

2025

Activity report



BLUESEEDS

Marine and coastal ecosystems around the world are being depleted by human pressures and climate change. Coastal communities are increasingly vulnerable as their territories degrade and the resources they draw from seas and oceans become scarcer. These upheavals are compounded by a lack of funding, and by the poor allocation of existing conservation finance. Many organisations working to deliver positive impact at local level remain under-resourced or chronically underfunded.

At BlueSeeds, we are driven by a clear conviction: conservation finance needs a new approach: one that can act as a catalyst for socio-environmental equity and enable marine and coastal ecosystems to thrive. Drawing on a wide network of contacts and partners across the Mediterranean and West Africa, we bring three distinctive approaches to the marine conservation sector: we help conservation actors take ownership of how their activities are financed; we channel funding towards the field, where it can have the greatest impact; and we embed the principles of strategic financial management within conservation organisations, particularly through training.



BlueSeeds designs and co-develops innovative conservation finance solutions with marine protected area managers and coastal communities.

Foreword

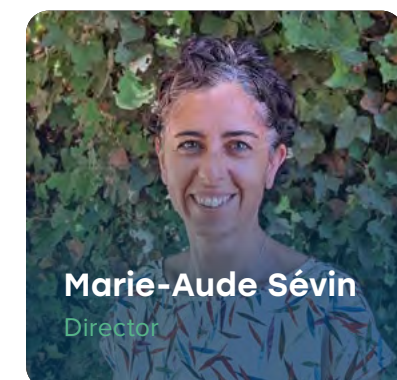
For BlueSeeds, 2025 was a year of contrasts and of renewed commitment. It brought moments of hope, but also persistent challenges for marine conservation. More than ever, it highlighted the vital importance of collective engagement and scientific rigour in the face of global environmental challenges.

We were delighted to reconnect with friends and partners at the United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice in summer 2025. It was an important opportunity to exchange ideas, strengthen our ties and speak together for the ocean. Such moments are essential to spur action and collaboration. On the international stage, significant progress towards the ratification of the BBNJ Agreement offered an encouraging outlook for the protection of the high seas, reminding us that ocean governance is a cornerstone of conservation.

Yet this positive momentum should not obscure less favourable signals, such as Europe's retreat on the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive in 2025. This setback raises questions about how effectively companies are taking environmental and social impacts into account. It strengthens our determination to act.

In the face of these complex realities, BlueSeeds is staying the course, true to its mission of working as closely as possible with the people and organisations acting in their own territories. Our work in 2025 shows that effective conservation depends on an inclusive approach, where equity and transparency guide our financing models.

As you read this report, you will discover an organisation firmly committed to turning challenges into opportunities, building bridges between science and local action, and making conservation finance a powerful lever for the more modest actors: those who live from and protect their territories.



11 team members
working together
at BlueSeeds

13 countries covered
by our projects,
across several regions

11 projects carried out
by the BlueSeeds team

80 participants
joined our UNOC side event,
organised by the Together for the
Med partnership through BlueSeeds
and MedSea Alliance, on the urgent
need to achieve the 30x30 target in
the Mediterranean.

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**Financing the transition
towards sustainable
fisheries**

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**Unlocking the value
of blue carbon
ecosystems**

€319 million
estimated financing
gap for Posidonia in
the Mediterranean

in a study for the WWF
Mediterranean Marine Initiative.

**BlueSeeds
in 2025**

**3 scientific
missions**
in Guinea-Bissau

**+ 939 vegetation
samplings**
carried out in the mangroves

+ 190 soil samples
analysed in the laboratory
to measure and certify the carbon sequestered by
the mangroves of the Cacheu region, so that the
credits generated can benefit local communities

**216 small-scale fishers
interested**

in BlueMove and took part in
our information meetings

47 fishers supported
through technical assistance to submit
applications to the EMFAF

€1,147,139
in EU funding requested to finance
sustainable fisheries projects

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**Contributing to
conservation by and
for communities**

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Our Scientific Lead, Timothée Cook, carrying out surveys in the mangroves of Guinea-Bissau. In total, 939 surveys were conducted in May along eight transects across the territories of three communities in the Cacheu region, including measurements of mangrove tree diameter and height, as well as species identification.

Blue carbon ecosystems

Blue carbon ecosystems (mangroves, salt marshes and seagrass meadows) play a leading role in climate balance, ecological resilience and socio-economic stability. Yet their potential remains largely undervalued in public policy. While forests and agriculture benefit from structured certification frameworks, blue carbon still sits at the margins of national and European climate strategies, hampered by a lack of harmonised methodologies and robust baseline data.

In response to this methodological and policy gap, BlueSeeds takes a comprehensive approach: generating high-quality data, helping to shape credible standards, and fully integrating these ecosystems into conservation finance mechanisms. Our objective goes further still: to ensure that revenues generated from blue carbon are reinvested for the benefit of the coastal communities that directly depend on these ecosystems. From Guinea-Bissau to the Mediterranean, we are developing Tier 3 methodologies based on *in situ* measurements, combined with satellite tools thanks to the support of NASA, the European Space Agency and scientific partners. Our ambition is to ensure that blue carbon is recognised, measured and financed in line with its role for the climate, biodiversity and the resilience of coastal territories.

The first blue carbon mangrove restoration project in Guinea-Bissau

In West Africa, mangroves are among the most carbon-rich ecosystems and play a central role in the resilience of coastal territories. In Guinea-Bissau, they are in sharp decline as a result of agricultural conversion, pressure on natural resources and a lack of dedicated funding for restoration. Scientific documentation on the carbon stored by these mangroves remains limited in the country, particularly when it comes to soil carbon, which nevertheless accounts for the largest share of blue carbon. This gap hinders the development of credible carbon projects capable of demonstrating their additionality and their real long-term impact. It is in this context that the West African Mangrove



In October, BlueSeeds and the ODZH team carried out 40 soil cores, collecting 190 soil samples along the transects where mangroves had been measured a few months earlier.

Carbon Initiative (WAM) is being deployed in Guinea-Bissau as the country's first blue carbon restoration project. Designed as a reference pilot site, it aims to generate robust data and lay the foundations for similar future initiatives across West Africa.

