at the forefront of collaboration with organizations across the globe devoted to bringing these solutions to fruition.

In the coming year, TOF will work to expand its OA observation techniques, continue to provide monitoring equipment to developing countries, and push lawmakers to take action. We cannot, of course, do any of this without the invaluable support of our community of donors and partners.

“Armed with data and a scientific understanding of the threat, we can engage stakeholders with a compelling story of what ocean acidification could mean to them, and, by working with fishers, shellfish farmers and others in coastal communities to interpret how the changes will affect them, we can work with policy makers to demonstrate how their constituents and the economies of their districts might be affected.”

ALEXIS VALAURI-ORTON, PROGRAM OFFICER

Fiscal Sponsorship refers to the practice of nonprofit institutions offering their legal and tax-exempt status, together with all applicable administrative services, to individuals or groups engaged in research, projects, and activities relating to and furthering the mission of the sponsoring nonprofit organization. As a registered 501(c)(3) entity, TOF offers appropriate legal incorporation, IRS exemption and charitable registration, in addition to financial oversight, business administration, human resources, grant management, capacity building, legal compliance and risk management. TOF provides two types of fiscal sponsorship; programmatic sponsorship and pre-approved grant relationships.

Photo Credit: Anna Mar, Ocean Connectors

Our Projects

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP

Photo Credit: James Nikitine, Manaia Productions, Uncharted Blue

As a fiscal sponsor, TOF helps reduce the complexity of operating a successful project or organization by providing the critical infrastructure, proficiency, and expertise of a large NGO so that projects can focus on program development, fundraising, and outreach. Through its fiscal sponsorship program, TOF creates space for innovation and unique approaches to marine conservation where people with big ideas – social entrepreneurs, grassroots advocates, and cutting-edge researchers – can take risks, experiment with new methods, and think outside the box.

This year, TOF has selected two incredible fiscally-sponsored projects to highlight; The Laguna San Ignacio Ecosystem Science Project- which focuses on ecosystem science research, and Ocean Revolution- devoted to the protection of indigenous communities and ocean ecosystems.

Our Fiscally Sponsored Projects

- Tag-A-Giant
- Ocean Revolution
- The Ocean Project
- Caribbean Marine Research and Conservation
- Blue Climate Solutions
- Eastern Pacific Hawksbill Initiative (ICAPO)
- Ocean Connectors
- ProCaguama
- Laguna San Ignacio Ecosystem Science Program (LSIESP)
- The Science Exchange
- Shark Advocates International
- Ocean Conservation Research
- Inland Ocean Coalition
- SURMAR
- Coastal Coordination
- Friends of the Delta
- Sea Turtle Census Initiative
- Deep Sea Mining Campaign
- International Fisheries Conservation Program
- High Seas Alliance
- SmartFish International
- Wise Laboratory Field Research Program
- Redfish Rocks Community Team SEVENSEAS
- Anchor Coalition Project
- earthDECKS.org Ocean Network
- Big Ocean
- Uncharted Blue
- Friends of Sustainable Travel International
- Superfish Tracking Research Partnership
- The Last Ocean Project
- World Oceans Day
- The Live Blue Foundation
- La Tortuga Viva, USA

Fiscally Sponsored Projects

LAGUNA SAN IGNACIO ECOSYSTEM SCIENCE PROJECT (LSIESP)

Project Highlight

The Laguna San Ignacio Ecosystem Science Program (LSIESP) investigates the ecological status of the gray whales that over-winter in Laguna San Ignacio in Baja California Sur, Mexico and other living marine resources that reside in this marine protected area. LSIESP's research yields science based information that is relevant to living resource management questions and concerns about future development, eco-tourism, impacts of climate change, and the sustainability of the lagoon ecosystem as a viable habitat for marine wildlife. The program was founded by Dr. Steven Swartz and Mary Lou Jones after first conducting systematic studies of gray whales in the area from 1977-1982, and Professor Jorge Urbán R., from the Universidad Autónoma de Baja California Sur (UABCS) in La Paz, B.C.S., Mexico. In 2009 the program became a "project" of the The Ocean Foundation, with a vision of establishing a science based research program that enlists and supports researchers and their graduate students in marine science to monitor and research the ecological health of the lagoon, the surrounding wetlands, the gray whales, and the variety of marine wildlife that utilize this unique marine protected area.

The Laguna San Ignacio is a coastal lagoon located on the Pacific coast of Baja California in Mulegé Municipality of the Mexican state of Baja California Sur, and is one of the most critical winter sanctuaries of the North Pacific gray whales. Laguna San Ignacio is the center of a unique marine ecosystem surrounded by and part of the "Vizcaíno Biosphere Reserve", and included in the UNESCO World Heritage Site: "Whale Sanctuary of El Vizcaíno."

Laguna San Ignacio is best known for gray whales that congregate there each winter to breed and calve. However, it is also home to dolphins, sea turtles, sea lions, commercially important fish and shellfish, multitudes of migratory waterfowl and shorebirds, and supports some of the world's most productive red and white mangrove and coastal wetland ecosystems within its shores. Due to intense 19th century whaling, gray whales have seen their numbers decline sharply over the past three centuries, with original populations in the North Atlantic now extinct and the "presumed" Western North Pacific population critically endangered. Once thought to be two separate populations in the North Pacific, LSIESP's Photographic Identification research demonstrates that the Western and Eastern North Pacific populations mix in the breeding and calving lagoons in Baja California, and raises the question if two separate extant populations continue to persist in the North Pacific.

While the third Eastern North Pacific population was once on the U.S. Endangered Species list, it recovered to approximately 25,000 individuals. Although, in recent years the effects of ocean warming and climate change are resulting in a reduction of the whales' primary invertebrate foods in the North Pacific and Arctic seas, and apparently this is contributing to periodic reductions in gray whale reproduction, skinny whales, and unusual mortality events in 1990-2000 and again in 2019 (NOAA), presumably the result of insufficient food available to the whales during the summers.

