

2022

# IMPACT REPORT



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Welcome note</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2022 at a glance</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Marine biodiversity</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Fisheries and aquaculture</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Decarbonising shipping</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Deep-sea mining</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Marine litter</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Communications</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>About us</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Members</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Donors</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Meet the Management Committee</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Meet the team</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Financial reporting</b>	<b>25</b>

# WELCOME NOTE

Dear friends,

Welcome to Seas At Risk's 2022 Impact Report! As the world slowly turned a post-pandemic corner and business returned somewhat to normal, 2022 marked itself as the long-awaited 'super year for the ocean'. Over the course of 12 months, we witnessed a series of major global ocean conferences and agreements that underscored growing international commitment to protecting precious marine ecosystems.

At the One Ocean Summit an impressive array of Heads of State and Government declared their unwavering support for ocean conservation, while several states publicly opposed the advancement of deep-sea mining at the UN Ocean Conference. The COP27 climate summit failed to address phasing out fossil fuels, but it did feature the ocean dimension more prominently. There was also the UN Convention on Biological Diversity summit, where states passed a groundbreaking commitment to protect 30% of the ocean by 2030 – 30X30 – an ambitious target that holds great promise for the preservation of marine biodiversity, while the last rounds of negotiations leading to the adoption of the High Seas Treaty in 2023 were crucial to ensure 30x30 can also be a target in the high seas, two-thirds of the ocean.

While the global community celebrated these achievements, a shifting mood prevailed closer to home. The war in Ukraine, the rising cost of living and out of control inflation were exploited by industry and the fisheries and agricultural lobbies to call for a halt to nature protection and restoration, citing concerns about "food security". Despite the European Commission emphasising that healthy



ecosystems are the bedrock of food security, many politicians and Member States have caved to the posturing of populists, reluctant to adequately address the climate crisis and biodiversity collapse.

In the face of this changing landscape, the importance of a united front among civil society organisations has never been clearer. We responded by launching an EU-wide project in collaboration with numerous member organisations and partners, aimed at securing genuine protection for Marine Protected Areas in European seas – moving beyond mere lines on a map. We also fostered close collaboration with our members and allies on other critical issues such as fisheries, shipping, marine litter, and deep-sea mining. These collective efforts yielded tangible results, including well-protected marine areas in Portugal and the UK, ambitious fishing limits in the Baltic, and crucial negotiations focusing on short-term measures to curb greenhouse gas emissions from shipping at the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Additionally, we actively worked towards the development of EU-wide measures to combat the source of microplastic pollution and have helped grow the chorus of countries advocating for a moratorium on deep-sea mining.

Thanks to continued collaboration with our strong and growing network of members and partners, alongside our dedicated and expanding team (check out the new faces on page 24!), I'm confident that we will seize the opportunities presented in the limited time remaining for this Commission and European Parliament. As we cast our gaze towards the 2024 elections, we harbor hope for a new European Green Deal – one that transcends economic growth and places the well-being of all people in Europe and the health of European seas at its core.

Happy reading!

Monica Verbeek

Executive Director, Seas At Risk

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monica Verbeek". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned below the printed name.



# 2022 AT A GLANCE

## MARINE BIODIVERSITY

We launched our new project campaigning for Marine Protected Areas in European seas. Our project brings together organisations from across Europe who want to see vulnerable marine life and ecosystems protected in practice and not only on paper. Our reach has spread far beyond the original ten project partners, as seen by the release of our joint position on an ambitious EU Nature Restoration Law that was signed by 25+ other civil society organisations.

## FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE

More than half a million people signed our petition to 'Stop the mass slaughter of dolphins by the fishing industry in EU waters'. As part of a coalition of NGOs, we delivered the petition to EU, French and Spanish decision-makers at the One Ocean Summit, leading to high-level calls for an end to this barbaric practice – including from the French President himself.

## DEEP-SEA MINING

Our communications and advocacy activities on the side lines of the United Nation Ocean Conference led to deep-sea mining becoming the hot topic – despite it not being on the agenda! In his closing remarks French President Emmanuel Macron added his support for a global moratorium on this hugely damaging industry, which has since contributed to a domino effect of other states calling for a halt to plans to destroy the seabed.

## OCEAN WEEK

With Ocean Week as the backdrop, we launched the annual assessment of our Blue Manifesto, a roadmap for Europe to deliver a healthy ocean by 2030. With only one of the eight targets having been met in the previous 12 months, we welcomed 250 people to an event where we addressed decision-makers and called on them to restore and protect the ocean as a matter of global urgency if we are to futureproof the planet for generations to come.

