



OUR OCEAN. OUR FUTURE.

STRATEGIC MANIFESTO



**MARINE
MEGAFUNA
FOUNDATION**



OUR RESPONSIBILITY

50%
DECLINE IN MARINE LIFE
BETWEEN 1970 AND 2012

2,270
MARINE SPECIES NOW
LISTED AS ENDANGERED
OR THREATENED WITH
EXTINCTION UNDER THE
ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

250k
METRIC TONS OF PLASTIC
IN THE OCEANS, WHICH IS
POISONING MARINE LIFE
AND ENTERING THE FOOD
CHAIN, THREATENING
HUMAN HEALTH

95%
OF OUR OCEANS REMAIN
UNREGULATED

“
The next 10 years may be more important than the last 10,000 in determining the fate of our oceans.”

Sylvia Earle
Marine Biologist and Explorer

All life is connected to the ocean.

As a species, our survival is dependent on our oceans being healthy and full of life, yet only four percent are currently protected. This leaves more than 95 percent unregulated and vulnerable to

In the past 200 years alone, ocean water has become 30% more acidic—faster than any known change in ocean chemistry in the last 50 million years.

ever-increasing human pressures such as unsustainable fishing, irresponsible waste management and climate change. The consequences are already becoming clear.

We must take these threats seriously and act now to prevent further damage before it's too late. In 2015, 150 world leaders took a first step by committing to protect the world's oceans as part of

the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2030. One of the main goals is to protect ten percent of marine areas by 2020.

While this commitment is encouraging and completely necessary, leading experts contend we must push to protect 30-50 percent of the ocean to preserve biodiversity and life as we know it. Many large marine species play critical roles in ecosystems by maintaining habitats, enhancing nutrient cycles and balancing the food web. Their extinctions could lead to ecological cascades that would influence the structure and function of future ecosystems beyond just losing those species. The unprecedented loss of ocean giants could “disrupt ecosystems for millions of years.”

If we don't protect marine life from destructive human activities now, the oceans face a 'sixth mass extinction'; an extinction caused by humans. The stakes have never been higher for marine megafauna, which is why we began the Marine Megafauna Foundation (MMF) and have developed a long-term strategy called: **MMF: Our Ocean, Our Future.**



WHY MARINE MEGAFAUNA

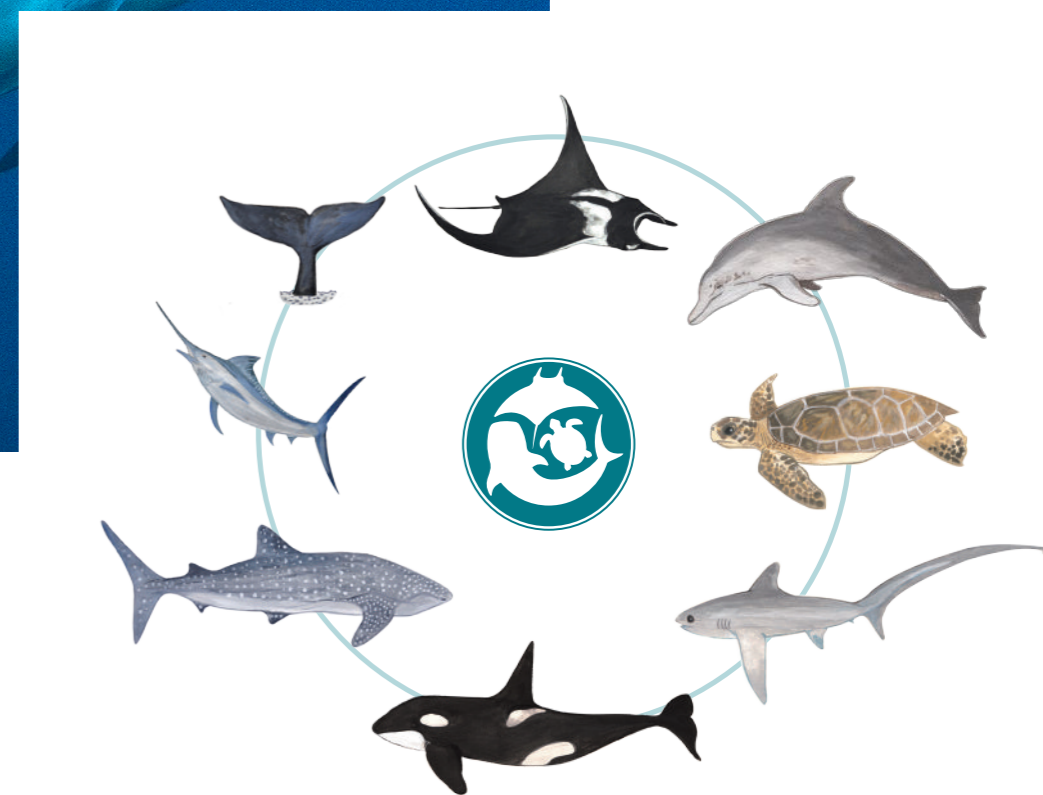
Marine megafauna, also known as ocean giants, hold a place in our hearts.