To monitor and document these trends, LSIESP researchers: conduct boat surveys to evaluate gray whale abundance and movements in the lagoon each winter; use Photographic Identification methods to identify individual whales that return to the lagoon and the number of calves produced by female whales; and fly UAV Drones with HD Video cameras to photograph and measure the size, growth, and body condition of the whales. This information tracks trends in the use of the lagoon by the whales, the overall health and reproductive fitness of the whales, and detects early signs of stress.

Photo Credits: Dr. Steven Swartz, LSIESP

Fiscally Sponsored Projects

LAGUNA SAN IGNACIO ECOSYSTEM SCIENCE PROJECT (LSIESP)

Project Highlight

Photo Credits: Dr. Steven Swartz, LSIESP

Overall, LSIESP provides this relevant science based information to support the conservation of the Laguna San Ignacio Wetlands Complex by:

Conducting research to monitor and evaluate the biological status of the lagoon and key indicator components of its wildlife

Providing science based information to evaluate options for future development and to evaluate the outcome of previously implemented management actions

Providing teaching resources for local schools and university students to foster an awareness of the unique nature of Laguna San Ignacio, and build a foundation among local students for its future conservation

Providing training opportunities for university graduate students pursuing careers in marine conservation science

Involving local residents, schools and eco-tourism operators in conservation activities by providing public workshops, hosting a website and symposia to discuss and comment on relevant science issues

The program provides university graduate students opportunities to participate in applied wildlife field research and to learn skills that will serve them in their careers as wildlife conservation scientists. As appropriate, the program forms partnerships and collaborations with other conservation and wildlife management groups and organizations investigating various aspects of the Laguna San Ignacio marine protected area.

LSIESP researchers host annual community workshops to review scientific findings and provide a public forum for the exchange of information on the lagoon and human activities that affect it. Additionally, the program produces peer-reviewed scientific publications of research findings, presents research papers at scientific conferences, hosts a website (www.sanignaciograywhales.org) that contains annual reports and all research findings and data, and posts "Blogs" on current research activities, events, and relevant information on how the lagoon ecosystem and surrounding community has evolved and changed over time.

TOF President Mark Spalding is proud to have been an active member of the broader NGO environmental coalition, assisting to launch the campaign, providing legal research support and by representing key NGOs at Mexican and international forums. TOF continues this legacy today by hosting the Laguna San Ignacio Science Program (LSIESP) to support ongoing monitoring of the area.

By utilizing these modes of outreach and communication, LSIESP works to encourage social awareness, education and community participation in the conservation of this marine protected area, while promoting human activities and alternatives that are in balance with the natural components of the region, and that also recognize the needs of the local community. Their work, and the work of their partners, has been and remains to be a crucial component in maintaining the vulnerable ecosystem of the Laguna San Ignacio and the magnificent creatures that inhabit it.

Fiscally Sponsored Projects

OCEAN REVOLUTION

Project Highlight

Ocean Revolution, a multi-cultural, multi-generational global organization, was created to change the way humans engage with the sea: to find, mentor, and network new voices and revive and amplify ancient ones.

Founded in 2004, Ocean Revolution, along with their implementing partner Bitonga Divers, has displayed an unyielding resolve to address inequity and socio-economic injustice in ocean management by rethinking old and outdated norms that have proven to be ineffective, and instead committing to engaging the local knowledge of and listening to indigenous communities. The program's advanced techniques in ocean governance and environmental management have implications that span the globe. In a world where we are becoming more and more disconnected from our past and further away from the lessons of our ancestors, we find the work of Ocean Revolution to be a refreshing reminder of how vital working with local communities is to overall environmental and marine conservation. The lessons that Tim and his team have taught us over the years are crucial reminders that we must work together, learn from one another, and rely on the knowledge that has existed in local communities for centuries.

Ocean Revolution's work in Mozambique, the Gulf of California in Mexico, the Guna communities of Panama, the Aboriginal and Torres Straits cultures of Australia and indigenous tribes of the United States, reveals that virtually all indigenous communities support the concept of conservation. Their leaders are discovering, with pride, that the value of many of their customary resource management practices, and application of their traditional knowledge, is respected and can be critical for decision-makers.

Through its participation in the Inhambane Bay Community Conservation Network, Ocean Revolution works with five distinct communities; Muéle, Nhampossa, Guidwane, Mucucune, and Marrambone, located in the Indian Ocean, Mozambique, Inhambane Province, and Inhambane Bay. In villages in Mozambique, legalized community reserves are being managed by the resource users who have the most direct interest in their success. Buy-in is high and enforcement costs are low. Fish biomass, and supporting mangrove and seagrass ecosystems are stable or improving, and, in damaged areas, enthusiasm for restoration is high. They are receiving global recognition as some of the most successful Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the world.

With deep and profound respect and the recognition of ancient values, knowledge and expertise, Ocean Revolution works to enhance ocean conservation systems with the tools and energy of youth, science, and interconnectivity. By combining centuries old wisdom and knowledge with 21st century tools and customary ocean practices in resource management, Ocean Revolution helps create effective interactions between indigenous people and other stakeholders, and by doing so, helps to improve ocean conservation, economic development, and food sovereignty. Ocean Revolution also utilizes cutting edge methods of communication through two-way learning, films, radio, and television in local indigenous languages.

The program provides funding skills, facilitates knowledge-transfer, and helps develop local and international infrastructure to assure justice and a healthy ocean that is capable of sustaining responsible utilization. Through best practices, communities can help sustain and protect their ecosystems and local species. As part of its work in the Conservation Network, Ocean Revolution has compiled an ID book of species found in Inhambane Bay. Not all of these species are resident year-round and in fact many of the reef and pelagic species use the Bay as a nursery area.

“We learned that my long time friend, and inspiring colleague Timothy R. Dykman, manager of Ocean Revolution, passed away suddenly on Friday October 11th, 2019. After the shock wore off, his accomplishments again became clear and provided us with some peace. Yet our community has just lost one of our greats. There are few who were as dedicated to engaging and listening to the indigenous communities as Tim. Thus, this is a huge loss for the protection of indigenous communities and their coastal and ocean ecosystems. We offer our ocean community’s condolences to his family, colleagues, and friends.”