## DECARBONISING SHIPPING

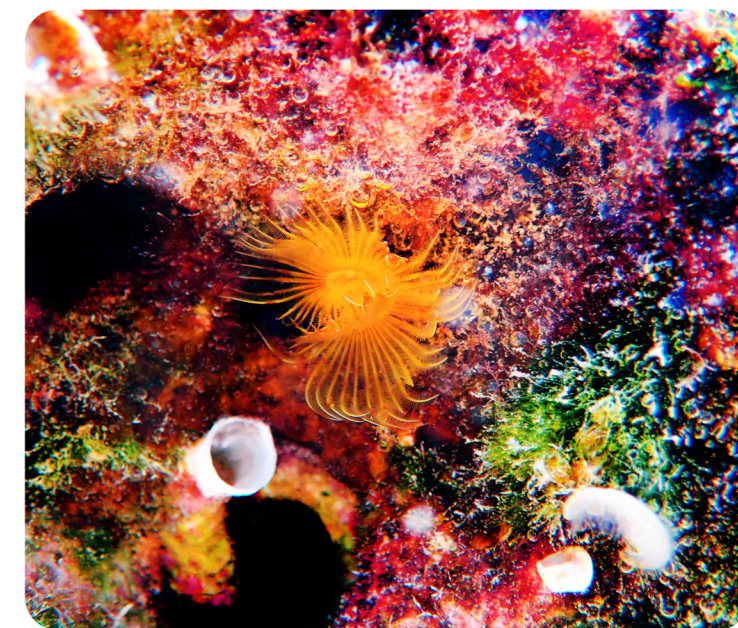
Our repeated calls to reduce shipping emissions to keep global heating below the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit were picked up by the Internal Maritime Organization (IMO). This means that although most IMO member states are in favour of zero emissions by 2050 only, there are still ambitious targets on the table for 2030 and 2040 as they enter the final stages of negotiations on its greenhouse gas strategy.

## MARINE LITTER

Our proposals on putting in place binding rules on how highly-polluting plastic production pellets are handled shook up the status quo (so much so, they were voted through in early 2023!). This is a huge leap towards ending the blight of plastic pollution in the ocean and on Europe's coastlines, which will have huge positive knock-on effects for marine – and human – health.

## RISE UP

Seas At Risk became host of global movement 'Rise Up – Blue Call to Action'. In 2022, the network grew to over 500 organisations from around the world pushing for bold, just actions needed to set the ocean on a course to recovery. Emblematic events at the UN Oceans Conference in Lisbon, including icons like Sylvia Earle and Peter Thomson as well as representatives of indigenous groups and small-scale fishers, consolidated and galvanised the movement towards the next UN Oceans conference in 2025.



**553,673** signatures collected to stop the bycatch of dolphins in EU waters

# MARINE BIODIVERSITY

In 2022, Seas At Risk shone a spotlight on marine biodiversity and the urgent need to restore and protect the ocean. With the very real prospect of legally binding measures for nature restoration just around the corner, [our new multi-annual project](#) has the overarching aim of restoring, protecting and extending vulnerable marine areas in practice, not just on paper.

## Joining forces to #RestoreOcean!

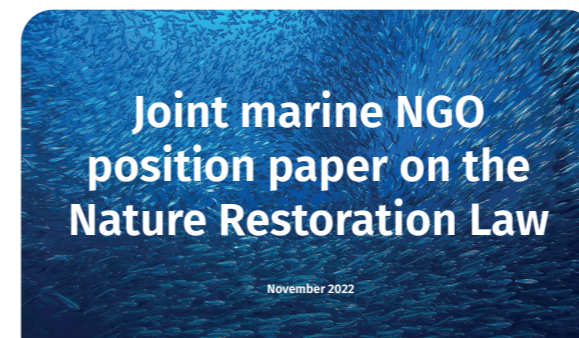
Seas At Risk's project is co-led by Oceana Europe and has project partners, including seven Seas At Risk members, both at EU level and in multiple Member States: Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. A highlight of 2022 was uniting a coalition of civil society organisations representing a broad array of interests around one common goal: getting strong and impactful legally binding rules to restore and protect the ocean. With this platform of 25+ organisations we published a [joint position paper](#) outlining our key asks to decision-makers for a strong EU Nature Restoration Law that puts people and planet before profit. As well as giving strength through numbers to our advocacy and communications deliverables, this grouping of marine and terrestrial interests has paved the way for capacity building among our organisations, and avenues for knowledge sharing and amplification of our messaging.

Beyond EU level our national partners have been working strenuously to shift national positioning on Marine Protected Areas. From our member Sciaena helping to convince the Portuguese government to protect new areas of national waters from all human activities, to

our member Marine Conservation Society UK and ClientEarth successfully getting sections of Dogger Bank closed to harmful bottom trawling fishing vessels, our project's impact on EU and national decision-makers will help protect European seas for generations to come.

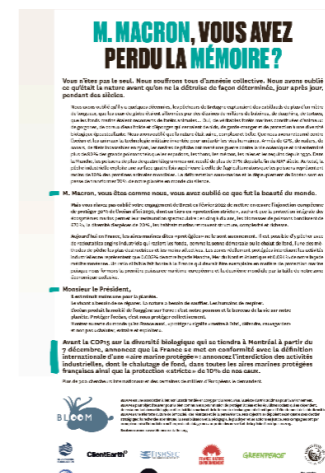
## Taking ocean protection to the public

As well as intensive work on the ground, the success of our project relies heavily on awareness raising and holding decision-makers to account around key moments. To this end, in 2022 we created and launched several communications deliverables with broad support from other civil society organisations that gained traction across our social media channels. Examples include [our advocacy action](#) around the kick-off of negotiations on the Nature Restoration Law in the European Parliament and Council of the EU (21,847 impressions across Twitter, Instagram and Facebook), [our 'Facts Of Sealife' video on the need for restoration](#) (11,576 impressions), and our [full-page advert in Le Monde](#) ahead of the UN Biodiversity Conference, calling on France to ban industrial activities in its Marine Protected Areas (average daily circulation of 470,000).