An initiative built on strong partnerships

WAM was designed by BlueSeeds in partnership with IUCN, with the ambition of structuring robust, ethical and replicable blue carbon initiatives. It aims to support coastal communities in the development of a carbon project grounded in rigorous science, capable of generating measurable climate benefits while contributing to local development. In Guinea-Bissau, operational implementation is led by BlueSeeds with the local NGO ODZH, ensuring strong local anchoring, the gradual strengthening



Partnership

Close collaboration with NASA

Since 2024, the partnership between BlueSeeds and NASA has strengthened the scientific robustness of the WAM initiative by combining in situ measurements with satellite data. This collaboration addresses a key challenge for carbon projects: reducing the risk of overestimating climate benefits as a result of inappropriate use of satellite data. NASA data, including the new global mangrove height map at 12-metre resolution derived from the TanDEM-X satellite, informed the selection of our field transect locations in order to reflect landscape variability. Measurements carried out in the Cacheu region were then extrapolated using NDVI analyses from Sentinel-2, making it possible to identify landscape stratification in the distribution of above-ground carbon stocks. This integrated approach reduces financial and reputational risks and provides a reliable framework for replicating the initiative.

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of local actors' capacities, and ongoing dialogue with communities.

Our activities build on the conservation work carried out by the Institute for Biodiversity and Protected Areas (IBAP). Our work generates data that remain scarce in the country, which we share with key national institutions and which are essential to inform environmental strategies.

In the long term, WAM plans to reinvest revenues from carbon credits to support local priorities (water, education, health and food security), embedding restoration within a long-term approach to empowerment.

Expansion prospects are already under way: we will replicate WAM in other countries in the region through the EU-funded, multi-partner WASOP project. In parallel, the RACINE project, submitted to the FFEM, aims to establish a blue-green continuum in Guinea-Bissau by combining mangrove



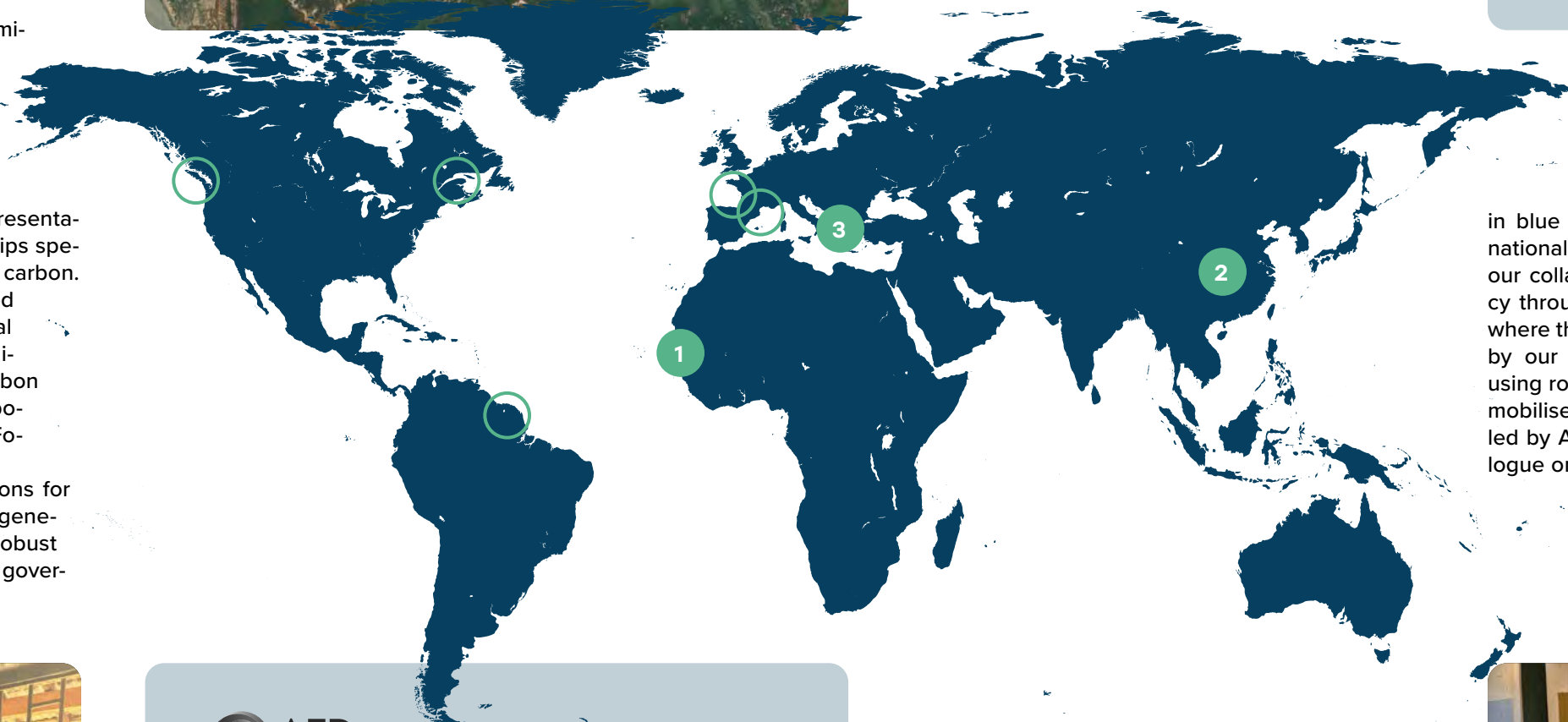
restoration with the development of sustainable agroforestry practices, to strengthen carbon sequestration, food security and territorial resilience.

A carbon methodology built in the field

At the heart of WAM lies a strong methodological requirement: to produce local data tailored to Guinea-Bissau's mangroves, while avoiding the pitfalls of generic models often used in carbon projects. Under the leadership of our Scientific Officer, Timothée Cook, and our Blue Carbon Project Officer, Maricruz Calvo, we are developing a Tier 3 methodology to measure mangrove carbon, based on *in situ* measurements, to ensure consistency between the data collected, modelling work and expected carbon sequestration outcomes. Their March 2025 mission marked a first milestone: testing the protocol, consolidating the partnership with ODZH, engaging with communities, and initiating work on the future governance of the project. In May 2025, the initiative entered its operational phase: nearly one thousand trees were measured along representative transects to build allometric relationships specific to the territory and estimate biomass carbon. In October 2025, a third mission completed this work through soil coring, an essential step to measure the carbon stored in sediments and establish a comprehensive carbon balance. These data are analysed in a laboratory of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Bissau. In 2025, WAM therefore laid the foundations for a reliable approach: the ambition is to generate high-quality credits, underpinned by robust science, a transparent methodology and a gover-



nance model that enables benefits to be reinvested for local communities. Faced with declining mangroves, WAM has chosen rigour and a long-term perspective. The same level of ambition guides our work on other major blue carbon ecosystems, foremost among them Posidonia in the Mediterranean.