MARK J. SPALDING, PRESIDENT

Fiscally Sponsored Projects

OCEAN REVOLUTION

Project Highlight

The goal is to provide support for entrepreneurial biodiversity conservation that focuses on improving the livelihoods of local populations that face a cadre of economic stresses and strains. As part of that effort, the program focuses heavily on knowledge-transfer between generations and a reliance on local ancient wisdom.

Photo Credits: Ocean Revolution

“For centuries, even millennia, environmental law and stewardship in indigenous societies was remembered from the stars, land and water. Practical wisdom, cultural and spiritual rules were carefully passed from generation to generation to set the relationship between human beings and non-human beings.”

TIMOTHY DYKMAN, DIRECTOR, OCEAN REVOLUTION

Acknowledging the many deficiencies in public policies, theories of change and blue economics being used to implement ocean management strategies, too often indigenous cultures become marginalized or are left out altogether. It is easy to disregard, misunderstand or misrepresent the priorities of these communities by underutilizing their contribution to the global goals of biodiversity conservation, and by overlooking their strong traditions and core values of responsible utilization. Monitoring nature has traditionally been complex and costly, requiring trained experts to identify species by sight. Vast swathes of nature are completely un-monitored and human impacts on them remain unknown.

War, development, governments, or natural events occasionally put these monitoring practices on pause, but, there are always “watchers” seeking to harmonize contemporary narratives with ancient ocean rules. In Mozambique, they are called “Mukhedzisseli.”

In a recent film, Ocean Revolution tells the story of the watchers of Inhambane Bay in Southern Mozambique and the resources they marshalled to return “ocean rules” to their home.

With almost every aspect of your daily life, you force more and more carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into our atmosphere. It's just a fact of modern life. There are many things you can do to reduce your footprint, but that's not always enough. By offsetting your carbon footprint with SeaGrass Grow, you help to defend against climate change and restore critical marine habitats.

Our Channels

OFFSET WITH SEAGRASS GROW

The Ocean Foundation released the first-ever Carbon Offset Calculator in 2012 to allow individuals, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and event organizers to offset their carbon footprint through a charitable contribution applied to a blue carbon restoration or conservation project. The calculator provides an easy-to-use way for donors to make their tax-deductible donation "tangible" by associating it with a specific amount of blue carbon resources that need to be restored or protected to offset their respective carbon footprint.

SeaGrass Grow
The Ocean Foundation

Seagrasses are flowering plants that grow in shallow waters along coasts, lagoons and estuaries. Seagrass meadows can be found along the coasts of every continent except for Antarctica and over one billion people live within 30 miles of a meadow.
In addition to seagrass meadows, mangrove forests and salt marshes are also efficient at sequestering carbon dioxide, and help provide coastal buffering; protecting against storm surges and flooding. Like seagrass meadows, mangrove forests also provide crucial habitat nurseries to fish and other species, which in turn helps the overall health of the ecosystem and the local economy, and salt marshes provide natural security to communities by attenuating wave energy, reducing storm surge, preventing coastal erosion, and buffering the impacts of ocean acidification.

TOF believes conservation is important, but we must also restore to return levels of abundance, to get ahead of population growth and its increasing demands on local ecosystems.

WHY GO BLUE?

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

For every $1 invested in coastal restoration projects and restoration jobs, $15 in net economic benefit is created from reviving, expanding or increasing the health of seagrass, meadows, mangrove forests, or salt marsh estuaries.

FOOD & HABITAT

A single acre of seagrass may support as many as 40,000 fish, and 50 million small invertebrates like crabs, oysters, and mussels. Seagrass meadows supply 50% of the world's fisheries and provide vital nutrition for close to 3 billion people.

SAFETY BENEFITS

Seagrass meadows reduce flooding from storm surges and hurricanes by dissipating wave energy.

CARBON SEQUESTRATION

Seagrass, mangrove and salt marsh habitats are up to 35x more effective than Amazonian rainforests in their carbon uptake and storage abilities. Seagrasses occupy 0.1% of the seafloor, yet are responsible for 11% of the organic carbon buried in the ocean, and help mitigate the effects of ocean acidification.

Our Channels

OFFSET WITH SEAGRASS GROW

Around the World

Since 2008, TOF has been involved in many coastal restoration projects and has widely promoted the concept of Blue Carbon -- the capacity of natural ecosystems of seagrasses, tidal marshes and mangroves to take up and sequester large quantities of carbon in both the plants themselves and the sediment below them. Recognizing that this concept could help address climate change while promoting ocean health, The Ocean Foundation has made an effort to protect and restore these coastal systems while investing in the science and viability of blue carbon. TOF has a long track record of conducting this work all over the world.

2008

Florida

In partnership with Absolut Vodka, TOF participated in Absolut's Global Cooling™ campaign, a multi-year green marketing campaign encouraging consumers to reduce the effects of global warming and register to give one dollar of every bottle purchased to an eco charity. The proceeds were directed to restore seagrass beds around major metropolitan coastal areas. This partnership restored more than 4,000 square feet of damaged seagrass located at Knight's Key Bank in the NOAA Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Through collaboration with local partners, TOF established the Restore-A-Scar program, aimed at restoring seagrass scars found off the coasts of Florida, New York, California and Washington. TOF worked with a local vendor, SeaGrass Recovery, to restore scars caused by boat propellers in seagrass beds with biodegradable cotton tubular socks containing sand and seeds. Through the Restore-A-Scar campaign, TOF joined forces with The Florida Aquarium to bring awareness to the importance of seagrass ecosystems, educating the public – especially children – through the aquarium's seagrass exhibit. The success of Restore-A-Scar led the Governor of Florida to declare March as "Seagrass Month" in 2008, a designation still recognized today.