The European Commission's landmark proposal for a Nature Restoration Law (NRL) comes at a time of rapidly progressing and mutually reinforcing triple crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation. We have pushed the planetary boundaries to the point of irreversible negative changes to the ecological conditions in which humanity has thrived for thousands of years and that are key to our survival. European seas must become resilient again if we are to face the challenge of climate change.

The ocean is the largest planetary carbon sink. It stores equivalent amounts of carbon to terrestrial ecosystems and removes around one-third of CO2 emitted by human activity. Healthy marine ecosystems capture and lock-in carbon, acting as nature-based solutions to climate change. Our marine ecosystems are far from healthy, however. In 2020, the European Environment Agency (EEA) reported a high loss of biodiversity in more than 80% of Europe's seas. Ocean restoration and conservation are key to recovering marine biodiversity and halting the degradation of marine ecosystems. Restoring EU seas can bring back the sea's abundant web of life, allowing marine and coastal ecosystems to perform their natural functions and support life on Earth. This is a nature-based solution to the climate breakdown, enhancing ecosystems' resilience and ability to mitigate the effects of droughts, floods, sea-level rises and other extreme weather events.



# FISHERIES & AQUACULTURE

2022 saw Seas At Risk continue its work to bring about a shift towards fisheries with a low impact on the environment, and the restoration of fish populations to a level where they can reproduce safely with a surplus we can harvest.

## Bringing real change to the Baltic Sea

Together with a group of like-minded marine NGOs, we positively influenced the outcome of the AGRIFISH Council of EU fisheries ministers on fishing opportunities for the Baltic Sea. Thanks to years of advocacy and multiple communications actions ahead of the Council – including our [‘Facts of Sealife’ video series](#), the targeted release of [infographics on sensitive species in the Baltic Sea](#) and a [press briefing for EU and national journalists](#) outlining the key issues at stake – for the first time ever ministers set ambitious fishing limits that take into account ecosystem considerations and buffer zones.

## Speaking up for healthy seas

As part of our Turning The Tide project, together with four of our member organisations – BUND, Ecologistas en Accion, France Nature Environnement and Sciaena – we ran a public-facing, awareness raising campaign. The [‘Voice of the Fish’ art action](#) saw a wood-carved sculpture of a woman carrying a fish journey from sea to sea – from Germany to Portugal, via Luxembourg, France and Spain – to advocate for marine life and bring the loss of the ocean’s ecosystems to the surface. Various activities accompanied the sculpture’s arrival in each country, including a panel

discussion on the impact of industrial fishing in the Bay of Biscay in La Rochelle, France bringing together ocean advocates, scientists and Member of the European Parliament Caroline Roose, and an action outside the AGRIFISH Council meeting in Luxembourg that saw ministers and their entourages engage with our project and listen to our key asks. The sculpture was returned to the sea in Sagres, Portugal and lives on through a film that is due to be shown at film festival across the EU throughout 2023.

## Our food’s footprint

To complement our work on moving towards low-impact fisheries, in 2022 we began active engagement with the EU Food Policy Coalition where we strengthened the [seafood dimension](#) – an issue typically overlooked in a land and agriculture focussed discussion. As a result, seafood and the marine dimension were included in the EU Food Policy election manifesto and the network’s advocacy work around the Sustainable Food Systems Law.



Since 2017, the scientific advice is to stop catching red seabream, but Spain keeps pushing to set a small quota to keep the fishery open.



# DECARBONISING SHIPPING

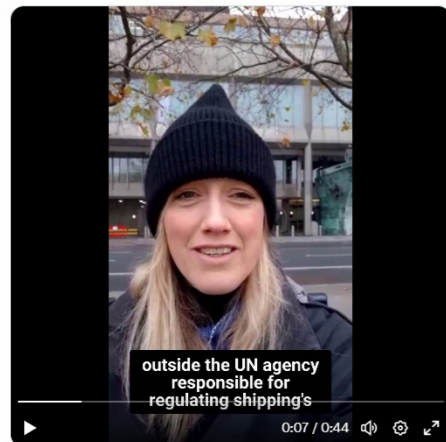


Seas At Risk @SeasAtRisk · Dec 11, 2022  
Stay up to date on UN climate talks on shipping!

SAR's @LucyGilliam is in London as @IMOHQ is about to debate measures to clean up the major polluter.

Follow #IPCC climate science:  
- 50% emissions cut by 2030  
- 0 emissions by 2040

#ClimateAction #Shipping #MEPC79 #UN



The shipping industry has immense power with its giant cargo ships dominating trade, and bringing huge negative social and environmental impacts. In 2022, Seas At Risk worked tirelessly to raise awareness of the need to decarbonise shipping, with clear goals to halve emissions by 2030 and to reach zero by 2040.