Consulting and studies
Blue carbon monitoring tools with ESA

The ESA Coastal Blue Carbon project aims to develop tools to map, monitor and estimate the carbon stored in coastal ecosystems (mangroves, intertidal marshes and seagrass meadows) across five regions of the world. BlueSeeds contributes political and economic expertise and brings together potential users of these tools.

Growing expertise in remote sensing

The expertise BlueSeeds has developed in blue carbon projects is now recognised internationally. Our Tier 3 standard is also reflected in our collaboration with the European Space Agency through the ESA Coastal Blue Carbon project, where the mapping and modelling tools developed by our consortium are calibrated and validated using robust field data. Our expertise is also being mobilised in a France-China cooperation project led by AFD, in which we are contributing to a dialogue on Chinese technical standards for blue carbon accounting and monitoring, drawing on European state-of-the-art knowledge in remote sensing and certification.



Once packaged in the field, the soil samples were sent to a laboratory in Bissau, where they were dried, weighed and analysed for carbon stock by the teams of our local partner ODZH.



Consulting and studies
State of the art of blue carbon certification in China

As part of a Franco-Chinese cooperation project, BlueSeeds provided European blue carbon expertise to the Chinese agencies responsible for natural resources. This included a state of the art review of certification methodologies, coastal ecosystem restoration case studies and remote sensing tools, with the aim of strengthening the robustness, operational relevance and recognition of Chinese standards.



WAM supports coastal communities in developing a carbon project grounded in rigorous science, generating climate benefits while contributing to local development.



The ESA Coastal Blue Carbon project consortium met in Bordeaux in March for a Mid-Term Review attended by the European Space Agency, mangrove specialist J. Boone Kauffman, Agglo La Rochelle urban area and the Bassin d'Arcachon Marine Nature Park, to discuss our methodology for designing blue carbon ecosystem monitoring tools.



Structuring financing mechanisms for Posidonia

Since its pioneering study *Carbon Stored and Carbon Lost* (Ruiz-Iglesias *et al.*, 2022), BlueSeeds has been recognised as a leading reference in blue carbon finance for *Posidonia oceanica* seagrass meadows. Carbon sinks and natural buffers against erosion, these meadows are declining under the pressure of anchoring, coastal development and chronic underfunding.

Within the Mediterranean Posidonia Network (MPN), BlueSeeds now plays a recognised role as an expert in finance and innovation. In 2025, BlueSeeds contributed to the development of the network's 2030 roadmap, finalised during a seminar in Tunis, which for the first time sets a clear operational course at Mediterranean level for the



Our Project Manager Your Ben Fadhel and our Director Marie-Aude Sévin during a field visit with members of the Mediterranean Posidonia Network, at the network seminar in May.

protection, restoration and financing of Posidonia. This recognition is also rooted in a major study carried out by BlueSeeds for WWF through to 2025. By analysing public and private financial flows dedicated to seagrass meadows, we identified an annual financing gap of €319 million, revealing the shortfall between ambitions and the resources mobilised. This work now feeds into strategic thinking on how to finance Posidonia conservation. Our expertise in blue carbon financing mechanisms for seagrass meadows is now informing major initiatives, including PENELOPE — *Promoting Tunisia's seagrass blue carbon ecosystems for sustainable livelihoods and a protected environment* — launched in 2026 in Tunisia alongside WWF France and North Africa and the French Office for Biodiversity (OFB) through the MPN. BlueSeeds will support the design of a blue carbon mechanism dedicated to Tunisian meadows, assistance to fishing communities,



Consulting and studies

Nature credits: a financing solution for mooring areas in the Mediterranean?

Faced with the pressure of anchoring on Posidonia, BlueSeeds conducted a study led and funded by WWF France at the Port-Cros National Park site, together with several partners. Starting from the observation that investment is available, but that resources for long-term management, maintenance and ecological monitoring remain insufficient, the study explored underused financing levers: nature credits, an emerging mechanism whose methodological, economic and regulatory frameworks are still being structured.

By analysing their feasibility and economic scenarios applied to the case of Porquerolles, our study led to concrete approaches to strengthen the effective protection of seagrass meadows and support the work of site managers on the ground.

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and dialogue with public authorities to integrate blue carbon into national climate contributions. At the same time, through our project with ESA, we have brought together early adopters in France and Spain around large-scale seagrass carbon monitoring tools. In 2025, our intern Gabriela Castaño, a student at Université Côte d'Azur, explored the relationship between seagrass meadows and coastal erosion, laying the groundwork for an economic model to estimate the beach replenishment costs avoided through their conservation. Finally, BlueSeeds strengthened its presence in scientific and policy spaces, with contributions at UNOC on blue carbon finance for MPAs, and a presentation of our work in Arcachon at the 2nd European Seagrass Restoration Workshop. Our ambition is clear: to ensure that Posidonia is recognised, measured and financed in line with its role for the climate and the Mediterranean.



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Consulting and studies

Estimating Posidonia financing needs

For WWF MMI, BlueSeeds analysed public and private financial flows dedicated to seagrass meadows. We estimated a financing gap of €319 million per year, highlighting the urgent need to structure innovative financial mechanisms to support their conservation.

© Alexis Rosenfeld



Sustainable fisheries

The transition towards sustainable fisheries depends on the ability of small-scale fishers to adapt their practices, modernise their equipment and secure their economic activities.

Yet between European ambitions, national frameworks and administrative realities, access to funding often remains complex, fragmented and poorly suited to the economic cycles and specific risks of small-scale fisheries. This mismatch slows the uptake of more selective gear, safety equipment and biodiversity-friendly investments.

True to its role as a financial catalyst, BlueSeeds acts as a bridge between the field and decision-makers. Through our financing solution BlueMove, we combine technical assistance, financial engineering and pre-financing to enable small-scale fishers to access available funding, particularly European funding, and bring their transition projects to life.

Our work aims to restore coherence between environmental objectives, budgetary instruments and local capacities. By turning barriers identified on the ground into operational proposals, we help financing frameworks evolve and place small-scale fisheries on a lasting path towards ecological and economic resilience.

Financing sustainable fisheries: from harbours to EU institutions

In Cyprus's fishing harbours, our Fund Manager, Camille Richer, listened to the stories of small-scale fishers. They know their environment better than anyone, yet struggle to finance more selective nets, safer equipment or innovations that are nonetheless encouraged by public policies. During her mission to Cyprus, Camille encountered a recurring reality: the willingness to act is there, technical solutions exist, but access to funding remains an obstacle course. It is too complex, too slow and too disconnected from the specific risks faced by small-scale fisheries. This structural divide is one of the main barriers to the transition towards sustainable fisheries.



