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Blue Nature Alliance to Expand and Improve the Conservation of 1.25 billion Hectares of Ocean Ecosystems

GEFID#: 10375, GEF Agency: Conservation International, Project Status: Active

Briefly describe what you consider to be the top three quantifiable results of the project to date.

1. To date, the Blue Nature Alliance has provided resources and technical capacity to support projects in 19 sites encompassing more than 1.15 billion hectares of ocean conservation area, covering all five oceans and the high seas.
2. To date, the Blue Nature Alliance has forged 11 partnerships to grow the field of ocean conservation at scale; invested in cutting-edge science and knowledge systems producing nine publications; supported the professional development of ocean conservation managers and stakeholders; and incubated new financing mechanisms to unlock untapped dollars for ocean conservation.
3. In FY22, the Blue Nature Alliance aided Tristan da Cunha, a small island territory of the United Kingdom, in efforts to protect 90% of its ocean area – nearly 70 million hectares. Now the largest fully protected zone in the Atlantic, the Tristan da Cunha Marine Protection Zone provides habitat for penguin, albatross, shark, and whale populations. The Blue Nature Alliance is now, along with philanthropic partners, supporting a conservation trust and a range of management, science, and community activities to bolster efforts to effectively manage the MPZ.

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Blue Nature Alliance

An aerial photograph of a tropical coastline. A large, deep blue bay curves along the top of the frame. Below it, a smaller inlet with turquoise water is bordered by a lush green island with dense vegetation and palm trees. The water transitions from deep blue to light turquoise near the shore, indicating a shallow reef or lagoon. The sky is a clear, deep blue.

July 2021 through June 2022

Ocean Conservation Journeys: Stories from Around the World





Humpback whale, British Colombia, Canada.
© Levi S. Norton



Silhouette Island, Seychelles.
© Conservation International/Russell A. Mittermeier



Jellyfish, British Columbia, Canada.
© Cristina Mittermeier/SeaLegacy



Weddell seal, Antarctica.
© Art Wolfe



Dear Friends,

What does it take to change the world? To make a difference for your coastal community? Country? The global ocean?

These are daunting questions. The ocean continues to face significant threats from climate change, damaging fishing practices, and pollution. Yet we know what to do.

The science is clear: Setting aside large areas where human activities are carefully managed can buffer our planet against the increasing stressors it faces. That's why there is growing support behind a call to effectively and equitably conserve at least 30% of the global ocean by 2030.

The Blue Nature Alliance partners came together with a core belief that meeting this target will require the bold vision of government and community leaders, underpinned by technical know-how, financial resources, innovation and creativity, and respect for local communities. It will also necessitate unprecedented levels of collaboration among governments, Indigenous peoples, philanthropists, scientists, ocean industries, and civil society.

Since launching the Blue Nature Alliance in 2021, more than 50 partners have joined our efforts to catalyze the conservation of 18 million square kilometers of the ocean—an area larger than the continent of South America—to do our part to achieve the proposed 2030 target. Our partners include high-level government officials working to implement bold and transformative policies, civil society organizations focused on marine protections, and local

communities that depend on a healthy ocean ecosystem for their cultural, economic, and food security. Together, we are working to move forward new designations of ocean conservation areas, as well as improve the effectiveness, durability, and equitability of existing ones.

To date, we have provided resources and technical capacity to support projects in 19 sites encompassing more than 11.5 million square kilometers of ocean. Through this report, we will highlight some of our incredible partners working on the frontlines to improve, expand, or establish new ocean conservation areas—in places like Tristan da Cunha, the Southern Ocean, Niue, and beyond.





With a dedication to learning and innovation, the Blue Nature Alliance also seeks to grow the professional field of large-scale ocean conservation across the globe, including in South America's Southern Cone region. We have forged nine partnerships through which we are investing in cutting-edge science and knowledge systems, the professional development of ocean conservation managers and stakeholders, and the incubation of new financing mechanisms to unlock untapped dollars for ocean conservation.

As we reflect on the past year, the fact that our partners accomplished so much during the COVID-19 pandemic—a time of great global paralysis—speaks volumes about the impact we can have in the years ahead. Together, we're making progress toward protecting the world's ocean and the communities who depend on it.

