



WWF CONSERVATION PULSE

NOVEMBER 2015

Major commitments, including more than 3 million square kilometres of new or expanded marine protected areas, were announced at the **Our Ocean** summit in Chile in October, at which US President Obama stated by video that ‘our economies, our livelihoods and our food depend on the ocean’. Through a series of three hard-hitting reports and presentations at key fora such as the Chile event, WWF’s Global Ocean Campaign has helped make the ocean’s economic value, the threats to it and the solutions to revive it a major theme of 2015. Combined with WWF’s work with coastal communities and partners – some featured in the stories below – this is contributing to a sea change in ocean conservation, representing significant progress towards ensuring the resilience and productivity of fisheries and marine ecosystems.

Deon Nel, Acting Executive Director, Conservation
Suds Sarronwala, Executive Director, Communications and Marketing

Landmark victory for the Great Barrier Reef

New laws passed by the Australian State of Queensland banning the dumping of industrial dredge spoil in the entire Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Site area represent a significant victory in the campaign to prevent further deterioration of the Reef, an iconic global conservation priority. WWF and the Australian Marine Conservation Society have been campaigning against activities that are damaging the health of the Reef, especially the dumping of spoil dredged from the seabed to enlarge mineral export terminals. The law banning dumping is a victory for public engagement – more than 500,000 people signed a petition against industrial dumping in the World Heritage area.



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WWF celebrates community marine conservation

WWF presented the 2015 Duke of Edinburgh Conservation Award to Alasdair Harris (UK) and Alifereti Tawake (Fiji) for their work to support local communities in rebuilding fish populations through creation of locally managed marine areas (LMMAs). Working with local fishermen and integrating cultural tradition with best-practice fisheries management, Mr Tawake’s innovative approach has resulted in the Fiji LMMA Network, which serves as a model for community-based marine resource management globally. Dr Harris, founder of Blue Ventures, works with coastal communities, government partners and non-governmental organizations to rebuild tropical fisheries through creation of LMMAs in Madagascar and Belize that bring tangible benefits to many communities. These strategies are now being replicated elsewhere in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.



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New Zealand to create new marine protected area

New Zealand has announced a commitment to create a vast 620,000 square kilometre ocean sanctuary in the remote Kermadec region by October 2016. Once established, it will be the largest single stretch of ocean off-limits to all types of fishing, and where exploitation of oil, gas and mining is banned. The campaign was driven by the Pew Charitable Trusts in partnership with WWF and local conservation groups. The sub-tropical Kermadec region is located in the South Pacific Ocean approximately 1,000 kilometres northeast of New Zealand. The area is home to a significant number of threatened species including migratory whales, sharks, turtles and tuna. It contains the world's longest chain of submerged volcanoes and the second deepest ocean trench on the planet.



REBECCA PRIESTLEY / WWF-NEW ZEALAND

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Major funding announced for Amazon conservation

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has approved US\$113 million for the Amazon Sustainable Landscapes Program – an innovative scheme to protect the Amazon ecosystem across Brazil, Colombia and Peru – that is expected to leverage US\$682 million in additional financing over the next five years. The programme aims to protect globally significant biodiversity and mitigate climate change by fostering sustainable land use, protected area management and restoration of vegetation cover. US\$30 million is designated for the ARPA Transition Fund, launched with WWF support in July 2014 for long-term financing of 60 million hectares of protected areas in the Brazilian Amazon. US\$9 million will support consolidation and effective management of 69 protected areas covering 19.5 million hectares in Peru, where WWF will be the GEF project agency.



DAVID'S EDGE PRODUCTIONS

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WWF partners with Sky for the Amazon

An innovative partnership with Sky, the UK media company, has helped to protect highly vulnerable Amazon forests in Brazil's Acre State – a biodiversity hot-spot and conservation priority. Together with the Acre authorities, the six-year programme – which has just come to an end – helped 1,500 small-scale farmers adopt sustainable cultivation methods and gain better prices for their produce, re-establishing a market for wild rubber and removing the incentive to clear forests for beef production. In the face of a new road cutting through the forest, the programme also met its promise to help keep a billion trees standing, thus preventing 3.7 million tonnes of carbon emissions. There was also a huge communications outreach, regularly reaching over 7 million viewers in the UK on the challenges facing the Amazon and its biodiversity.



WWF / SIMON RAWLES

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WWF and IUCN partner for protected areas

WWF and IUCN have committed to promote the role of protected areas (PAs) in achieving sustainable development over the next 10 years. The partnership aims to increase, to at least 1,000, the number of PAs reaching IUCN Green List quality standards, to mobilize US\$2 billion of new funding for effective PA management, and generate at least 20 ambitious new PA commitments among communities, governments and other organizations for biodiversity protection and the Sustainable Development Goals. The partnership was announced on the first anniversary of the Sydney IUCN World Parks Congress in November 2014, which agreed to invest in protected areas for their role in helping halt biodiversity loss, mitigate and adapt to climate change, improve food and water security and reduce the risk and impact of disasters.



ALEXANDER BELONKOROV / WWF

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