



BLUE MARINE
FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT TO AFFINITY PRIVATE WEALTH

BLUE MARINE FOUNDATION

November 2023

Annual report to Affinity Private Wealth

November 2023

Blue Marine Foundation is working in Jersey to secure a marine park closed entirely to bottom-towed fishing (trawling and dredging). In September 2023, the Government of Jersey announced, for the first time, their ambition to deliver this, through the development of a Marine Spatial Plan.

Blue Marine's work, supported by Affinity Private Wealth, has contributed to this huge conservation win, and will continue to feed into the Marine Spatial Plan. If successful, the marine park will afford high levels of protection to over 30 per cent of Jersey's waters, with some areas fully protected – setting a conservation precedent for Northern Europe.

Blue Marine would like to thank Affinity Private Wealth for your incredible support over the last year. It is thanks to your funding that we are able to celebrate our achievements and progress detailed in this report.

Background

With one of the largest tidal ranges in the world, Jersey's marine environment hosts an astonishing diversity of habitats. The Minquiers and other offshore reefs harbour rocks and kelp containing rare pink sea fans, sunset cup corals, ormers and marbled electric rays. Seagrass beds provide nurseries for cuttlefish and bream and sandy gravels are important spawning grounds for finfish. Jersey also provides sanctuary for larger mega-fauna and is home to a pod of over 350 resident Bottlenose dolphins. This is one of the largest pods in Europe and they are often seen from beaches, cliffs and when out on the water. Jersey's offshore reefs provide a rich source for sharks to feed on with Porbeagles and Blue sharks recorded as visitors.

Many of these marine habitats such as maerl and seagrass also act as 'blue carbon' stores, sequestering carbon and helping to fight climate change. As well as trapping

carbon in their biomass, these habitats also store carbon in the sediment, increasing their carbon value. However, bottom-towed mobile fishing gear disturbs these sediments and can release stored carbon. A report released in 2021 by Enric Sala, demonstrated that the carbon footprint of bottom-towed mobile gear is much higher than previously thought. Initial assessments indicate that current annual carbon sequestration rates in Jersey's territorial waters roughly match the emissions of the entire Jersey business sector. Such figures highlight the important role of the marine environment around Jersey in achieving carbon neutrality.

Despite the clear value of Jersey's waters only six and a half per cent of it is currently protected. There is an urgent need to increase the level of protection in Jersey's waters for the benefit of biodiversity, carbon stores and the people who live there.



Blue Marine's work

In 2017, with Blue Marine's support and encouragement, Jersey established two large Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) (15km² and 47.5km²) within its territorial waters covering the offshore reefs of Les Ecréhous and Les Minquiers. The protection afforded includes a ban on mobile fishing gear (trawling and dredging) to protect high value habitats, adding to the existing coastal MPA, covering a total of 6.5 percent of territorial waters. To support this work, Blue Marine has been delivering and assisting research alongside partners on-island and UK academic institutions to assess the benefits of Jersey's existing MPAs. This evidence has formed the base of a proposal for a well-managed MPA in the form of a Marine Park, closed to bottom-towed fishing gear, to cover over 30 per cent of Jersey's territorial waters.

For the Bridging Island Plan vote in March 2022, Blue Marine fought hard to include the Marine Park proposal into this planning document. While the proposal was not voted through due to concerns around difficulties in international politics and a belief that a Marine Park does not belong in a planning document, the States of Jersey instead committed to develop a network of MPAs as part of its marine spatial plan (MSP), which is due to be released before 2025. With the carbon neutral roadmap bringing forward the MSPs timeline to the end of 2023, and after more than a year of further campaigning, research and engagement with key stakeholders, the Government of Jersey finally announced its ambitions to adopt the Marine Park proposal and protect 30 percent of Jersey's marine environment within the upcoming MSP.

Affinity Private Wealth's support - *Championing low-impact fisheries*

To ensure fishing communities can continue to operate, thrive and co-exist alongside marine conservation, such as the Government's Marine Park ambition, Blue Marine is applying its model of fishery co-management developed in Lyme Bay. This model proves that by using low-impact methods, fishermen's livelihoods can improve while marine biodiversity thrives. In Jersey, we are supporting research with fishermen to inform local fisheries management plans through the completion of studies (such as monitoring local lobster, crab and scallop stocks) to determine the next steps in safeguarding the future of these commercially important species. Such work aims to empower local fishermen to lead the management of their fisheries in line with conservation goals.