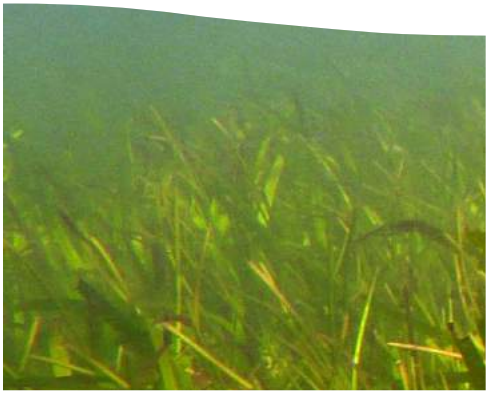
Photo Credit: Beau Williams

2010

Alabama

In the wake of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, four leading conservation organizations – Alabama Coastal Foundation, Mobile Baykeeper, The Nature Conservancy and The Ocean Foundation – formed the 100-1000: Restore Coastal Alabama Partnership to address impacts from the oil spill and years of environmental degradation along the Alabama coast. The 100-1000: Restore Coastal Alabama Partnership launched in September 2010 and held its first volunteer event at Helen Wood Park near Mobile, Alabama in January 2011. The event drew some 545 volunteers who built the first quarter-mile of reef using 50-pound sacks of oysters shells donated by local restaurants.

In less than a year of the reef-building event, Nature Conservancy scientists noted a marked improvement in marsh and seagrass growth and increased fish and bird activity at the site. And, when the site was hit by Hurricane Isaac, the areas with such natural infrastructure regrown fared much better than those without.



Volunteers are an important component of the 100-1000 initiative by helping to build reefs and plant critical marsh grasses that aid in habitat restoration. The 100-1000 Partnership has grown to include more than 40 organizations as sponsors, supporters and partners. The business, non-profit, science, agency and citizen support for this project continues to grow because restoring our environment helps restore our economy.

To date, the 100-1000 Partnership has built more than two miles of reefs along Alabama's Gulf Coast and continues to strategically plan living shoreline projects that will benefit the people and struggling economies of coastal Alabama. In addition to providing a foundation to rebuild local businesses and economies that depend on the resources of the bay, the 100-1000 initiative helps create jobs for Gulf Coast residents who help to construct and deploy the artificial oyster reefs.

2012

Abu Dhabi

TOF served as an advisor to GRID-Arendal, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD), and the Abu-Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative (AGEDI) as part of a large-scale blue carbon restoration project in Abu Dhabi (2012-13). Following the project's completion, TOF contributed to the publication of a widely acclaimed report titled, "Blue Carbon in Abu Dhabi – Protecting our Coastal Heritage: The Abu Dhabi Blue Carbon Demonstration Project," which advanced blue carbon science, restoration methodologies, and the development of data management tools.

2013

Florida

TOF conducted a successful seagrass planting in Tampa Bay, Florida. Through TOF's already existing TOF Restore-A-Scar program, this work focused on restoring seagrass scars found off the coasts of Fort De Soto, Florida. Working with a local vendor, SeaGrass Recovery, TOF restored scars caused by boat propellers in seagrass beds with tubular socks containing sand and seeds.

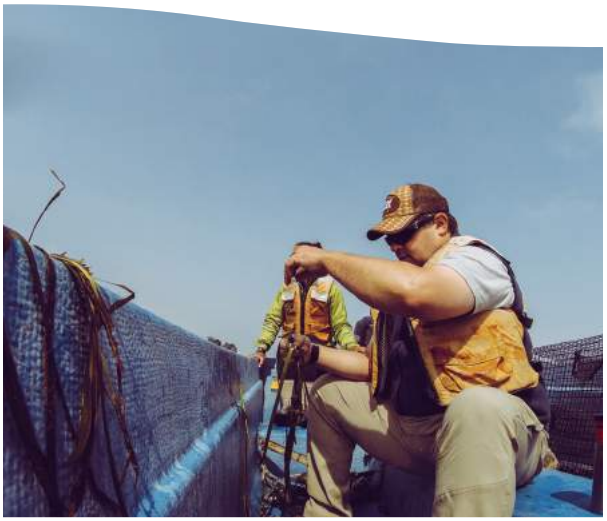
2014

Global

Since 2014, TOF has provided ongoing technical advice and project co-financing to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Blue Forests Project, which aims to demonstrate the viability of coastal blue carbon projects as a mechanism to generate revenue through climate change mitigation and adaptation. On-the-ground coastal restoration demonstrations in Ecuador, Mozambique, Madagascar, Indonesia, United Arab Emirates, Central America and Kenya are illuminating the values associated with carbon and ecosystem services and addressing key knowledge gaps through targeted research and peer-reviewed literature. As part of the project, TOF has worked to improve acceptance of international policies and blue carbon methodologies for greater adoption by public, private, and nonprofit constituencies. TOF is helping to build capacity both internationally and domestically through its educational workshops, on-the-ground blue carbon restoration activities, scientific research, and policy development. The Blue Forests Project is an initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and is funded by the Global Environment Facility. The project is co-financed by project partners (including TOF) and managed by GRID-Arendal.

2015
Rhode Island
TOF funded a program in the Narragansett Bay in Rhode Island to directly support salt marsh restoration and climate adaptation work, in addition to public education initiatives aimed at increasing local awareness on the benefits of protecting coastal ecosystems.

2016
California
TOF began supporting an ongoing project in Elkhorn Slough, California, implemented by the University of California, Santa Cruz, that focused on the restoration and monitoring of biodiversity in this region for both meiofauna and macrofauna as a result of eelgrass restoration.



Restoration work being done in Elkhorn Slough, CA.

Our Channels

OFFSET WITH SEAGRASS GROW

Jobos Bay, Puerto Rico

2017–PRESENT

Puerto Rico

In 2017, in response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria, and in coordination with our partners at 11th Hour Racing and JetBlue Airways, TOF brought its SeaGrass Grow program to the Jobos Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (JBNERR) in an attempt to rebuild the island's natural infrastructure, improve resilience to the growing effects of climate change, sequester carbon, and help to buffer against future storms.

Seagrass beds, mangrove forests, and salt marsh estuaries are recognized as one of the most productive and diverse coastal marine habitat communities in the world. In tropical western Atlantic ecosystems, like Jobos Bay, widely distributed seagrass beds, mangrove forests, and salt marsh estuaries deliver many important and valuable ecosystem services. These services include functions such as nurseries, shelter and food for juvenile fish, invertebrates, and large charismatic marine herbivores like manatees and green sea turtles. Seagrass, mangroves, and marsh grasses also stabilize sediments and attenuate wave energy; protecting shorelines from erosion and maintaining water clarity in Jobos Bay. Along with high rates of nutrient cycling associated with primary production and storage in plant biomass, seagrass meadows, mangrove forests, and salt marsh estuaries are responsible for maintaining optimum water quality conditions. Positive feedback made possible by many of these services contribute to the long-term persistence of coastal ecosystems and the protections afforded to nearby communities.