—The Blue Nature Alliance

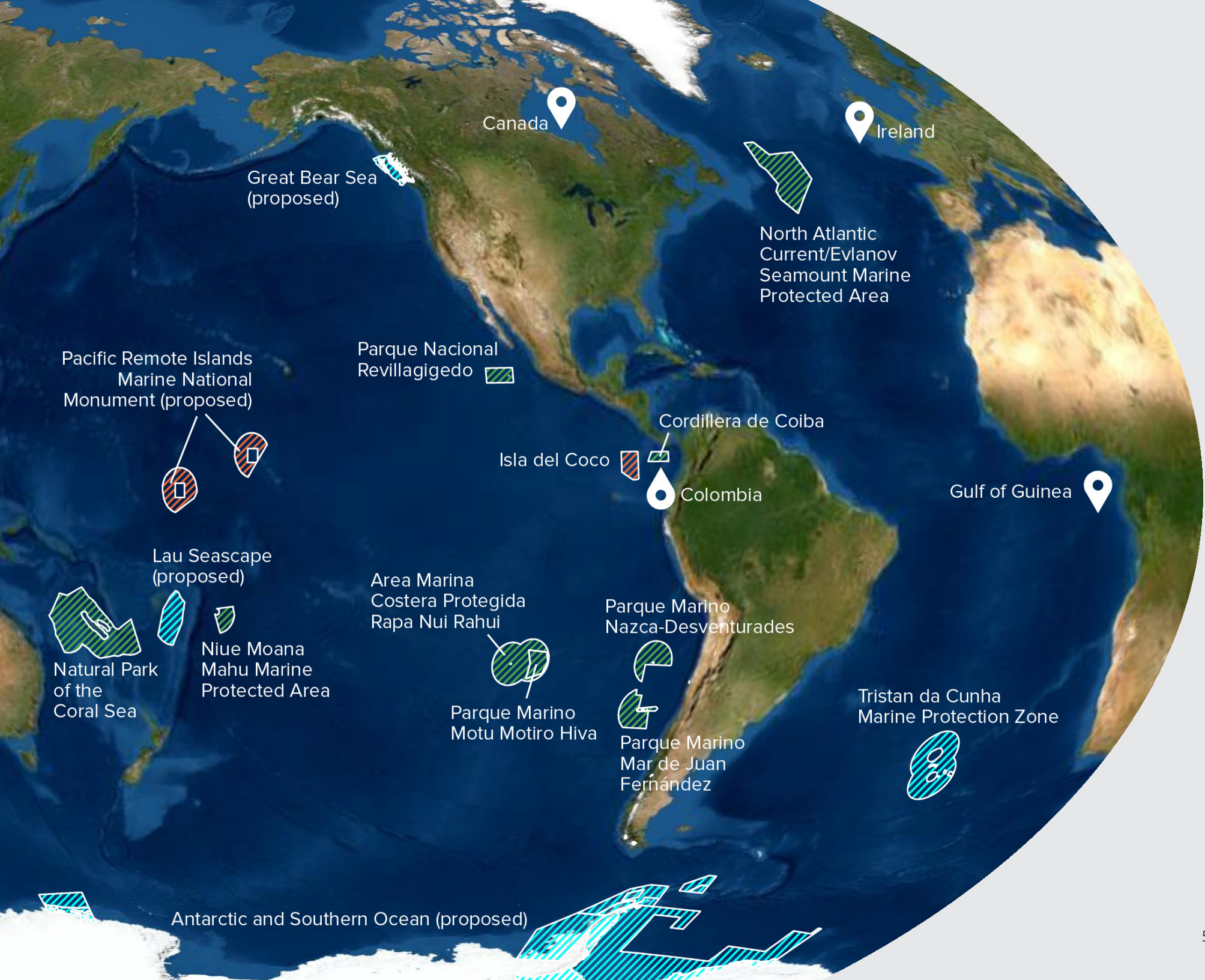
Where We Work

The Blue Nature Alliance collaborates with governments, NGOs, Indigenous peoples, and scientists around the world to catalyze the creation, expansion, and improvement of ocean conservation areas. Here's a look at the sites where we currently work.