Marios Papageorgiou, Director of the Enalia Physis Environmental Research Centre, presents the BlueMove mechanism to small-scale fishers in Ayia Napa, Cyprus.
© Enalia Physis Environmental Research Centre

A few months later, this reality from the field echoed in Brussels. During an *Implementation Dialogue on Small-Scale and Coastal Fisheries* organised by the European Commission in November, BlueSeeds spoke before the European Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans, Kóstas Kadís. Our message was clear: European schemes exist, but they do not fully work for the very people they are meant to support.

Drawing on the operational experience of our BlueMove pre-financing mechanism, our Fund Manager Camille Richer presented the barriers observed across the Mediterranean: inconsistencies between environmental objectives and funding eligibility criteria, delayed or absent calls for proposals, and a lack of visibility on national timelines... We took on the role of translator and mediator, turning situations experienced by fishers into operational messages for European decision-makers.



Financing solutions

BlueMove achievements in the Mediterranean

216
small-scale
fishers
interested

in BlueMove and took part in our information meetings

47
fishers
supported

through technical assistance to submit an EMFAF application

8 pre-financing arrangements
for fishers' sustainable projects, provided by BlueMove for a total amount of €33,577

€1,147,139

in EMFAF funding requested by fishers with support from BlueMove to finance their projects

Our support for small-scale fishers in the Mediterranean

Our BlueMove mechanism combines technical assistance, financial engineering and pre-financing to help small-scale fishers mobilise the European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF) to secure grants for their sustainable projects.

On the ground, our technical assistants support small-scale fishers at every stage: analysing needs, understanding European calls for proposals and interpreting eligibility criteria, preparing administrative documents and project applications, developing quotations for new purchases, and liaising with managing authorities. Despite the structural challenges outlined above, we were able to make progress in several Mediterranean countries.



Camille Richer, BlueMove Fund Manager, met the European Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans, Kóstas Kadís, in Brussels in November.
© Lukasz Kobus / European Union, 2025

- 1 In Croatia, BlueMove and WWF Adria supported 25 small-scale fishers. Three were able to access pre-financing totalling €16,592 through the Croatian ethical finance cooperative ZEF. In total, €951,910 in EMFAF grants are expected to be mobilised, mainly for investments in energy efficiency and decarbonisation (engines and optimisation) more selective equipment, and safety on board. The Croatian experience confirms that when calls are published and authorities cooperate, the BlueMove model can generate significant leverage.
- 2 In Cyprus, in partnership with Enalia Physis, six workshops brought together 66 participants and generated interest from 25 fishers. Eight received individual support. The needs expressed focused in particular on passive and selective gear, but the national eligibility framework limited the investments authorised. Six applications were approved for devices designed to reduce interactions with marine mammals, representing €36,396 in funding requested. Faced with banking constraints and timelines that were incompatible with the calls for proposals, BlueMove directly advanced €16,985 to four fishers in the form of repayable pre-financing. This experience also revealed systemic weaknesses: dependence on international suppliers, delivery times that can jeopardise project timelines, and banks that remain poorly adapted to the realities of small-scale fisheries.
- 3 In Portugal, WWF Portugal gathered 45 fishers within communities engaged in co-management approaches. Many were concerned about having to navigate the multiple application platforms required by the Portuguese authorities, and only 14 requested technical support from BlueMove. None chose to use pre-financing, as the interest rates proposed by the financing organisations we approached were considered too high. Although operational deployment was limited, the project helped raise awareness among Portuguese institutions of the barriers faced by fishers: around ten dedicated support desks are expected to be opened to assist grant applications.



BlueMove combines technical assistance, financial engineering and pre-financing to help fishers secure grants for their sustainable fisheries projects.

Our Project Officer Alvise Ca'Zorzi met with the Mulheres da Ria association on Culatra Island, Portugal, to assess the needs of local small-scale fishers.



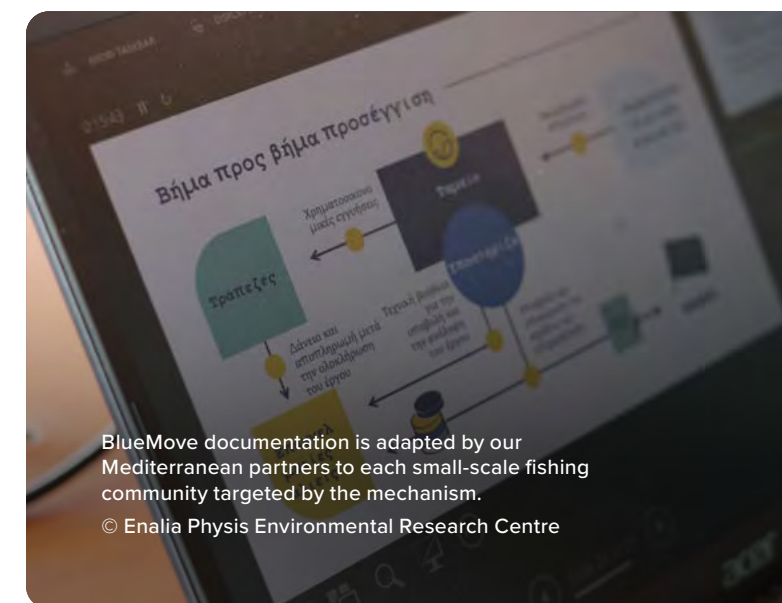
Consulting and studies

Making the impact of European funds visible

For FAMENET, BlueSeeds analysed how the European EMFF and EMFAF funds contribute to marine protection. A methodological framework was developed, linking EU policies, environmental objectives and funded actions, in order to strengthen the readability and coherence of EU interventions.

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- 4 In Greece, despite in-depth work with WWF Greece and several coordination meetings, no funding could be triggered in 2025. The Greek calls under the 2021–2027 EMFAF funding cycle dedicated to small-scale fish-



BlueMove documentation is adapted by our Mediterranean partners to each small-scale fishing community targeted by the mechanism.