JOBOS BAY PROJECT PARTNERS

Department of Natural and Environmental Resources (DNER)

The project team will work closely with the DNER of Puerto Rico, the executive department of the government tasked with protecting, conserving, developing, and managing the natural and environmental resources of Puerto Rico. The DNER manages the Jobos Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (JBNERR) and has offered its full support for the restoration project, which will be conducted alongside DNER staff.

Manuel Merello, General Director, Merello Marine Consulting

Mr. Merello is a botanical marine biologist researcher at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation (FWC) in the Florida Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) division. He is also the General Director of an international company dedicated to the restoration and protection of the environment (Merello Marine Consulting) and has been collaborating for more than 20 years with NOAA at the Center for Coastal Fisheries and Research Habitat in Beaufort, North Carolina. Mr. Merello brings expert knowledge to the project on conservation and restoration of seagrass and manatees in the U.S. and is a leader in the protection, restoration, and mitigation of natural resources.

Conservación ConCiencia, TOF Project

TOF hosts a philanthropic fund for Conservación ConCiencia, a registered U.S. nonprofit dedicated to environmental research and conservation throughout the Caribbean region. Their work promotes sustainable development by working in collaboration with communities, NGOs, governments, academia and the private sector. Conservación ConCiencia was born out of the need to address environmental issues in a multifaceted manner utilizing an interdisciplinary toolbox that integrates life sciences, societal welfare and economic security into a problem-solving approach to today's most pressing environmental problems.

Our Channels
OFFSET WITH SEAGRASS GROW
Our Partners

SEAGRASS GROW & OFFSET PARTNERS:

CREW À LA MODE
THE YACHT CLOTHING & LIFESTYLE AGENCY

SUSTAINABLE RESTAURANT GROUP

diversified COMMUNICATIONS

11TH HOUR RACING

jetBlue

Protect & Preserve BeeSure®

CONFLUENCE PHILANTHROPY
OWN WHAT YOU OWN

peak design

As the only community foundation for the ocean, TOF is devoted to ensuring we connect donors and philanthropic institutions with their chosen passion for the ocean and coastal communities. We have the experts, the research and the time – thus streamlining the process of shaping your portfolio of coastal and ocean donations for the maximum effect. Our work is personalized, professional, and confidential. Consider starting a Donor Advised Fund with The Ocean Foundation and connect your passion for the ocean to the organization on the ground working to protect it.

Services

OUR SERVICES FOR DONORS

DONOR ADVISED FUNDS

A Donor Advised Fund (DAF) is a charitable vehicle that allows you to recommend monetary distributions or mission related investments in organizations of your choice through TOF to support the ocean causes you love. Having your donations given on your behalf allows you to enjoy the full benefits of tax exemption while avoiding the costs of creating a private foundation.

As a legally incorporated and registered 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organization, TOF operates as a community foundation dedicated to the conservation of the coasts and ocean. By choosing TOF to host your project or fund, you can minimize the amount of time and money you spend on infrastructure and administration, and thus maximize your support to the oceans. Your DAF will have the legally vetted and time-tested best practice policies and benefits in place for grant distribution, personnel and operations.

The services provided by TOF include the financial oversight, administrative support, legal compliance, tax reporting and annual audit. In addition, depending on your particular needs, we can provide project consulting, grant administration, contract management, fundraising advice, and a variety of other services.

COMMITTEE ADVISED FUND

A Committee Advised Fund (CAF) at TOF offers you an easy way to both develop your philanthropic plan and to manage your legacy. A CAF is substantially similar to a DAF, except that the grantmaking interest comes from a committee established by TOF and the donor to provide an expert panel to advise in grantmaking, scholarships or other awards from the fund.

For more information or to explore your donor options please contact Jason Donofrio, External Relations Officer at (202) 318-3178 or Jdonofrio@oceanfdn.org.

As with almost all nonprofits, we are operating with a very small percentage of unrestricted funds and are working to make this margin more robust and more sustainable. Finally, we would like TOF to be stronger, bigger, more powerful to drive the mission to reverse the trend of destruction of ocean environments around the world. Please join our community foundation for the ocean and help us get there.

Photo Credits: Above, The Science Exchange
Right, Uncharted Blue

Finances

OUR FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS


CHAPMAN

Finances

OUR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Financial Position & Cost Allocations

JUNE 30, 2019

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	$304,194
Investments	$203,421
Receivables	$2,600,987
Prepaid expenses	$55,696
	$3,164,298

PROPERTY & EQUIPMENT

Equipment and software	$113,284
Furniture and fixtures	$2,041
Vehicles	$17,895
	$133,220
Accumulated depreciation	($130,028)

OTHER ASSETS

Receivables, net of current	$2,738,077
Intangible Assets, net	$23,292
Security Deposits	$12,042
	$2,773,411

TOTAL ASSETS **$5,940,901**

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses	$338,435
Line of Credit	$366,641
Tenant Security Deposit	$3,100
Deferred Rent Liability (current portion)	$10,379
Charitable Gift Annuity (current portion)	$620
	$719,175

OTHER LIABILITIES

Deferred rent liability	$110,668
Charitable gift annuity	$3,775

TOTAL LIABILITIES **$833,618**

NET ASSETS

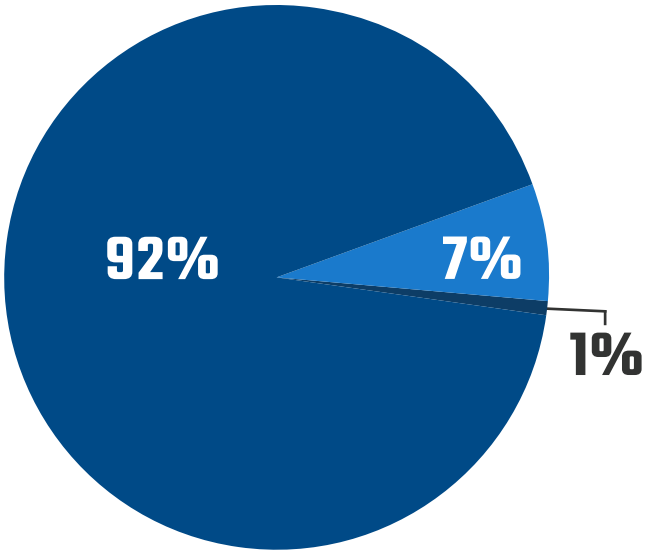
Without Donor Restriction	$2,698,652
With Donor Restriction	$2,408,631