## One Planet Shipping: A course for future shipping

2022 saw the launch of the [One Planet Shipping project](#), focused on steering shipping down a more sustainable path and ensuring that it operates within planetary ecosystem boundaries. The project reframes our collective understanding of trade and transport's role in our societies, and works towards a world with fair consumption, safe harbours, sustainable trade and a just transition.

The launch of this project saw the commissioning of our State of Shipping & Oceans Report, which will be finalised and released in 2023 and will unravel the shipping sector and reveal some home truths about the damage it has caused to our planet and society. The concept of One Planet Shipping was also shared at the United Nations Ocean Conference in Lisbon, Portugal where we organised [an event to raise awareness of maritime transport policies and planetary boundaries](#).

The project's official launch event, "[Boat Beats: A climate storytelling concert](#)", featured travelling artists Filastine and Nova. With the aid of visuals and music, in one evening the audience was transported around the world, sailing through the COVID-19 lockdown and coastal communities in Indonesia.

## Defending the 1.5°C heating limit and short-term action at IMO

Seas At Risk, ever-present on the ground at the International Maritime Organization's (IMO)

meetings in London, succeeded in putting [short-term ambition and the pre-2030 shipping climate](#) action that is needed to keep heating below 1.5°C firmly on the table, pushing back against the widespread view that zero by 2050 is sufficient. A decision on this will be the centrepiece of two weeks of IMO climate summit in June/July 2023.

We have also been working on getting climate ambition high on the EU agenda, to strengthen its stance at the IMO. The EU still has some weaknesses when it comes to reaching a coordinated position, and we will continue to apply pressure whenever and wherever an opportunity arises.

## Black carbon emissions in and near the Arctic

Black carbon emissions have a huge negative impact on the Arctic, a region that is already vulnerable to climate breakdown, with tipping points that could lead to disastrous global consequences.

In 2022, we produced several submissions and papers and [attended meetings](#) to put pressure on IMO member states to support the regulation of black carbon emissions from international shipping. This included the [submission of a paper](#) highlighting the need for urgent action to adopt binding measures, aimed at improving the quality of the fuels used on board ships in the Arctic.

At the end of 2022, the Clean Arctic Alliance (a global alliance of 20 NGOs led by Seas At Risk), created a [series of infographics](#) to explain the key climate threats to the Arctic.

# DEEP-SEA MINING

We know more about the moon than about the deep sea. However, the surging demand for metals is now driving the mining industry into our planet's last frontier. In 2022, we helped transform deep-sea mining from 'out of sight, out of mind' to one of the hottest topics on the international marine agenda.

## Bringing the threat of deep-sea mining to the surface

The United Nations Ocean Conference 2022 (UNOC 2022) in Lisbon, Portugal was a pivotal moment in our campaign to stop deep-sea mining at global and EU level. In the run up to the conference we invited Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) to join our social media campaign, displaying signs showing their commitment to a moratorium. The deep-sea mining side-events, social media communications and activities we organised and supported at UNOC 2022, as well as the Ocean Basecamp we set up together with our Portuguese member Sciaena and Oceano Azul, [contributed much to deep-sea mining becoming 'the talk of the day'](#), even though formally it was not on the UNOC 2022 agenda.

A Global Alliance of countries for a moratorium was launched, and German and Portuguese ministers made statements in support. Our engagement with MEPs also resulted in French MEP Marie Toussaint launching a Global Parliamentary Declaration Calling for a Moratorium on Deep Seabed Mining.