Ahead of Affinity Private Wealth's support, Blue Marine has developed two initiatives to support low-impact fisheries. Jersey Hand Dived (JHD) showcases local scallops caught using sustainable methods by local divers. Jersea Fish of The Month raises awareness around the seasonality and sustainability of local seafood, resulting in consumers making more informed decisions. From November 2022 to November 2023, Affinity Private Wealth kindly supported both of our low-impact fishery initiatives (Jersea and Jersey Hand Dived) as well as local scallop research to help inform management and support further marine protection.

Seafood initiatives

Jersea

Over the year, Jersea saw the development of a website, complete with fish of the month information across an entire year accompanied with instructional cooking videos. An interactive fish map was also produced helping users to locate fresh local seafood. Although a number of materials were successfully developed, this initiative seemed to gain less traction compared to JHD. We believe that the sole focus on one species proved to be most successful. Therefore, the project team redirected their focus to the more specific initiative. To date, Jersea has 450 followers on Instagram and a total of 34,585 Instagram reel views.

Jersey Hand Dived

JHD has shown steady growth and interest within the local community. Further engagement with local scallop divers has resulted in eight out of approximately 10 local scallop divers signed up to the scheme, each provided with their own permit number. Additionally, two out of four local merchants are also signed up to the initiative and 14 out of the 27 eateries which serve scallops on their menu have signed up to the scheme. Social media presence has remained strong, with nearly 600 followers on Instagram and over 32000 views on Instagram reels.

A number of materials were created for the different people and businesses signed up to the scheme. Each commercial diver is issued with a bespoke sticker which can be utilised on packaging when sold, therefore increasing traceability. Merchants have also been