They captivate us in a way that few other creatures can. But they're so much more than popular icons, as their presence tells a deeper story. They are vital to the delicate balance of the marine ecosystem and indicate the health of our oceans. When we protect ocean giants, we are also achieving umbrella protection for a wide variety of marine species and creating a stable environment for the future.

“

We have come to appreciate that megafauna are not merely embellishments, they are vital to the natural rhythms of life.

Professor Callum Roberts
Marine Biology Conservationist
and Author of "Oceans of Life"





A STRATEGY BASED ON OUR STRENGTHS

MMF: Our Ocean, Our Future

Our strategy builds on a strong foundation, beginning with the establishment of the Marine Megafauna Foundation in 2012. The organization was founded to conduct pioneering research on marine megafauna and to use scientific evidence to educate the public and government to influence long-lasting conservation strategies.

Leading the charge at the heart of MMF, we have our founders, whose passion, dedication and expertise in the field have captured the attention of international media and inspired world-class scientists and volunteers to join our mission.

Our Founders



Dr. Andrea Marshall

Dr. Marshall was the first person in the world to complete a PhD on manta rays. After her thesis, she stayed in Mozambique to spearhead the conservation of manta rays in the region and around the world. She is the lead author of the IUCN's Red List assessments for both species of manta ray and is a member of the IUCN Shark Specialist Group. Andrea featured in the BBC Natural World documentary 'Andrea: Queen of Mantas' as well as the broadcaster's award-winning trilogy 'Sharks'. In 2013, she was inducted into the ranks of National Geographic's Explorers as an Emerging Explorer in recognition of her efforts to protect these threatened rays.



Dr. Simon Pierce

Dr. Pierce founded MMF's flagship research program on whale sharks, and is now studying these gentle giants in seven countries. His work on the population ecology and management of this iconic species has made him the world's top whale shark conservation biologist. In 2016, Simon led a research team whose efforts resulted in whale sharks being recognized as globally endangered for the first time on the IUCN Red List. He is also a scientific advisor to the online global whale shark database (www.whaleshark.org), regional co-chair of the IUCN Shark Specialist Group, and supervising multiple PhD students working on threatened marine species.

Key Accomplishments

Our key accomplishments during this time have made documented improvements in research, education and conservation:

— **Since our inception, MMF scientists have made great strides by using groundbreaking research to educate local and global communities and inspire lasting conservation solutions.**

— **Conducted the in-depth assessments** necessary to list manta rays and whale sharks on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species

— **Featured in global media outlets** such as CNN, BBC, National Geographic and TED

— **Pioneered groundbreaking technology** such as the use of satellite tags, new non-invasive methods to collect DNA samples, and algorithms and photo recognition software to track populations

— **Expanded our scope** to implement marine protection strategies in Africa, Southeast Asia and Central America, modeled after our successful pilot program in Mozambique

— **Led the first ranger training program** in Bazaruto Archipelago Marine National Park in Mozambique

We are proud of what we have done, but there is still so much more we can do. We can take advantage of this momentum and apply our proven local approach on a global scale to achieve long-lasting change. We also recognize there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. We will continue to use a combination of research and community engagement to recommend effective protection strategies tailored to the unique needs of the areas we work in.



MISSION + VISION

Our vision:

A world where marine life and humans thrive together

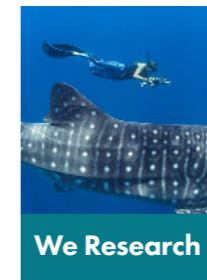
Our mission:

Save threatened marine life using pioneering research, education and sustainable conservation solutions

We need research to understand the threats facing marine life and their root causes, but data alone is not enough.