TOTAL NET ASSETS **$5,107,283**

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS **$5,940,901**

FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2019

REVENUE TO SUPPORT MARINE CONSERVATION

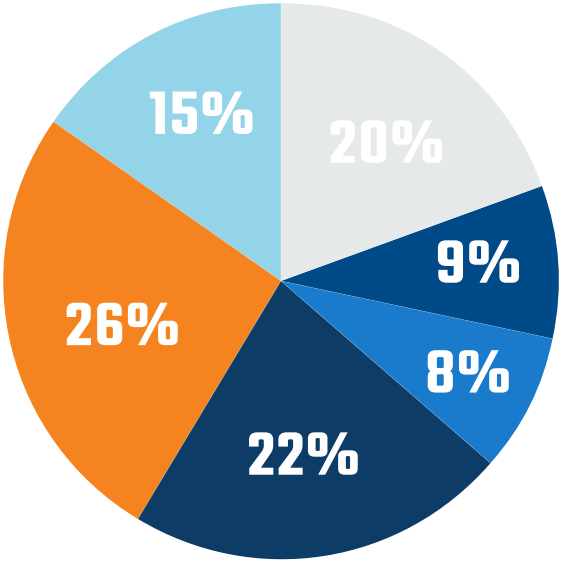


- Grants and contributions from a community of donors who care about the coasts and oceans: **$7,892,829**
- Support we received to nurture an array of good ideas and the smart people behind them: **$600,599**
- Additional revenue earned to help support those engaged in ocean conservation anywhere in the world: **$59,957**

TOTAL REVENUE:
$8,553,384

FISCAL YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2019

SPENDING BY FUNCTION



- Cost of the support we provide to those working to improve the health of the ocean: **$710,970**
- Cultivating more support for marine conservation: **$671,726**
- Conserving marine habitats and ecosystems that are more than just picturesque: **$1,823,122**
- Protecting the species that keep the ocean ecosystem in balance: **$2,140,588**
- Expanding awareness that communicates how the health of our ocean relates to almost everything: **$1,237,495**
- Helping build the capacity of the many conservation organizations dedicated to protecting our ocean: **$1,618,215**

TOTAL EXPENSES:
$8,202,116

JUNE 30, 2019

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

REVENUE & SUPPORT | JUNE 30, 2019

	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Grants & Contributions	$2,444,456	$5,288,745	$7,733,201
Program Service Revenue	$759,947	-	$759,947
Rental Income	$37,089	-	$37,089
Investment Income - net realized and unrealized gain/(loss)	$21,186	-	$21,186
Interest Income - other	$1,961	-	$1,961
Total	**3,264,639**	**5,288,745**	**8,553,384**

NEW ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTION | JUNE 30, 2019

	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Satisfaction of program restrictions	$4,814,406	($4,814,406)	-
Total revenue & support	**$8,079,045**	**$474,339**	**$8,553,384**

EXPENSES (PROGRAM SERVICES) | JUNE 30, 2019

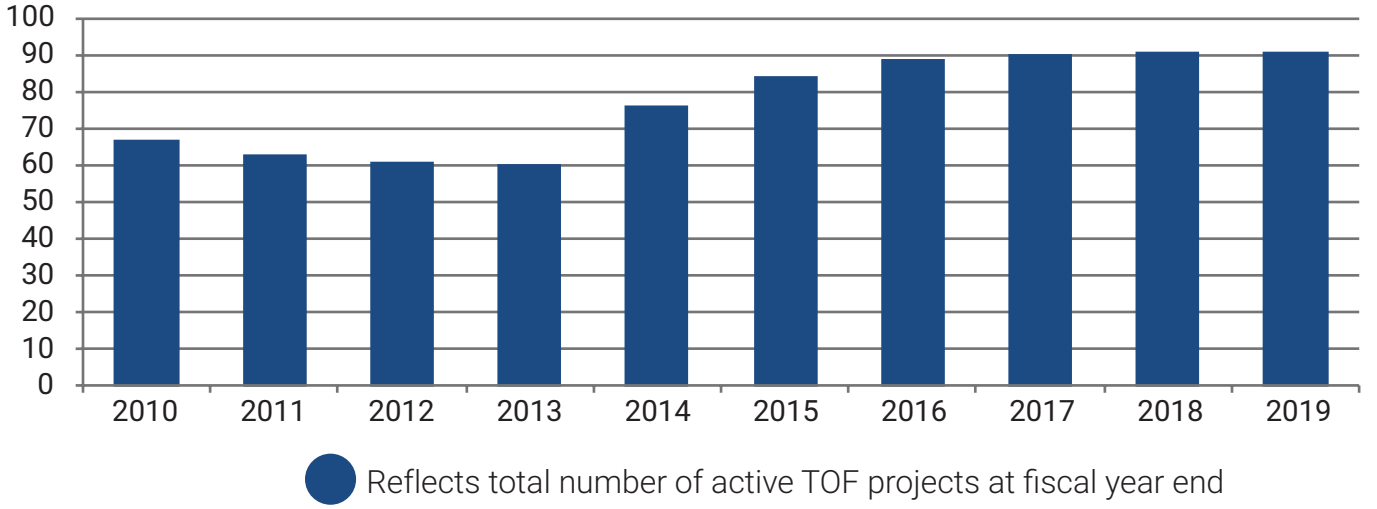
	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Protecting Marine Habitats	$1,823,122	-	$1,823,122
Protecting Species of Concern	$2,140,588	-	$2,140,588
Building Marine Community Capacity	$1,618,215	-	$1,618,215
Ocean Literacy	$1,237,495	-	$1,237,495
Total program expenses	**$6,819,420**	**-**	**$6,819,420**