© Enalia Physis Environmental Research Centre



ries had still not been published, despite repeated announcements. Meetings with fishers nevertheless made it possible to identify needs, prepare pre-financing scenarios (through microfinance or direct advances) and initiate dialogue with potential financial partners in 2025. These experiences with European fishing communities show that the challenge is not only financial. It lies at the intersection of European regulation, national implementation, fishers' administrative capacity and access to suitable financial products. Both successes and barriers are feeding into the evolution of the BlueMove model: we are simplifying tools, diversifying financial partners able to lend to fishers, and advocating for greater coherence between environmental objectives and the budgetary instruments available to fishers.



Information meeting with small-scale fishers in Larnaca, Cyprus
© Enalia Physis

Towards the deployment of BlueMove in Africa

Building on these lessons, BlueSeeds is preparing the development of an impact fund for Tunisia and Senegal. Developed with the support of the Conservation Finance Alliance Incubator, this new mechanism aims to adapt the model to the realities of coastal communities in these countries. It will combine technical assistance, loans and alignment with the priorities of local marine protected areas. The objective is clear: to make sustainable fisheries a driver of community-based conservation and economic resilience, in contexts where access to formal finance remains limited. In 2026, we will actively seek financial partners to launch the pilot phases and demonstrate the feasibility of this model at scale.



Financing solutions

Towards the resilience of Tunisian and Senegalese coastal communities

In 2025, the CFA Incubator helped BlueSeeds conceptualise a BlueMove fund adapted to the African context, dedicated to the resilience of coastal communities in Tunisia and Senegal. The fund will target small-scale fishers and the fisheries value chain, particularly in Tunisian ports, where needs include safety, equipment and working capital; as well as women-led cooperatives, including shellfish farmers in Senegal's *bolongs*, who require equipment, improvements to the cold chain and short-term finance. The mechanism will be based on loans with interest rates adjusted according to beneficiaries' repayment capacity and environmental performance, assessed by local MPAs. In 2026, BlueSeeds will continue seeking financial partners to launch the fund's pilot phases.

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The challenge is not only financial. It lies at the intersection of regulation, national implementation, fishers' administrative capacity and access to suitable financial products.



Our Project Manager Yousr Ben Fadhel met with small-scale fisheries stakeholders in the Ghar El Melh lagoon, Tunisia, in February.



Community-based conservation

Marine conservation can be neither effective nor lasting without the people who live in direct contact with ecosystems. Fishers, marine protected area managers, local NGOs, local authorities and economic actors are the first guardians of coastal territories' resilience. Yet these actors often remain dependent on short-term, fragmented funding that is insufficiently aligned with local realities.

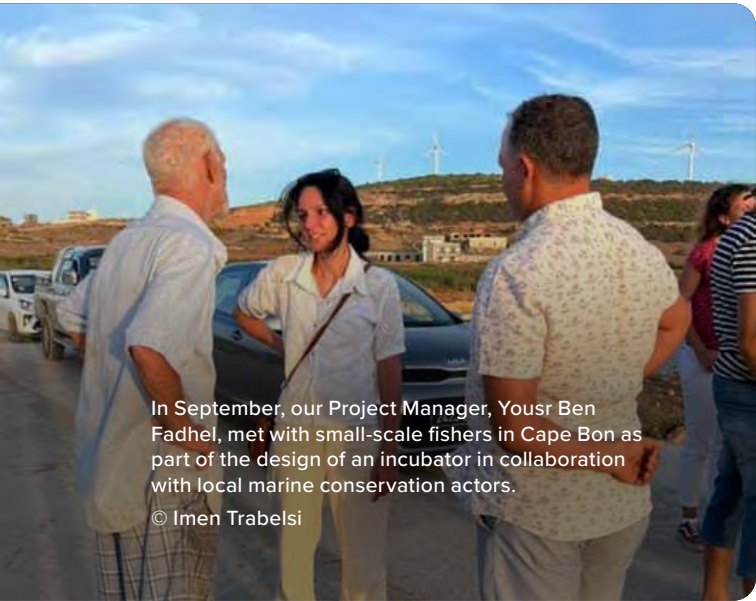
BlueSeeds develops a community-based conservation approach grounded in the technical and economic empowerment of field actors, the structuring of multi-stakeholder alliances, and the creation of sustainable financial mechanisms. Blue business incubators, dedicated funds, multi-year financial pathways for marine protected areas: we design mechanisms that secure long-term management and strengthen local governance.

We turn community-rooted initiatives into structuring projects capable of influencing public policy by connecting local expertise with regional dynamics. Our conviction remains unchanged: when finance is directed towards the field and local capacities are strengthened, conservation becomes a shared project, economically viable and collectively governed.

BlueSeeds’ objective is to strengthen the resilience of conservation, sustainable fisheries and blue entrepreneurship activities, so that they can continue beyond funding cycles.

An integrated approach to community-based conservation

Today, this approach is taking shape in Tunisia, in the Cape Bon region. In El Haouaria, BlueSeeds is supporting the deployment of a Blue Business Incubator (BBI) developed in close partnership with the *Association pour la Sauvegarde du Patrimoine Écologique et Naturel du Cap Bon* (ASPEN), co-manager of the Zembra and Zembretta Marine Protected Area, and designed with and for local small-scale fishing communities.



In September, our Project Manager, Yousr Ben Fadhel, met with small-scale fishers in Cape Bon as part of the design of an incubator in collaboration with local marine conservation actors.
© Imen Trabelsi

The area faces major challenges, some of which were observed by our Project Manager, Yousr Ben Fadhel, during a field visit in September: pressure on fishery resources around Zembra and Zembretta, significant price gaps along the value chain, fishers’ dependence on intermediaries, limited storage and processing capacity, and the strong seasonality of tourism. In some landing sites, the lack of infrastructure (ice, cold storage, developed harbour facilities) directly weakens the income of small-scale fishers. The BBI aims to support fishers and their families in creating blue microbusinesses: local processing (sardines in tomato sauce or olive oil, the valorisation of invasive species), short supply chains, off-season nature-based tourism, and land-sea synergies. Funded by Expertise France, the incubator builds on a socio-economic study conducted in



Consulting and studies
A conservation trust fund in the Solomon Islands

As part of a programme led by the Asian Development Bank to develop climate risk financing solutions for coastal ecosystems, BlueSeeds has been supporting the Arnavon Community Marine Park (ACMP) in the Solomon Islands since 2023. Following a field mission and the exploration of trust fund options to finance the park’s conservation activities in 2024, we structured a 15-year financial pathway through a business plan aligned with ecological and community priorities. BlueSeeds also supported the optimisation of the park’s accounting systems to strengthen transparency and financial management. Two years of stakeholder consultations led to the validation of a dedicated sub-fund, hosted by the Coral Triangle Conservation Fund, to provide more stable financing for reef protection.

