



2024 ANNUAL REPORT





The Heart of Our Mission

Our greatest strength is a community that supports our ability to drive deep change for the ocean by making ocean conservation matter to everyone — from everyday citizens to global leaders.

Our vision is a world in which the ocean is healthy and thriving. We are on a mission to build a global community that takes meaningful action to make this happen.

Our Values

OPTIMISM Our energy comes from a sense of informed optimism, rather than naivety

INTEGRITY Representing the interests of the ocean first and foremost, we never compromise on ocean health

IMPACT Focusing on what the ocean needs for real change in the water

KNOWLEDGE Building conservation solutions based on the best available knowledge

EXTREME COLLABORATION Actively seeking new and diverse opportunities for collaboration and expanding the coalition of the willing



Message from the Chair

I am delighted to share with you Ocean Wise’s 2024 Annual Report, which provides a snapshot of one of our core values, ‘extreme collaboration’. In these pages you’ll find highlights from across all of our program areas including the launch of a Salmon Advisory Panel, kelp planting with youth from Tseshaht Nation, and a successful mobile education tour in Atlantic Canada.

2024 was a good year for our Board. We strengthened our knowledge of marketing with the addition of Howard Chang and Kari Grist, as well as adding two incredible young ocean leaders, Jasveen Brar and Moronke Harris, and legal expertise from new member Debra Finlay. With the support of Board member Tuck Rickards, we hosted engaging events in San Francisco and Boston. And, we achieved 100% Board giving (a first for the organization)!

Reflecting on the past two years I’m pleased to say that we’ve achieved much of what we set out to accomplish. In the pages below you’ll hear more about that work. You’ll read about our collaborations with Girl Up and Earth Echo to bring our Shoreline Cleanup program to the United States, how our

work to protect whales is making waves globally, and how our seaforestation work is connecting Indigenous youth to the growing ocean economy.

While we celebrate this work, we are also aware of the headwinds that lie ahead. With the threat of tariffs, political unrest, and an uncertain economy, we will have more competition for people’s time and energy to take action for the ocean. But we also know that taking action is a real and meaningful thing that people around the world can do – and I believe that can inspire. More than ever before we need monthly donors who can provide certainty. If you are able to join us as a monthly donor, please do. As individuals we can’t do it all, but we can do something!

Thank you to our supporters, staff, and funders. The fact that you are reading this means you believe in Ocean Wise, believe in our mission, and believe that we can all take action to make a difference.



Ian Warner,
Ocean Wise Board Chair

Message from the CEO

There is a small beach, not far from where I live, where I sometimes go to ponder big issues. When I looked out over the ocean last week, I was struck by how its restless energy – unpredictable currents, powerful storms, and shifting tides – mirrors the turbulence of our current geopolitical landscape. None of us is immune to these storms, but our ability to navigate them depends on how well we prepare and how clearly we stay focused on our destination.

2024 was a pivotal year for Ocean Wise. We battened down the hatches and built the resilience needed to drive real action for the ocean. It was a time to review the first three years of our Ocean Decade strategy and sharpen our focus on the programs delivering the greatest impact. That meant making some tough but necessary choices: streamlining our Executive Team, strengthening our fundraising capacity, and stepping away from initiatives that weren’t achieving the results we need. By doing less, we will do more – scaling the solutions that are working and ensuring our efforts have the strongest possible effect.

We remain deeply committed to fostering a workplace culture where diverse voices and perspectives are welcomed and valued. Just as biodiversity is essential to a thriving ocean, diversity within our organization is key to our success.

Looking ahead, we will continue to amplify proven solutions. At major global events this year – including Climate Week in New York and the IUCN Leaders Forum in Geneva – I saw firsthand the respect Canada commands as a leader and collaborator in conservation. We have an important role to play, and we are ready to meet the moment.



I would also like to express my thanks to our Chair, Ian Warner, for his leadership. As well as to our Board of Directors for their support, guidance, and investment in our mission.

Most of all, I want to thank our staff and community. Every day, I have the privilege of working alongside an extraordinary team, tackling big challenges together. Your commitment and passion make all the difference. Thank you for everything you do.