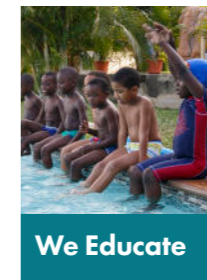
It is our responsibility to use our scientific findings to educate and inspire the general public, local communities, and national and world leaders so that we can develop sustainable conservation solutions together.

To achieve our mission and bring our vision to life, it is critical that we look at the problem holistically.



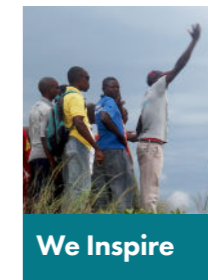
We Research

in pursuit of scientific data on threatened species and critical marine habitats



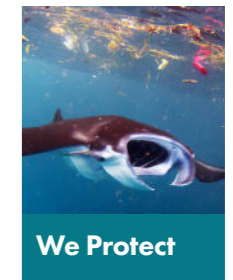
We Educate

global and local communities to create and empower ocean guardians to develop long-term conservation solutions



We Inspire

governments, global policy makers, businesses, and individuals to take action

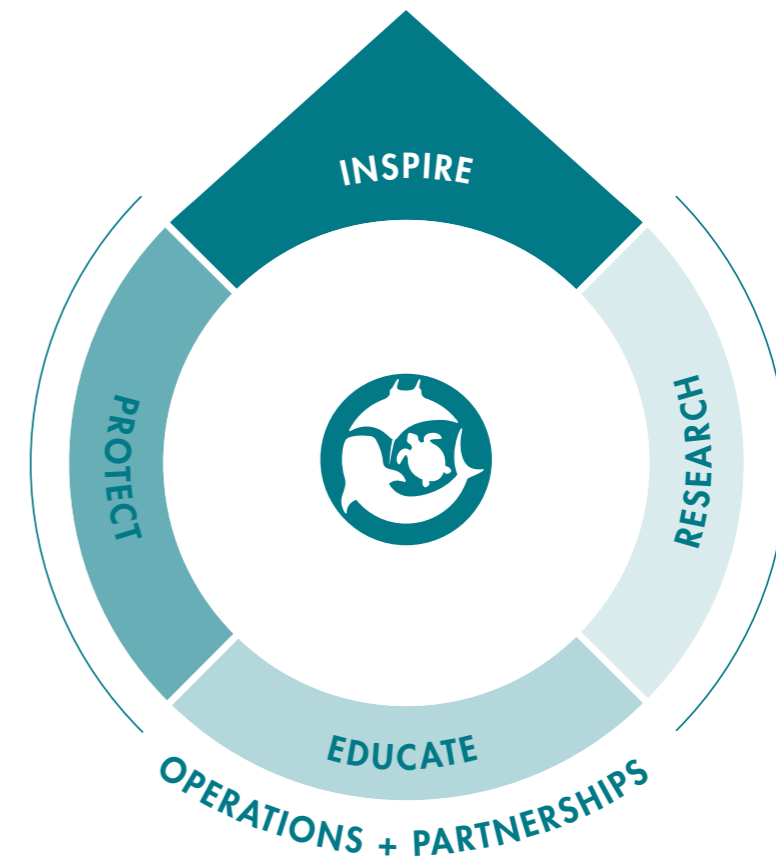


We Protect

marine life and their key habitats by developing effective, sustainable conservation strategies