SUPPORT SERVICES | JUNE 30, 2019

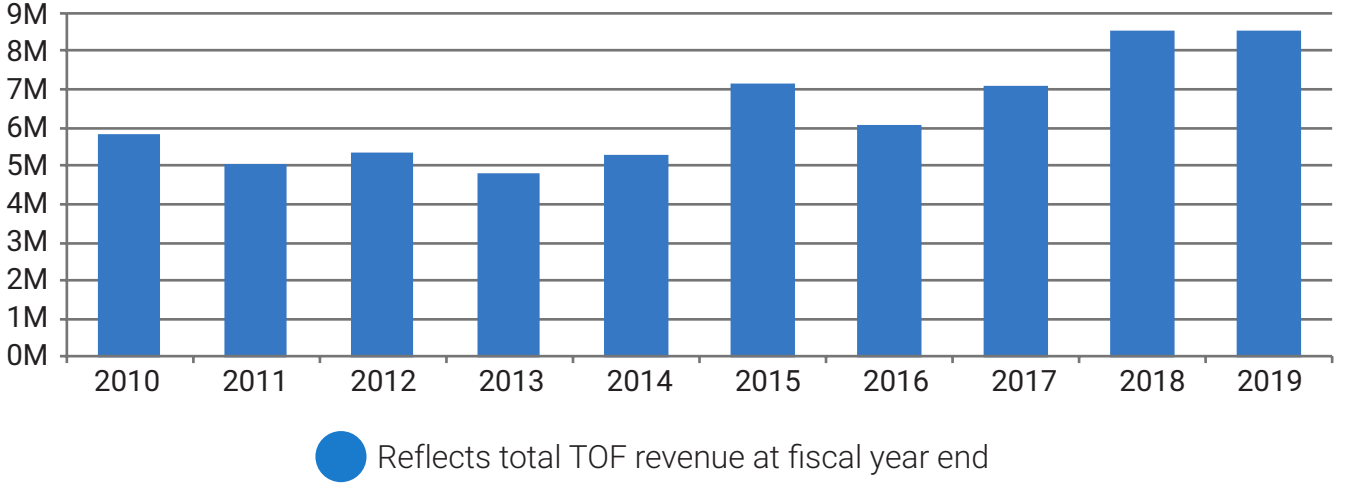
	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Management & general	$710,970	-	$710,970
Fundraising	$671,726	-	$671,726
Total Support Expenses	**$1,382,696**	**-**	**$1,382,696**
Total Expenses	**$8,202,116**	**-**	**$8,202,116**

	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL
Change in Net Assets (Deficit)	($123,071)	$474,339	$351,268
Beginning net assets	$2,821,723	$1,934,292	$4,756,015
Ending net assets	$2,698,652	$2,408,631	$5,107,283