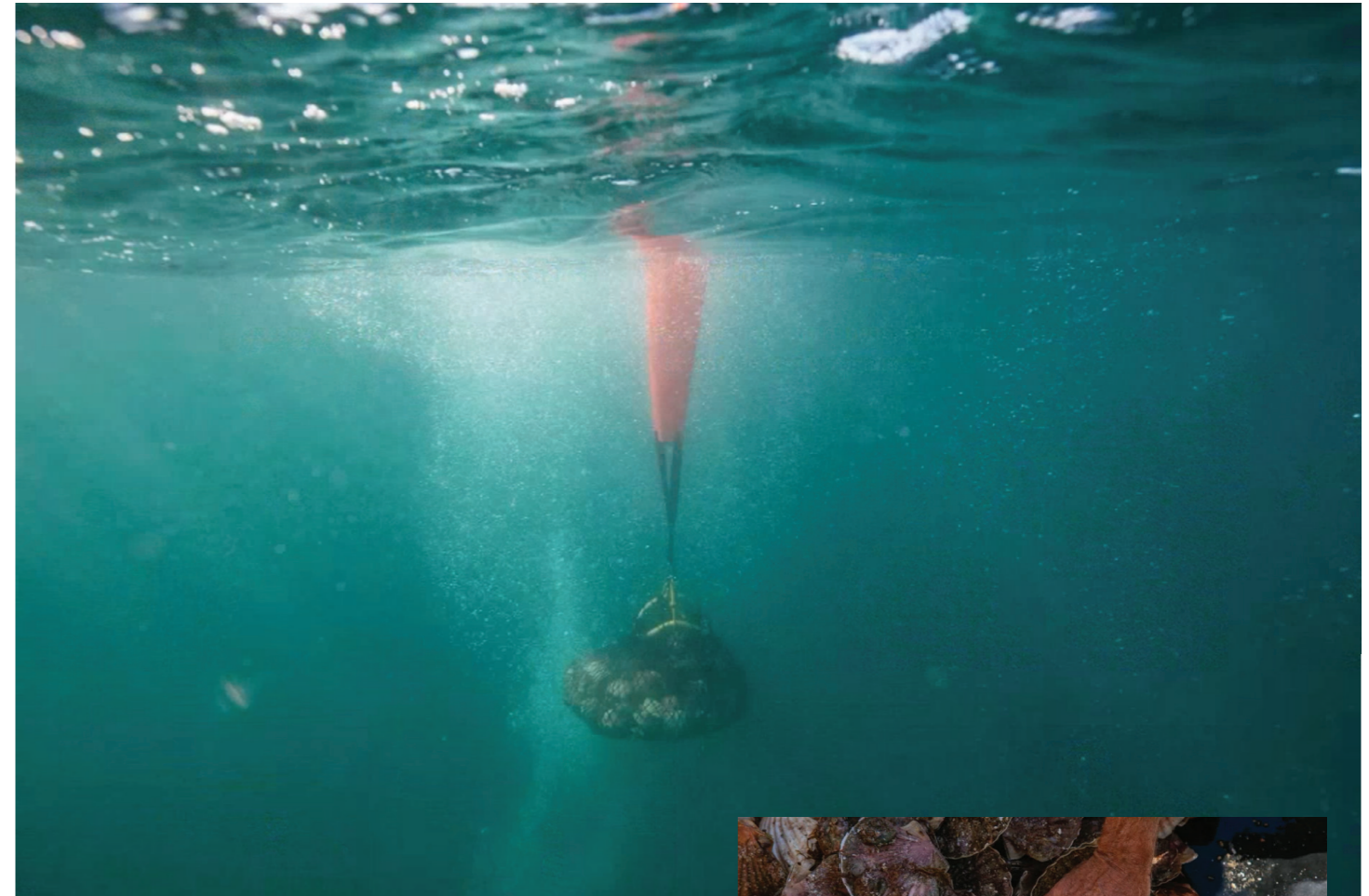


provided with these bespoke stickers, enabling them to package the product with the assigned sticker to the diver who caught the product. Window stickers have also been provided to showcase their support for the initiative. Eateries have showcased the JHD logo on their menus, as well as distributing JHD business cards in further support of the scheme.

The brand has also enabled for the development of a local hand dived scallop processing unit. A local scallop diver who is part of the scheme came to Blue Marine for aid in developing a business model which can utilise the existing JHD branding. The project team develop this business model in collaboration with the scallop diver, facilitated meetings with the Ports of Jersey and ultimately secured a location for the business to operate out of. Products moving through this unit will be labelled with the JHD branding, therefore increasing on island exposure of the brand as well as exposure in the UK and France due to export market this business now has access to

Fisher-led scallop research

Scallops are a key species for the Jersey fishery. They are the fourth most valuable (in terms of annual landings) caught by fishermen, coming after whelks, lobster and crab. This research aimed to assess scallop populations between areas protected from dredging and areas which experience dredging. Working with a local scallop diver, seven locations around Jersey were assessed, with four 30 meter transects at each location. This provided a comprehensive pool of data suitable to draw reliable and representative conclusions. Overall, results showed that scallop populations were significantly more abundant in protected areas. Additionally, protected areas showed to have significantly higher proportions of large scallops. This data and findings have been submitted to the government of Jersey and have successfully shown the benefits protected areas can have on scallop populations. This data will ultimately be imperative in strengthening the evidence base for more marine protection in Jersey as well as appropriate fishery management for scallops.



Low-impact fisheries:

Blue Marine will continue to develop Jersey Hand Dived, to further increase local awareness of this low-impact fishery. The assets developed within Jersea will aim to be transferred into a wider Marine Park brand, of which Jersey Hand Dived will also fall under along with other local, marine related initiatives and activities such as research and events.

Due to the unforeseen weather conditions over the last year, Blue Marine aim to repeat the scallop dive surveys between March and May 2024, helping to expand the data base and gain a better understanding of scallop patterns throughout the year.

Education and engagement:

Blue Marine have now successfully launched two snorkel trails, both supplemented with a comprehensive education outreach programme, which provided the opportunity to 600 local schoolchildren between the ages of nine and eleven

to physically immerse themselves in Jersey rich, emerald waters. The project team aim to continue this programme for another two years while further expanding it by creating another snorkel trail and by working with local partners to develop handicap friendly snorkelling practices.

Marine Protection:

The Marine Spatial Plan is due for release in October 2023. Blue Marine will continue to campaign for this to include 30 per cent marine protection. Once finalised by the Jersey Government, the project team will be ready to assist in the deliverance of any MPAs recommended by the plan and hold the Government accountable to their own recommendations.



T
H
A
N
K

Y
O
U



www.blumarinefoundation.com



BLUE MARINE
FOUNDATION