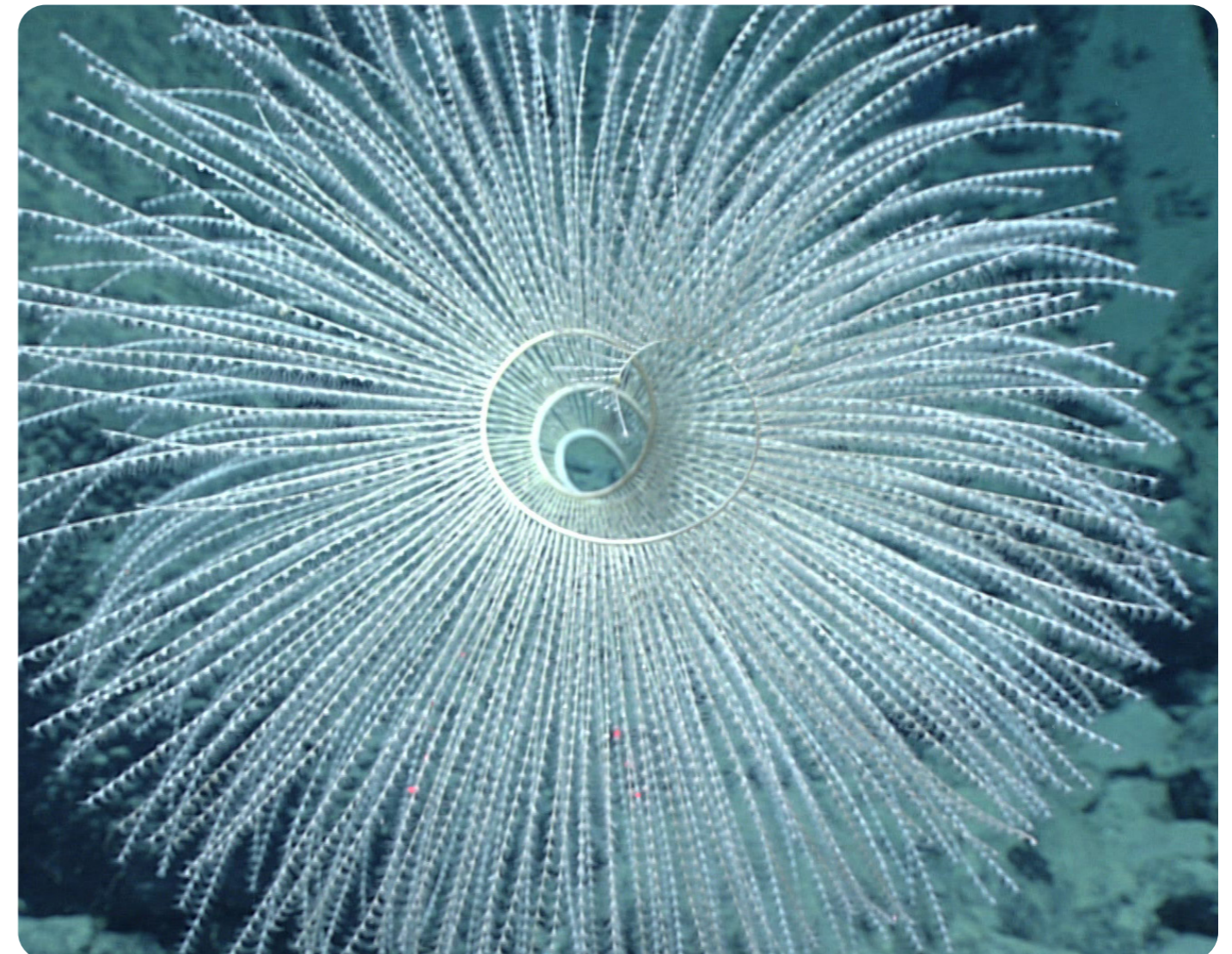
Following the conference an influx of countries adopted positions against deep-sea mining:

eight countries in the last half of the year alone, including Spain, France and Germany.

## Creating coalitions for change

To better influence NGO engagement in EU raw materials policies we co-created a civil society alliance, involving some 50 NGOs. A joint submission to the consultation on the Raw Materials Action Plan and a workshop on '[Breaking Free From Mining](#)' helped to mainstream our position in the Alliance. We also facilitated the establishment of a raw materials work group with marine NGOs at the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition.

At national level we supported the creation of a coalition of French NGOs, who effectively engaged with ministries and set up several social media campaigns. The coalition was instrumental in getting the French parliament to adopt a cross-party resolution calling for a ban on deep-sea mining. We continued to engage with the Belgian stakeholder process, and through multiple high-level meetings and our response to the consultation on International Ocean Governance, we successfully encouraged [the European Commission to take a firmer position on deep-sea mining.](#)







# MARINE LITTER

Plastic production continues to skyrocket and with it so does marine litter. Following recent legislative developments and new committees tasked with reigning in microplastics, in 2022 Seas At Risk strived to make sure that measures proposed to turn off the tap on marine litter were ambitious, effective and followed through on across Europe.

## Amplifying the microplastics problem

Both the EU and OSPAR (Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic) took strides to challenge the scourge of microplastics from design to degradation. After years of advocacy, we were instrumental in getting the European Commission to finally put forward strict measures aimed at stopping microplastic pollution.

Together with the [Rethink Plastic alliance \(RPa\)](#), we made the case for changing the way that plastic pellets – a big polluter of EU seas and beaches – are handled, including by holding industry to account. Our advocacy was a huge success: the first rules were adopted in April 2023!

Pellets aren't the only plastic pollutants that accidentally end up in the ocean, and so we pushed the European Commission to put forward binding rules to tackle other unintentionally released microplastics, like those shed from car tyres, lint from

clothes, and paint peelings. In 2023, we will continue to advocate for ambition, diligence, and effectiveness in all aspects of marine microplastic pollution.

## Monitoring Member States' uptake of single-use plastic rules

Macroplastics are still a major concern, so we kept pressure on Member States to follow through on their obligation to eliminate single-use plastics in line with the EU's 2019 Single-Use Plastics Directive that we campaigned hard for. We did this with a [report](#) that highlighted leaders and laggards across Europe, revealing the successes and failures of the directive in the two years after it was voted through. We also shone a light on inspiring examples from across the EU on how to eliminate throwaway plastics, updating our popular eleven-language [best practices catalogue](#), featuring more than 30 new local and national initiatives and covering even more countries – a testament to the progress made on phasing out single-use plastics for good.