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2024 with more than 200 fishers and women from fishing households. The study highlighted the need for income diversification, collective structuring and market access. Discussions were also initiated with Iberostar Group to encourage the integration of small-scale fisheries products into hotels.

A structuring project to support Tunisian fishers

As part of the BlueMissionMed project under the European Union’s Restore our Ocean and Waters Mission, BlueSeeds, ASPEN, Iberostar and Tune-Sea received technical assistance to confirm the pre-feasibility of the BBI. This support made it possible to analyse the regulatory framework, map the fisheries-tourism-agriculture value chains, and define socio-economic and environmental indicators.

ASPEN, our partner in the incubator project for small-scale fisheries actors in Cape Bon, is behind many initiatives in Tunisian harbours, including waste collection.



BlueSeeds provided strategic and methodological support to ASPEN, led by our Project Manager, Yousr Ben Fadhel.

The issues we are addressing extend well beyond Cape Bon. A field mission conducted by BlueSeeds in February to Boughrara, Djerba, Gabès, Ghan-nouch, Ghar El Melh, Kerkennah, Monastir and Sfax revealed similar challenges. The arrival of the blue crab, an invasive species first observed in the Gulf of Gabès in 2014, has profoundly transformed the fisheries economy. While it now represents up to 80% of catches in some areas and has generated a job-creating sector (particularly for women in processing plants), added value remains unevenly distributed and dependence on exports exposes fishers to market fluctuations. Traps, which are more effective than the nets used initially, have helped improve selectivity, but now raise the issue of plastic pollution.

BlueSeeds documented these dynamics, met with fishers' groups and women's cooperatives, analysed public schemes (subsidies, quotas and biological rest periods) and identified levers for improvement: local recovery of waste, improved cold storage infrastructure, and collective structuring to access quotas and markets. To bring these issues to a regional scale, BlueSeeds and the members of the Together for the Med partnership submitted an Interreg NEXT Med project in 2025, aimed at coordinating a sustainable response to the spread of blue crab by combining research, innovation and support to communities.



Tunisia's Mediterranean coast, particularly around El Haouaria, has significant potential for the development of sustainable economic activities, such as ecotourism and the responsible enhancement of natural heritage.



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Consulting and studies

From European support to local action in Cape Bon

As part of the technical assistance obtained under the EU Mission “Restore our Ocean and Waters”, the ESTeM project led by ASPEN (including an incubator component developed with BlueSeeds) received structuring support. This enabled us to study the feasibility of the incubator.

From the field to regional and international dynamics

BlueSeeds’ ability to connect local expertise with regional strategies led to its integration into the Pelagos Consortium, a multi-partner, cross-border initiative dedicated to the protection of cetaceans in the Pelagos Sanctuary, shared by France, Italy and Monaco. Structured around four pillars (Public Policy and Advocacy, Multi-stakeholder Engagement, Communication, and Research and Innovation), the project aims in particular to secure the adoption of speed limits within the sanctuary, reduce underwater noise, designate highly protected areas, and integrate



The Blue Business Incubator aims to support Tunisian small-scale fishers and their families in creating blue microbusinesses.



Our Project Manager, Yousr Ben Fadhel, during a working session with the ESTeM project team and the technical assistance experts supported by the European Union, in Tunisia.



marine spatial planning measures. BlueSeeds, alongside Cerema and Green Marine Europe and with support from the Portofino and Port-Cros MPAs, will facilitate communities of practice bringing together shipowners, ports, maritime authorities and MPA managers under the Multi-stakeholder Engagement pillar. The objective is to co-develop operational solutions, encourage the adoption of good practices (including speed reduction and environmental certification) and prepare their integration into lasting regulatory frameworks. BlueSeeds is also leading the exploration of innovative financing mechanisms to secure the long-term sustainability of conservation actions. Finally, we sustained this collective momentum beyond individual projects. At UNOC, BlueSeeds and its partners mobilised more than 70 Mediter-



Marie-Aude Sévin, Director of BlueSeeds, at the signing of the Pelagos Consortium project during UNOC3 in Nice, France.



Training

Training MSc MARRES students at Université Côte d'Azur

In September, BlueSeeds delivered a five-day training course for first-year students of the MSc MARRES (Science, Conservation & Valorisation of Marine Resources) at Université Côte d'Azur, dedicated to the effectiveness of marine protected areas and marine conservation.

Led by our Scientific Officer, Timothée Cook, and our Project Manager, Guillaume Le Port, the sessions addressed multi-stakeholder governance, local community involvement, strategic planning and long-term economic viability. Through case studies, group work and role-playing exercises, students analysed real-life contexts, identified levers for stakeholder buy-in and explored different financing mechanisms. This comprehensive approach aims to train future blue managers to steer inclusive, effective MPAs that are firmly rooted in their territories.

4



BlueSeeds starts from realities on the ground to build structuring projects that sustainably strengthen marine conservation.

anean organisations and contributed to the signing of the *One Ocean, One Future* declaration, calling for stronger collective action to achieve the 30x30 targets. Within the BiodivEarth Community of Practice, the BiodivEarth Foundation entrusted BlueSeeds with a finance expert role in this collective project to develop standards for the resilience of socio-ecological management models. From structuring a fishers' group in Kerkennah to facilitating a community of shipowners in the Mediterranean, BlueSeeds follows the same guiding thread: making conservation a shared, economically viable and collectively governed project, so that the protection of ecosystems becomes a driver of sustainable development for coastal territories.



Our Network Coordinator, Margaux Janin, met with small-scale fisheries stakeholders in Ghannouch, Tunisia, in February.

Networking

Since 2017, Together for the Med has brought together more than 50 organisations from 15 Mediterranean countries around a shared ambition: to advance effective, equitable marine conservation rooted in local realities. Coordinated by BlueSeeds and IUCN, the partnership acts as a regional platform connecting field actors, scientific research and policy advocacy, in order to turn international commitments into concrete action for the Mediterranean basin.

The partnership's activities focus on strengthening marine protected areas, improving their effectiveness, governance and financial sustainability, and reducing the impacts of fisheries on biodiversity, particularly bycatch, by promoting science-based solutions that are compatible with the livelihoods of small-scale fishers.

Representatives from IUCN, Blue Marine Foundation, Yolda Initiative, the Marilles Foundation, WWF North Africa, the Adessium Foundation, Oceans 5 and The MedFund were invited to UNOC by Together for the Med and MedSea Alliance to discuss collaboration and regional initiatives to achieve the 30x30 target.