PROJECT GROWTH

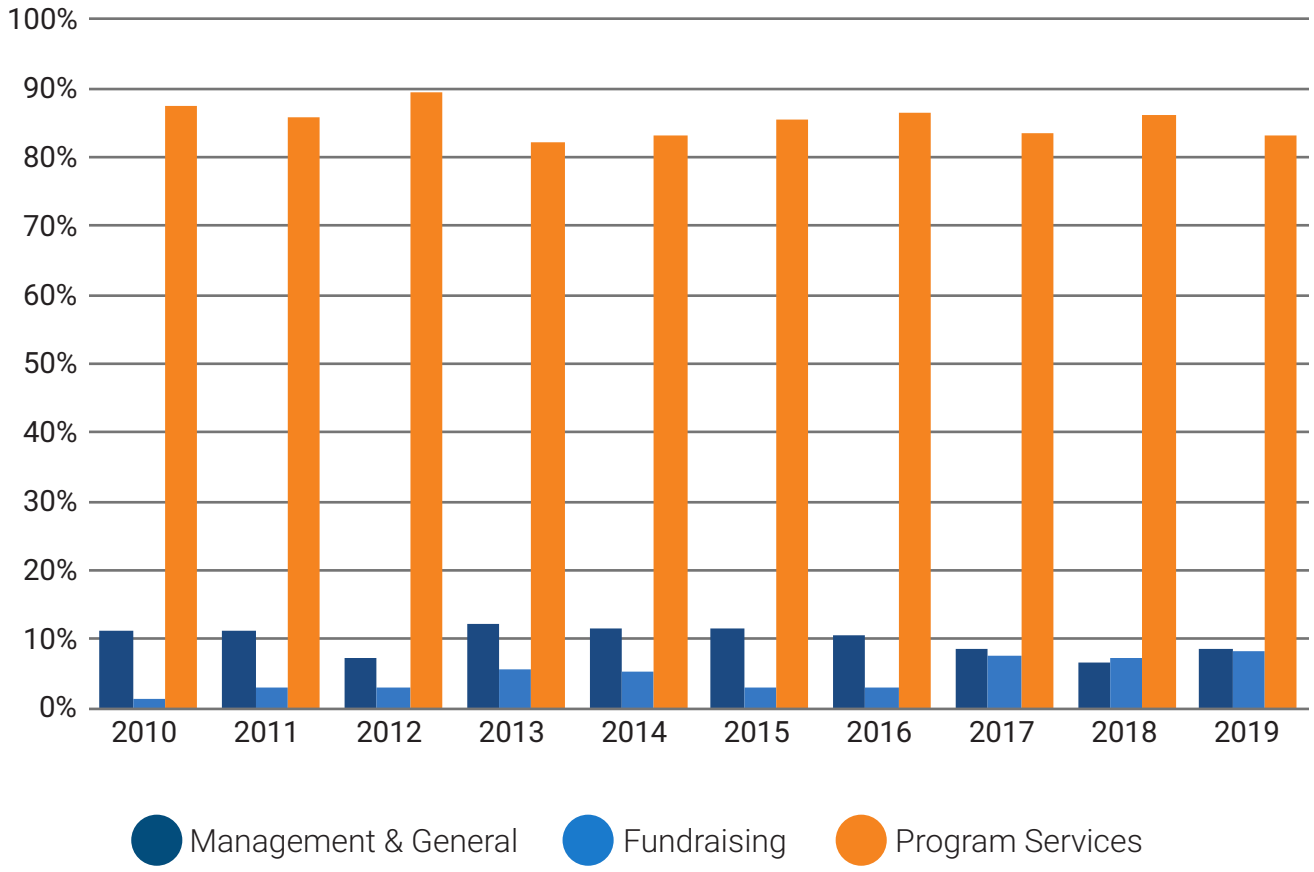


REVENUE GROWTH



A VIEW OF HOW WE'VE BEEN SPENDING EVERY DOLLAR DONATED

Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2019



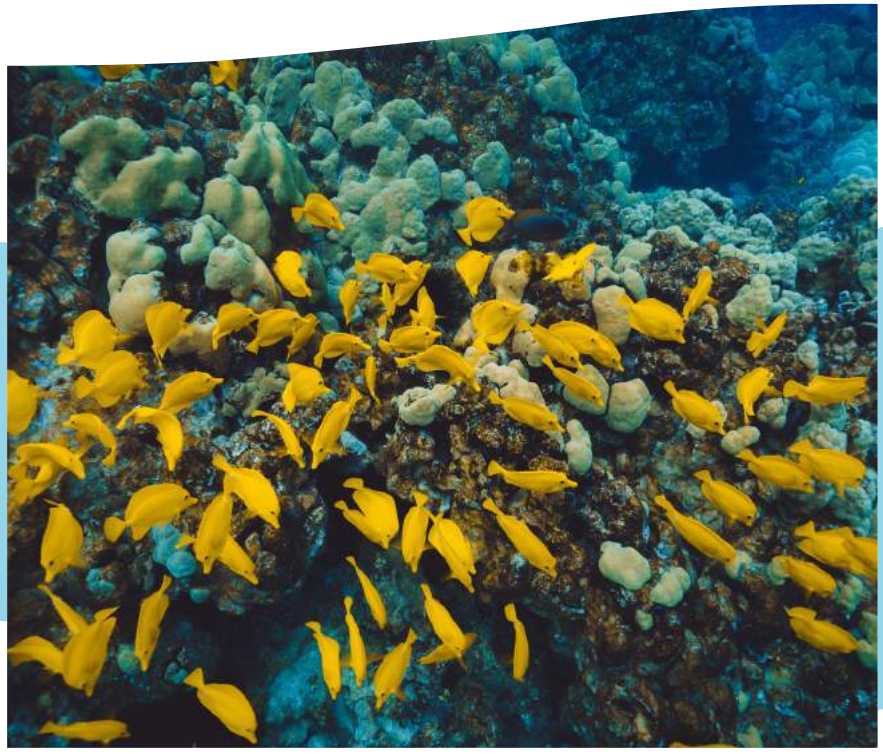


Photo Credit: Right, Redfish Rocks Community Team

Our Community

PROJECTS, PARTNERS, AND STAFF

Our Community
TOF PROJECTS

FISCALLY SPONSORED FUNDS




Not Pictured: Tag-A-Giant, Friends of the Delta, International Fisheries Conservation Program, The Last Ocean Project

FRIENDS OF FUNDS


Not Pictured: Future Ocean Alliance

Our Community
OUR PARTNERS

11TH HOUR RACING

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Staff

Mark J. Spalding – President
Karen Muir – Vice President, Operations
Meghan Jeans – Program Director
Kate Killerlain Morrison – Strategic Partnerships Director
Tamika Washington – Finance & Operations Director
María Alejandra Navarrete Hernández – International Legal Advisor, Mexico
Jason Donofrio – External Relations Officer
Jarrod Curry – Senior Marketing Manager
Ben Scheelk – Senior Program Manager
Alexis Valauri-Orton – Program Manager
Alyssa Hildt – Grants and Program Manager
Eleni Refu – Accountability and Transparency Systems Manager
Shree Karmacharya – Senior Accountant & Operations Manager
Maykell Merino-Cobo – Accountant
Julianna Dietz – Marketing Associate
Eddie Love – Program Associate
Alexandra Puritz – Program Associate
Alexa Pust – Development Associate
Alexandra Refosco – Research Associate

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Joshua Ginsberg
Walter Howes*
Bill Eichbaum
Elliot Cafritz
Nora Pouillon
Dawn Martin
Lisa Volgenau
Russell Smith

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Sylvia Earle
Toni Frederick--Armstrong
Kathleen Finlay
Lisa Genasci
J. Martin Goebel
Nydia Gutierrez
Marce Gutiérrez-Graudiņš
Mara Haseltine
Hans Herrmann
Asher Jay
Nancy Knowlton
Sara Lowell
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Laura Martínez Rios
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Maurice Middleberg
Angeles Murgie
Nyawira Muthiga
Magnus Ngoile
John Ogden
Chris Palmer
Daniel Pauly
Roger Payne
Donald Perkins
Dan Pingaro
Craig Quirolo
DeeVon Quirolo
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Jonathan Smith
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Vikki Spruill
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Kira Stillwell
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Marilyn Weiner
Ole Varmer
Hilda Vandergriff
Asha de Vos
Robin Yeager

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Vikki Spruill
David Rockefeller, Jr.
Sophia Mendelsohn
Bob Ramin
Ann Luskey
Lisa Hook
Chris Himes

Senior Fellows

Randall Snodgrass
William Finch
Michael Lang
Nancy Daves
Richard Charter
Boyce Thorne Miller
Sonja Fordham
Wolcott Henry
Conn Nugent
Alexandra Cousteau

Photo Credit: The Wise Laboratory Field Research Program

* On behalf of the staff and the Board of Directors of The Ocean Foundation, we were saddened at the loss of Walter S. Howes, who served on our Board. We really enjoyed working with him, listening to his new ideas, and laughing with him at his pithy assessments of how things really worked. We will miss him.

The Ocean Foundation

ANNUAL REPORT | FISCAL YEAR 2019

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