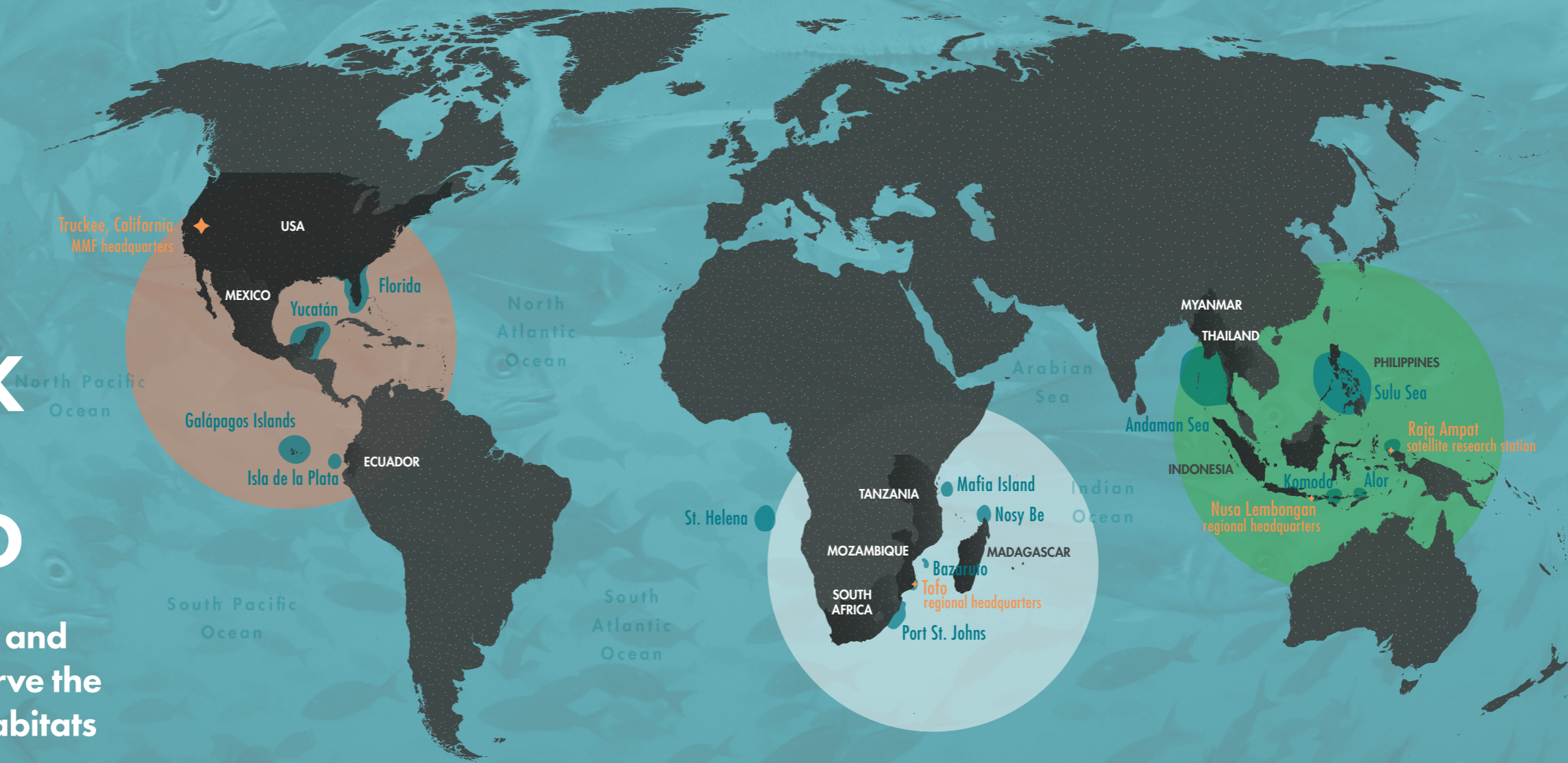
We have identified four interconnected strategic pillars to give focus to the various roles we play.

A WORLD WHERE MARINE LIFE + HUMANS THRIVE TOGETHER



OUR WORK AROUND THE WORLD

As we move toward 2030 and beyond, we seek to preserve the most biodiverse marine habitats on the planet.



We will focus our efforts in:

Americas

Western Indian Ocean

Southeast Asia

Three priority regions

Based on our current global research activity, we have identified three priority regions that:

Have a high number of threatened marine species

Represent the highest levels of ocean biodiversity

Face significant threats from growing human pressures

“

How inappropriate to call this planet Earth when it is clearly Ocean.

Arthur C. Clarke
Scientific Fiction Writer
and Undersea Explorer

As these areas continue to develop, the human pressures on the marine environment will only increase, with nearly 60 percent of the world's population living within 100 kilometers of the coast and growing.

We need to get involved now, bringing our locally tested research and conservation strategies to save these critical species from extinction and preserve the biodiversity of our oceans.