# COMMUNICATIONS

The social media scene is ever-changing. Luckily, the Seas At Risk communications team was up to the challenge. We grew our online presence across the board. By the end of 2022, we had nearly 10,000 followers on [Twitter](#), more than 840 followers on our newly-launched [Instagram](#) page, over 1,800 [LinkedIn](#) followers, and around 1,200 [Facebook](#) followers. We earned more than 110,000 site visits across Seas At Risk's websites.

Keeping up with growing traffic meant we had more opportunities to reach out to people, politicians, and other stakeholders vital to bringing about the changes we want. In 2022, we had media coverage in some of the biggest media outlets in Brussels and beyond: EURACTIV, POLITICO Europe, Le Monde, TIME Magazine, the Guardian, Le Figaro, the Huffington Post, and the BBC. Hundreds of mentions of Seas At Risk and our hardworking policy teams gave us potential outreach to 1.14 billion people globally. As our network and reach grows, our collective calls for ocean protection and environmental responsibility echo around the world.

Ocean Week 2022 was another resounding success; we collaborated with other influential marine NGOs and [hosted more than 250 people in Bozar Centre for Fine Arts](#) and online for seven full days of ocean action and advocacy. We also hosted side events at COP27 and the [United Nations Ocean Conference](#), and spoke at several other high-level events where we constantly championed ocean-first policy before emblematic and influential figures, such as Members of the European Parliament, UN representatives, and even the Crown Princess of Sweden.

We hope to keep pushing the limits of traditional media and outreach in 2023 and beyond, to find new and exciting ways to amplify the voice of the ocean and European seas.

Twitter  
9928 followers

LinkedIn  
1896 followers

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:

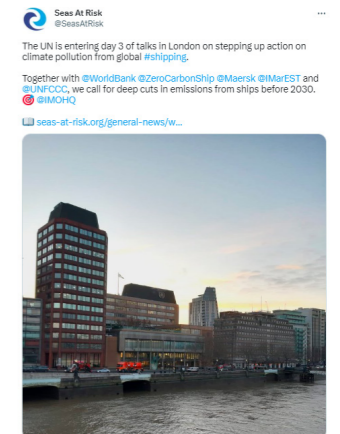
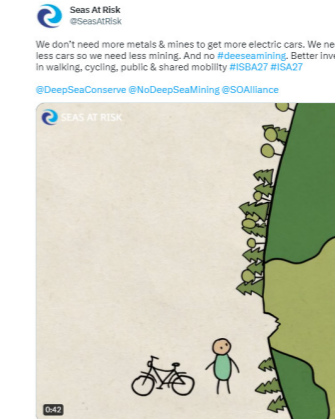
 **Monica Verbeek**  
@VerbeekSAR

🇪🇺 Fisheries Minister @LuisPlanas says he'll take 🇺🇰 to court over its ban on bottom-trawling - a destructive fishing practice that destroys the seabed - in vulnerable deepsea areas 🌊 Besides publicly outing himself as anti-ocean, here's how he's playing the fishing industry 🇺🇰



Facebook  
1369 followers  
1270 likes

Instagram  
823  
followers



# ABOUT SEAS AT RISK

For over 30 years, Seas At Risk has championed the cause of the European marine environment and that of seas and oceans around the world. An umbrella organisation of environmental NGOs across Europe, we promote ambitious policies for marine protection at European and international level.

We strive for seas and an ocean whose marine life is abundant, diverse, climate-resilient, and unthreatened by human pressures. Our network of member organisations in every corner of the EU shares our dedication to protecting the marine environment and its crucial ecosystems.

Our long history of successful advocacy work and a passionate team means that we have an important level of insight and understanding of the problems facing the marine environment, as well as the ideas, individuals and institutions that are key to solving them. With a fast-growing membership representing millions of people, this advocacy carries both political and intellectual weight.

## Want to join the fight to protect Planet Ocean?

Seas At Risk members are all national or international environmental NGOs that coordinate projects and campaigns for the protection of the marine environment and marine life. Seas At Risk and our members regularly come together in workshops, seminars and meetings to share experiences and best practices and to coordinate joint actions to increase the impact of our work. We provide the platform for this knowledge exchange and play a pivotal role in ensuring that agreed ideas turn into action.

[Find out how to become a member of Seas At Risk here.](#)



# OUR MEMBERS



# OUR DONORS

Thank you!

Our work would not be possible without generous funding support from:



# MEET THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



**Gonçalo Carvalho**  
Chair



**Ana Gutierrez Dewar**  
Secretary



**Ilaria Di Silvestre**  
Non-post holder



**Iris Ziegler**  
Non-post holder



**Jean-Luc Solandt**  
Non-post holder



**Nadja Ziebarth**  
Non-post holder



**Ida Carlén**  
Non-post holder

# MEET THE TEAM



## Directors

**Xiaowei Liu** - Operations Director  
**Helen Willetts** - Communications Director  
**Monica Verbeek** - Executive Director  
**Tobias Troll** - Marine Policy Director