Lasse Gustavsson,
Ocean Wise CEO & President

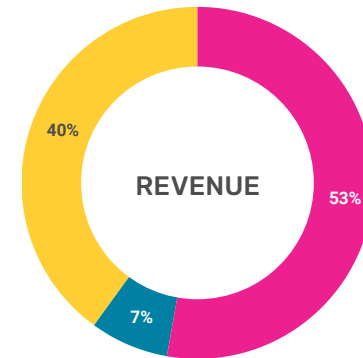
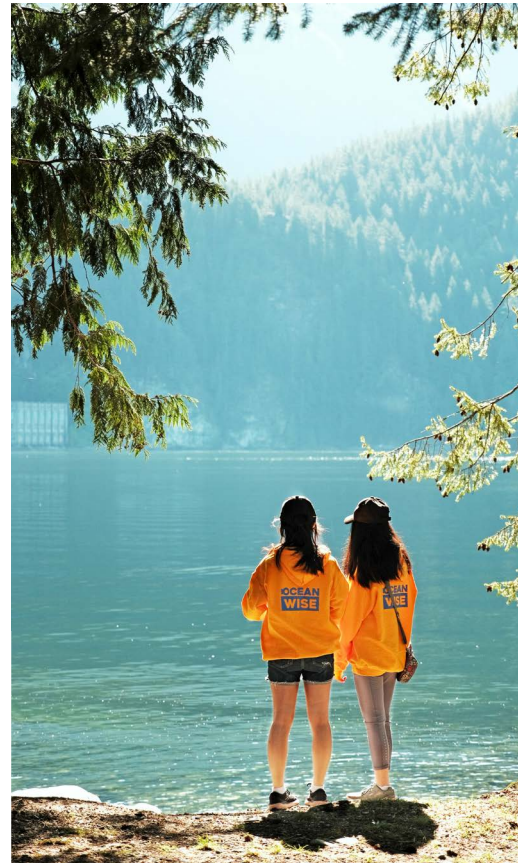
Financial Highlights

In 2024 Ocean Wise felt the first impacts of global unrest, with a significant reduction in government grants. This early indicator of the challenges we see ahead required restructuring and refocusing of our work to those programs realizing the most immediate impacts for the ocean.

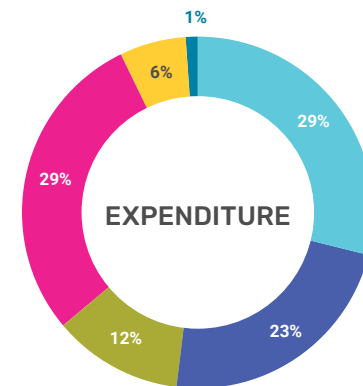
In anticipation of future reductions in government support, 2024 saw an investment in strengthening a sustainable fundraising model. Supported by the Board of Directors, and a one-time revenue contribution from the sale of the Vancouver Aquarium, we now have a strong team in place to take on the challenges and opportunities ahead.

“It has been such a treat to discover a lean organization that is informed by scientific research and application but also governed by ethics of reciprocity. Our world is facing so many challenges but organizations like Ocean Wise are actively participating in solutions.”

Hannah, Ocean Wise Donor



2024 (IN THOUSANDS)	
53% Grants and Donations	\$7,973
7% Programs	\$1,006
40% Other income	\$5,909
Total revenue	\$14,888



2024 (IN THOUSANDS)	
29% Conservation	\$4,806
23% Youth and Education	\$3,879
12% Communications and Development	\$1,949
29% General Administration	\$4,793
6% Digital Strategy	\$950
1% Amortization of Capital Assets	\$94
Total expenses	\$16,471
Operating deficiency of revenue over expenses	(\$1,583)