JOIN US AS WE

We will continuously measure the effectiveness of our research initiatives. Among others, our priority metrics will be:

Number of high-quality research papers published (percent leading to conservation solutions; number of citations)

Number of local nationals trained in scientific methods

Research

By 2030, we will be one of the main explorers of marine ecosystems, focusing on megafauna as our flagship species.

MMF will be a:

Pioneering researcher with state-of-the-art facilities, research vessels and leading research staff

Primary research educator for future researchers through theoretical and practical experience

Global research facilitator, fostering knowledge exchange and enabling research opportunities

To achieve this outcome, MMF will maximize its impact by focusing on the following areas between now and 2030:

CONDUCT exploratory marine megafauna research

PUBLISH frequent high-quality, conservation-oriented scientific papers

EXPAND research both in species and geographic locations to increase global impact

EDUCATE the science community by training and supporting local scientists alongside international students from top-tier universities

FACILITATE knowledge exchange by providing the necessary platforms and organizing conferences and workshops



We will continuously measure the effectiveness of our education initiatives. Among others, our priority metrics will be:

Number of people reached globally and locally through our education initiatives

Number of mass media impressions for educational content

Educate

By 2030, we will be one of the main educators of future generations, inspiring them to take action to protect the ocean's biodiversity.

MMF will be a:

Global educator raising public awareness and providing opportunities to take action

Local educator to affect behavioral change by working directly with targeted coastal groups

To achieve this outcome, MMF will maximize its impact by focusing on the following areas between now and 2030:

GENERATE appealing mass media contributions (broadcast, print and online outlets) to educate and raise general public awareness of the importance of marine megafauna conservation

DEVELOP inspiring messages to educate consumers about products made from endangered species

COLLABORATE with same sector organisations to share learnings and develop best practice focusing on regional and behavioural change

EDUCATE major stakeholders in our priority regions such as local community members (especially fishermen) and tourists (especially divers)

INSPIRE the next generations to become ocean guardians of the future



HELP US AS WE

We will continuously measure the effectiveness of our initiatives to inspire. Among others, our priority metrics will be:

Number of agreements achieved with governments and international policy makers

Number of workshops and conferences hosted to educate government officials

Inspire

By 2030, we will be one of the main inspirations behind the preservation of oceans across the world.

MMF will be a:

Leading influencer of governments, international policy makers, businesses, and individuals to inspire behavioral change and action

To achieve this outcome, MMF will maximize its impact by focusing on the following areas between now and 2030:

INFLUENCE international policy by sharing research findings and working with influential public figures to inspire change

COLLABORATE with other global organizations to inspire conservation action

FACILITATE interdisciplinary workshops and conferences to educate governments and build productive relationships

ENABLE our supporters to experience inspirational encounters with marine megafauna in the most amazing locations around the world

ADVOCATE for focal species globally through a multitude of channels to build and inspire a wide network of supporters



We will continuously measure the effectiveness of our initiatives to protect. Among others, our priority metrics will be:

Population trends of our focal megafauna species

Protection legislation achieved for focal species

Protect

By 2030, we will be one of the main protectors of marine ecosystems.

MMF will be a:

Globally respected leader improving the management of existing marine protected areas (MPAs) and developing effective, long-term conservation strategies to protect and restore key habitats

Trusted regional conservation leader empowering local communities to manage marine resources sustainably

To achieve this outcome, MMF will maximize its impact by focusing on the following areas between now and 2030:

LAUNCH global and local programs to advocate for effective marine protection strategies

TRAIN rangers of protected areas to protect in a sustainable way and advise governments and law enforcement on effective marine protection strategies

FACILITATE cross-border collaboration to establish and manage protection strategies in our priority regions

PROMOTE alternative livelihood programs to reduce human pressures on the ocean in partnership with other NGOs

EDUCATE local communities and governments on the economic value of sustainable fishing methods and empower them to create locally managed marine areas (LMMAs)

Join Us

The challenges are great, but with your help we can deepen our impact and continue to work towards creating a world where marine life and humans thrive together.

We encourage fellow visionaries to partner with us.

GETINVOLVED@MARINEMEGAFUNA.ORG

SOURCE INFORMATION AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

“

We are supportive of MMF's work and acknowledge the significant, positive contribution they make towards the active research and conservation of marine megafauna across the globe.

The National Geographic Society



OUR CURRENT PARTNERS