-  National/Multinational Engagement
-  New Ocean Conservation Area
-  Improved Ocean Conservation Area
-  Expanded Ocean Conservation Area



Map of site engagements as of June 1, 2022



Canada

Ireland

Great Bear Sea
(proposed)

North Atlantic
Current/Evlanov
Seamount Marine
Protected Area

Pacific Remote Islands
Marine National
Monument (proposed)

Parque Nacional
Revillagigedo

Cordillera de Coiba

Isla del Coco

Colombia

Gulf of Guinea

Lau Seascape
(proposed)

Natural Park of the
Coral Sea

Niue Moana
Mahu Marine
Protected Area

Area Marina
Costera Protegida
Rapa Nui Rahui


Parque Marino
Motu Motiro Hiva

Parque Marino
Nazca-Desventuradas

Parque Marino
Mar de Juan
Fernández

Tristan da Cunha
Marine Protection Zone


Antarctic and Southern Ocean (proposed)



“This small island has made a big impact—
and laid down a challenge to the rest of the planet.
The establishment of the marine protection zone has
come at a cost, but the community is rooted in the
marine environment and understands the need to
protect the pristine seas around its shores.”

—Stephen Townsend, Co-administrator of Tristan da Cunha

Creation and Improved Management of Ocean Conservation Areas



“Tristan, with its small community, is so proud to be helping the world to protect its oceans.”

—Trevor Glass, Head of Conservation,
Tristan da Cunha Government

Tristan da Cunha, a small island territory of the United Kingdom, has protected 90% of its ocean area—nearly 700,000 square kilometers, roughly twice the size of the Great Barrier Reef. The largest fully protected zone in the Atlantic, it provides habitat for penguin, albatross, shark, and whale populations. Home to 250 people, this remote island community has limited economic options. By boosting ocean health in their area, Tristanians are ensuring the viability of the highly sustainable rock lobster fishery that is crucial to their economy and way of life. The effort was led by Tristan da Cunha

community members—who view themselves as guardians of the Atlantic—with support from the United Kingdom government, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, and partners across the global NGO community, including the Great British Oceans Coalition. The Blue Nature Alliance, along with philanthropic partners, is supporting a conservation trust and a range of management, science, and community activities to advance Tristanians’ efforts to effectively manage their marine resources and bolster community development for the long term.

“I am incredibly proud to have supported the designation of Tristan da Cunha’s marine protection zone, the largest fully protected area in the Atlantic Ocean. Never has such a small community given the rest of the world a bigger gift. Thank you, Tristan. You have made our world a better place.”

—Andy Schofield, Government Partner Territories Programme Manager,
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Science to Support Conservation Action

Antarctica's Southern Ocean is one of the last great marine wilderness areas on earth, and science can help protect it. The Blue Nature Alliance and the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition commissioned six scientific studies that will help effectively design marine protected areas that could conserve 3.8 million square kilometers. The diverse set of research projects ranges from analyzing Antarctica's biodiversity, to understanding the economics of the growing krill fishery, to


identifying biodiversity hotspots. The partners will share the findings with the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, the regional policymaking body that governs Antarctica's waters. The findings from these rigorous scientific research projects will inform decision-makers as they consider and implement plans to protect habitat for penguins, seals, whales, and the 10,000 other wildlife species that call the Southern Ocean home.

“The Southern Ocean is bursting with unique life—from sponges that can live for centuries to emperor penguins that thrive in some of the harshest conditions on the planet. But the science is telling us that these and other species are likely to be affected by climate change and other human activities. A science-based system of marine protected areas can safeguard Antarctica's incredible marine ecosystems for future generations.”

—Claire Christian, Executive Director, Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition



Paradise Harbor, Antarctica.
© Levi S. Norton



“Although there is a tremendous amount of high-quality science conducted in the Antarctic, there is still much we don’t know. The funding provided by the Alliance is targeted at filling key gaps in our understanding of the Antarctic, enabling scientists and decision-makers to preserve areas of the highest ecological importance.”

—Olive Andrews, Marine Protected Area Program Manager, Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition



Beveridge Reef, Niue.
© UNDP/Vlad Sokhin

Innovative Financing to Achieve Longevity

“Niue’s long tradition of sustainable marine resource use, conservation, and respect for nature as our ‘taoga’ passed on from our ancestors has allowed us to thrive, preserving our way of life despite our geographical isolation and the threats the ocean faces.”