## Operations

**David Brown** - Finance Officer  
**Giulia Messeri** - Junior Operations Officer  
**Renske Cox** - Operations Officer



## Biodiversity

**Hélène Bucholzer** - Junior Fisheries Policy Officer  
**Andrea Ripol** - Fisheries/Marine Policy Officer  
**Christine Adams** - Fisheries Policy Officer



## Pollution

**Lucy Gilliam** - Senior Shipping Policy Officer  
**Frédérique Mongodin** - Senior Marine Litter Policy Officer  
**John Maggs** - Senior Shipping Policy Officer  
**Tiago Pires da Cruz** - Junior Deep-Sea Mining Policy Officer



## Communications

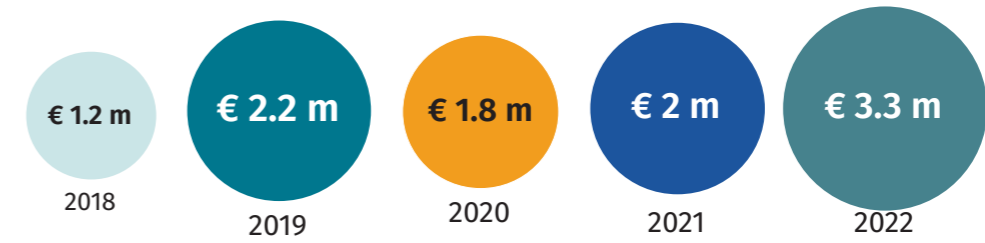
**Sara Tironi** - Communications Officer  
**Adenieke Lewis-Gibbs** - Junior Communications Officer  
**Louisa Gray** - Membership and Internal Communications Officer

## with thanks to:

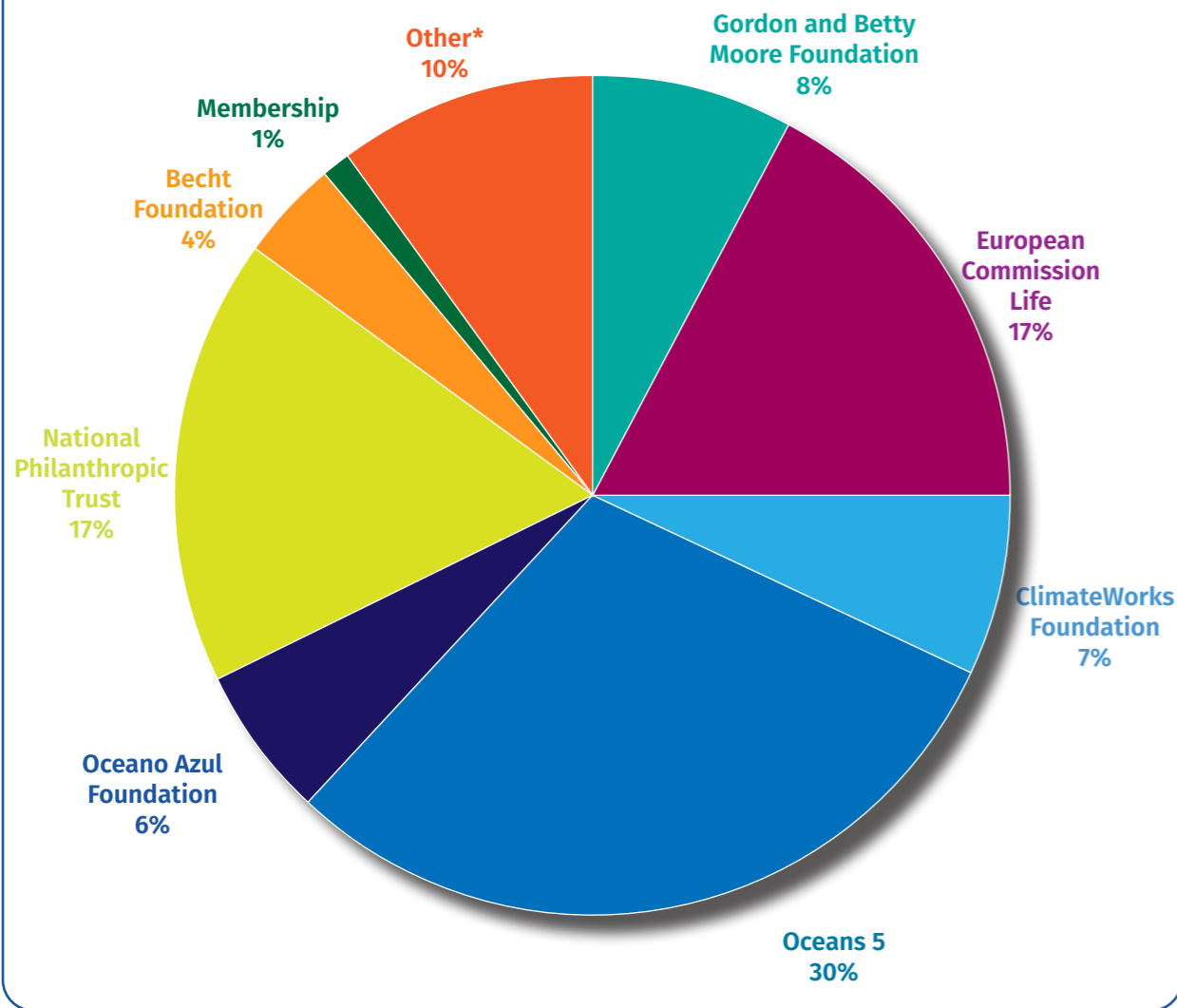
**Marc-Phillip Buckhout** - Marine Policy Officer  
**Sarah Thomas** - Fisheries intern  
**Kimon Niarchos** - Marine Litter intern  
**Sophie Aarts** - Communications intern  
**for their work at SAR in 2022**