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Bringing community voices to UNOC

In 2025, Together for the Med strengthened its international visibility at the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC). On this occasion, the partnership co-organised a high-level event with MedSea Alliance, bringing together more than 80 participants from 18 countries, including NGOs, scientists, public institutions and donors. This key moment made it possible to raise a collective voice in support of the 30x30 and 10x30 targets, while highlighting concrete initiatives implemented on the ground by NGOs and local actors, in direct engagement with coastal communities and adapted to the social, economic and ecological realities of each territory.

As part of this work, Together for the Med launched a video series designed specifically for UNOC, giving the floor to small-scale fishers and actors engaged in the management and protection of marine areas. Filmed in seven Mediterranean countries and released in several languages, these testimonies show in very practical terms how highly protected areas can deliver ecological and socio-economic benefits when they are based on credible approaches rooted in local realities. The series became a central advocacy tool, helping to renew the narratives around marine conservation in the Mediterranean.

Acting locally for strong protection in the Mediterranean

Following on from UNOC, in November the partnership launched a call for expressions of interest to provide Mediterranean MPAs on a pathway towards high protection with technical support and funding to strengthen their protection. The call is based on a structured and demanding selection process, with clear criteria: ecological relevance, operational feasibility of the proposed projects, quality of stakeholder and community engagement, and potential for medium-term impact. Particular attention was given to initiatives located in countries of the southern and eastern Mediterranean basin, as well as to projects demonstrating a credible pathway towards effective protection.



At UNOC, Together for the Med brought together more than 80 conservation actors around the urgent need to achieve the 30x30 target in the Mediterranean.



Our Network Coordinator, Margaux Janin, and our Project Manager, Yousr Ben Fadhel, during a visit to Djerba, Tunisia, to study blue crab fishing and processing, linked to an invasive species.

The selected projects will receive targeted technical support and financial assistance from 2026 onwards, to help implement priority actions. This call marks a key step in translating the partnership Together for the Med's regional ambitions into tangible results on the ground.

Throughout the year, BlueSeeds led the strategic coordination of the partnership, fostering synergies between partners, the emergence of multi-partner projects and dialogue with donors. Together, these actions confirm that Together for the Med is moving forward, with the ability to connect international advocacy, strategic selection and concrete impact for the Mediterranean.

In October, our Scientific Lead, Timothée Cook, and our Project Manager, Guillaume Le Port, delivered training on marine conservation effectiveness to MSc MARRES students at Université Côte d'Azur.



Partners

Public and intergovernmental organisations



Private organisations



Partner foundations and funders



Protected natural areas



Partner networks

NGOs and associations



Events

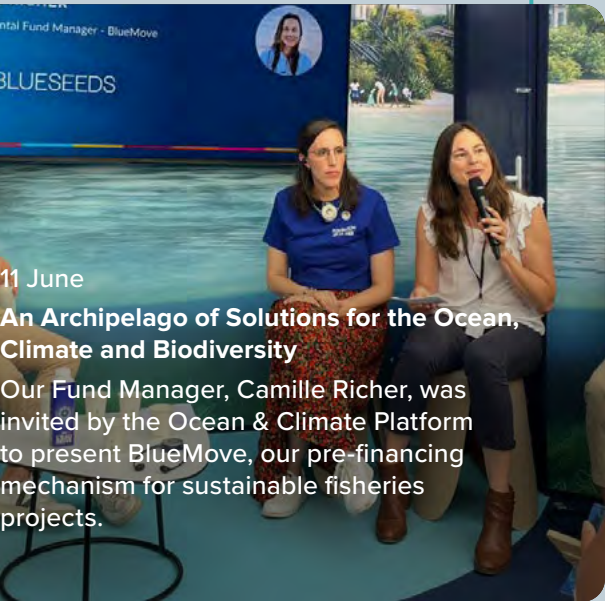
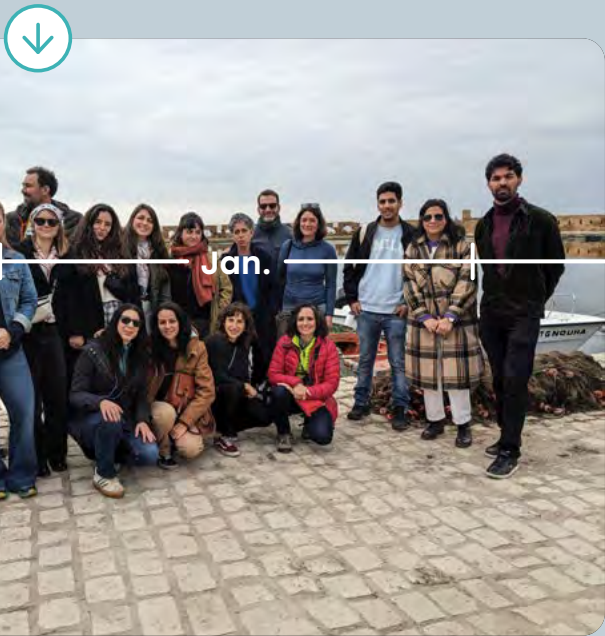
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19–21 February

Tunis, Tunisia

Together for the Med Annual Workshop

As coordinator of Together for the Med, BlueSeeds brought together the partnership’s members to define strategic priorities, strengthen synergies between local initiatives led by its members, and consolidate a roadmap.



2

3–7 March

Brussels, Belgium

European Ocean Days

Our Network Coordinator, Margaux Janin, travelled to Brussels to meet with our partners and create synergies between our work in the Mediterranean and other European sea basins.

3

8–10 April

Arcachon, France

2nd European Seagrass Restoration Workshop

BlueSeeds presented its methodology for assessing the ecological and economic value of the carbon sequestered in Posidonia through the installation of eco-moorings, finalised in 2022.

4

5–9 May

Tunis, Tunisia

Mediterranean Posidonia Network Seminar

BlueSeeds contributed to finalising the roadmap for the protection and restoration of 100% of Posidonia by 2030.

5

23 May

Online

MARRES Around the World

BlueSeeds was invited to share its experience in MPA financing during three sessions of this event, co-organised by MSc MARRES students ahead of UNOC.



6 June

Blue Carbon: Challenges and Issues in the Fight Against Climate Change

Our Project Manager, Guillaume Le Port, was invited by Surfrider Foundation Europe to present our work on financing MPAs through blue carbon credits.