—Brendon Pasisi, Project Manager, Niue Ocean Wide

Building on a heritage of sustainable harvesting and traditional conservation, the Pacific Island nation of Niue in 2020 established a marine protected area covering 40% of its ocean space, and in 2022 enacted legislation ensuring responsible management and use of 100% of its waters. Niue now manages the country’s more than 320,000 square kilometers of ocean using a new marine spatial management plan developed through the Niue Ocean Wide (NOW) public-private partnership between the government of Niue and local ocean nonprofit Tofia Niue. NOW is also working with the Blue Nature Alliance, consulting firm and Alliance analytics partner McKinsey and Company, and other

partners to develop a financing mechanism that allows investors to purchase ocean conservation credits. Underscoring the value of the ocean, those credits will support Niue’s marine conservation work, which improves the ocean’s ability to provide ecological, socio-cultural, economic, and resilience benefits. Niueans will use this financing to effectively monitor ocean use, enforce rules, build sustainable livelihoods, increase resilience to climate change, and strategically manage their waters—building on more than 1,000 years of traditional knowledge, practices, and respect for the ocean to ensure abundance for future generations.

“By combining our local communities’ intellect and passion with help from development partners around the globe, we will monitor, manage, and enforce marine protections while strengthening our ocean conservation-based economy so that both support our community long into the future.”

—Dalton Emani Makamau Tagelagi, Premier, Niue

Growing the Field of Ocean Conservation Professionals

Skilled managers are critical for ensuring the effectiveness of ocean conservation areas. The Marine Protected Area (MPA) Management School for the Southern Cone is helping safeguard the rich and biologically significant waters surrounding the Southern Cone of South America by training and certifying MPA managers in Chile, Argentina, Uruguay, and Peru. The Forum for the Conservation of the Patagonian Sea and Areas of Influence established the program in 2017 in coordination with government agencies and philanthropic partners. To date, the initiative—

which trains those directly responsible for managing, supervising, and administering MPAs—has impacted 39 marine protected areas throughout the region. The Blue Nature Alliance is working with the Forum to secure long-term funding and develop new relationships with academic institutions so the program can continue expanding, building expertise, and enhancing marine conservation outcomes across the region in a durable and sustainable way.

“As Southern Cone countries improve existing marine protected areas and establish new ones, this incredible training program will help conservation practitioners become proficient and confident in their roles so they can achieve effective management of these areas.”

—Alexandra Sapoznikow, Academic Coordinator of the MPA Management School for the Southern Cone, Forum for the Conservation of the Patagonian Sea




Field trip to Patagonia Austral Marine Coastal Inter-Jurisdictional Park, Chubut, Argentina.
© Alexandra Sapoznikow



Strait of Magellan, Kawésqar National Park, Chile.
© Alejandra Javiera Gallo



Students meeting with artisanal fishermen, San José Gulf, Chubut, Argentina.
© Nykol Jara (WCS Chile)

A photograph of two Commerson's dolphins leaping from the water. The dolphins are captured mid-air, with their bodies arched and tails still submerged, creating a large, dynamic splash of white water against the deep blue-green background of the ocean. The dolphins have a distinctive black and white coloration, with black on their backs and sides, and white on their undersides.

“Sharing experiences among Southern Cone countries is vital; we share resources, systems, and endemic species. Establishing isolated marine protected areas to preserve them would not be efficient.”

—Mariana Ríos, Technician, Uruguay National Protected Areas System

By the Numbers

The Blue Nature Alliance is working with partners in countries around the world toward shared conservation goals. In some places, we are advancing the designation of new or expanded ocean conservation areas. In others, we are improving the effectiveness, durability, and equitability of existing ones. While it may take years to achieve each individual goal, the work is well underway. Here's a snapshot of our work in progress.

Supporting conservation in **19 sites** in all **5 oceans** and on the high seas

Totalling **11,509,837 square kilometers** where we support ocean work

Together covering an area larger than Europe



Projected new conservation: **5,433,714 square kilometers**

Projected expanded conservation: **830,049 square kilometers**

Projected improved conservation: **5,246,073 square kilometers**

Developing the Field of Large-Scale Ocean Conservation

The Alliance is working with partners to advance science and knowledge, support professional development, and create new financing mechanisms. Here's a look at our work so far.

9 science papers published

1,100+ people reached through learning opportunities

11 ocean partnerships established

Figures as of June 1, 2022



Dolphins, Isla Socorro, Mexico.
© Talia Cohen/Unsplash

Our Partners

The Blue Nature Alliance is a global partnership founded and led by five core partners. We collaborate with governments, NGOs, Indigenous peoples, scientists, financial strategists, ocean conservation experts, and communities of practice to advance effective large-scale ocean conservation.

Core partners



Some of our technical, leverage, and implementing partners





BLUE NATURE
ALLIANCE

The Blue Nature Alliance is a global partnership catalyzing and accelerating large-scale ocean conservation.

Learn more about our work:
www.bluenaturealliance.org

Get in touch:
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