# FINANCIAL REPORTING

TOTAL ANNUAL INCOME 2018 - 2022

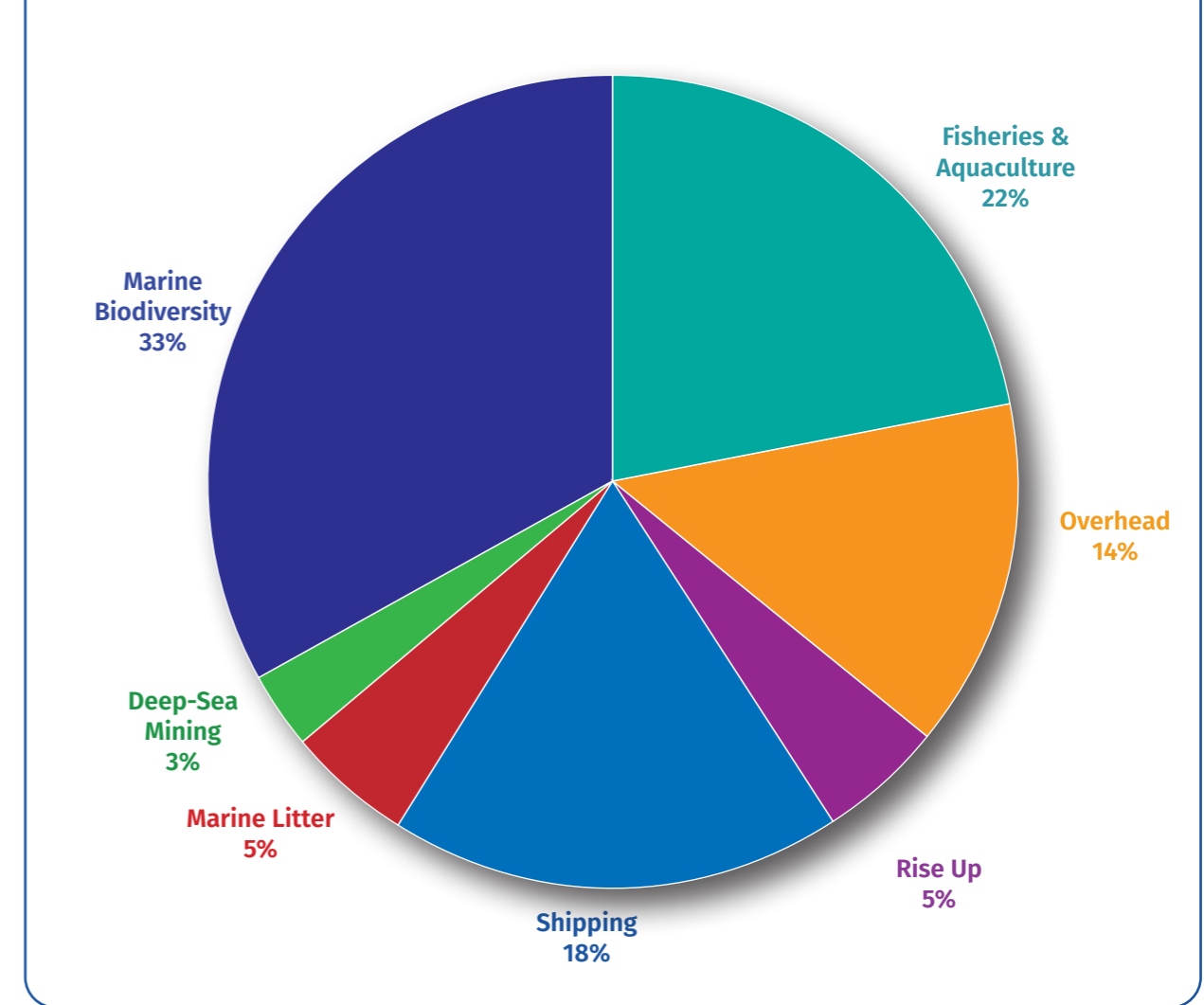


TOTAL 2022 INCOME



Total Income.: € 3,302,316.51

TOTAL 2022 EXPENDITURE



Total exp.: € 3,136,969.86  
Total reserves end 2022: €384,693

FIND  
AND FOLLOW US



**Seas At Risk**  
**Rue de la Charite 22**  
**1210 Brussels**  
**[www.seas-at-risk.org](http://www.seas-at-risk.org)**  
**+32 (0)2 329 01 18**



Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or LIFE programme. Neither the European Union nor the granting authorities can be held responsible for them.