8 June

Advancing the Financing Roadmap for Seagrass Blue Carbon Protection in the Mediterranean

This side event organised by WWF and the Mediterranean Posidonia Network gave Thomas Binet, founder of BlueSeeds, the opportunity to present his work on the blue carbon financing potential of Posidonia seagrass meadows in the Mediterranean.

10 June

Launch of the PENELOPE project

BlueSeeds signed this project to enhance the value of Tunisia’s blue carbon ecosystems, alongside WWF France and the French Development Agency (AFD).

10 June

Enhancing Blue Carbon Partnerships: A China-EU Collaboration for Climate Action

BlueSeeds is a partner in this project to study and improve Chinese standards for the understanding and valuation of blue carbon ecosystems.

11 June

Pelagos: An Exceptional Sanctuary, A Collective Movement

BlueSeeds signed the Pelagos Consortium project with its partners, in the presence of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation.

11 June

Working Together for Effective Marine Protected Areas: The Med as a Hope Spot for Change

Together for the Med and the MedSea Alliance network organised this side event on community-based conservation as a way to achieve the 30x30 target in the Mediterranean.



22–26 September
Gaspé, Canada

International preparatory meeting for IMPAC6

Our Scientific Officer, Timothée Cook, joined the organising committee of the 6th International Marine Protected Areas Congress, which will take place from 22 to 26 March 2027 in Dakar.



7



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© Sam Glazier

Aug.

Sept.

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Oct.

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Nov.

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Dec.



5 November
Rimini, Italy

Ecomondo 2025: Powering the Mediterranean Lighthouse

Our Project Manager, Youss Ben Fadhel, presented her role as finance and innovation expert within the Mediterranean Posidonia Network.

10



© Lukasz Kobus / Union européenne, 2025

23 September
Brussels, Belgium

Green Shipping Industry Days

Marie-Aude Sévin, Director of BlueSeeds, and the Pelagos Consortium presented the conservation objectives of the new project dedicated to the sanctuary.

8



9

30 Sept. – 2 Oct.
Menorca, Spain

BiodivEarth Community of Practice (CoP)

At the invitation of the BiodivEarth Foundation, BlueSeeds contributed conservation finance expertise to this collective workshop on developing standards for the resilience of socio-ecological management models.

24 November
Brussels, Belgium

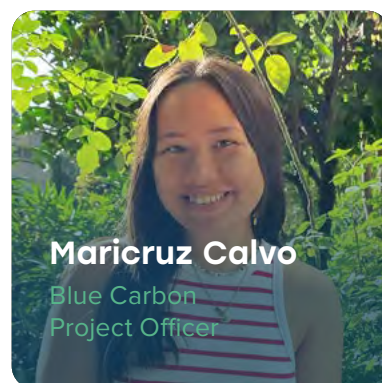
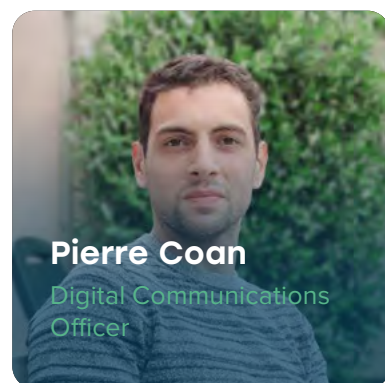
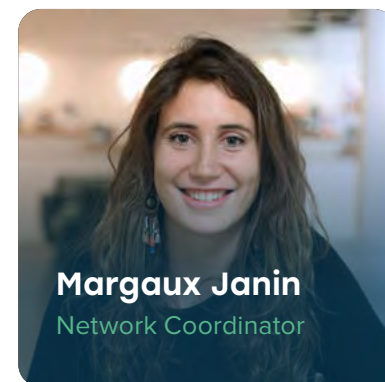
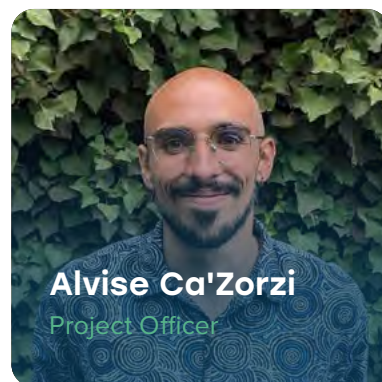
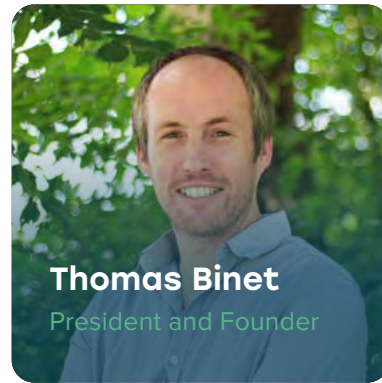
European Commission's Implementation Dialogue on SSFs

Our BlueMove Fund Manager, Camille Richer, together with NGOs working on sustainable fisheries, met the European Commissioner for Fisheries and Oceans, Kóstas Kadís.

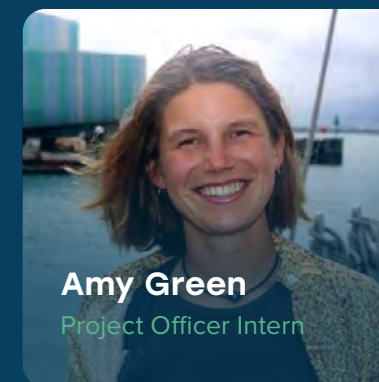
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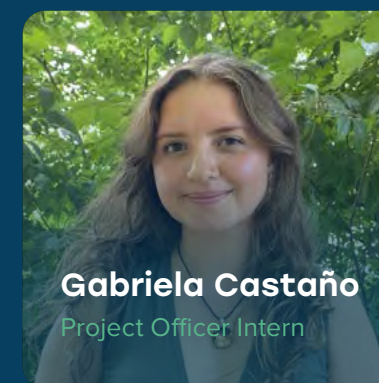
Team



We would like to thank our interns, who contributed to our successes during their professional discovery internships.



A student of the MSc MARRES, Amy contributed to the Together for the Med partnership. By involving many partners, she helped make our UNOC side event a success and contributed to the production of a powerful video series on highly protected areas. Her energy, creativity and enthusiasm were infectious, and we wish her every success for the future.



Also a student at Université Côte d'Azur, Gabriela joined BlueSeeds to explore the link between Posidonia seagrass meadows and coastal erosion. She developed a methodology to estimate the beach replenishment costs avoided by municipalities thanks to the protection of seagrass meadows. Her curiosity and rigour will undoubtedly open up promising opportunities.

Contact

Get in touch

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