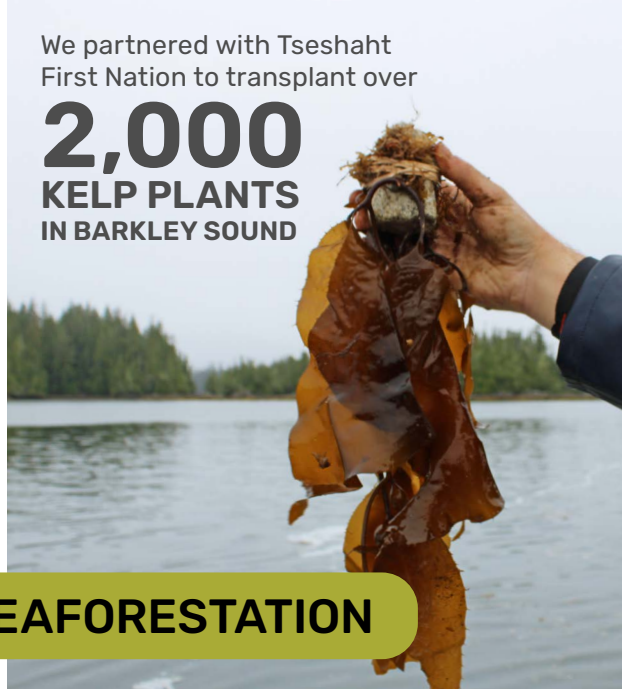
1. Dollars have been rounded to the nearest thousand.
 2. For Capital Asset and Reserve Funds information, see the audited Financial Statements.
 3. For a complete set of the financial statements audited by KPMG LLP, please contact us at contact@ocean.org

Our Impact



We formed the Salmon Advisory Panel, leading to **15 NEW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BC SALMON FISHERIES**

We partnered with Tseshaht First Nation to transplant over **2,000 KELP PLANTS IN BARKLEY SOUND**



We released our 2nd annual Rapid Assessment Standard report, generating **300 SUSTAINABILITY RATINGS**



SEAFOOD & FISHERIES



By upgrading our Kelp Nursery, **WE INCREASED CAPACITY BY 500%**



105 NEW PARTICIPANTS took part in our Youth programs

YOUTH

EDUCATION

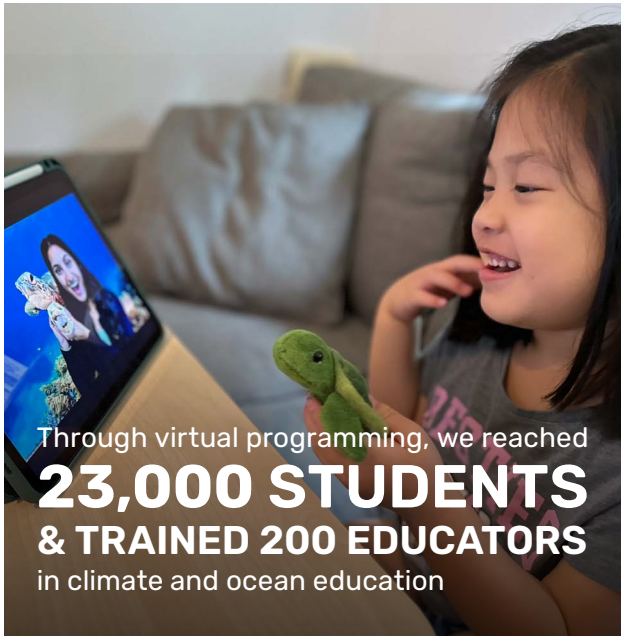


Our Sea Dome tour in Atlantic Canada reached **17 COMMUNITIES, 50 EVENTS, AND 14,000+ PEOPLE**



17,995 WHALE ALERTS were sent using the Whale Report Alert System, a **300% INCREASE** from last year

WHALES



Through virtual programming, we reached **23,000 STUDENTS & TRAINED 200 EDUCATORS** in climate and ocean education

Shoreline Cleanup litter data shows progress **PLASTIC STRAWS DOWN 32%**



PLASTICS



26,387 PEOPLE joined a Shoreline Cleanup, removing **18,092 KGS OF LITTER**

VOICES FROM THE WAVES

Stories of Impact & Inspiration

The world's waterways are deeply connected – countless streams flowing together into one vast ocean. In the same way, the people and organizations we work with form a network of change-makers, each contributing to a healthier, more resilient blue planet. From Indigenous fishers and marine scientists to educators and youth advocates, these partnerships are the lifeblood of our mission. In 2024, collaboration was at the heart of our impact, proving that when we come together, we can protect and restore our ocean for generations to come.

“Ocean Wise helped me ignite my passion for the environment and wildlife.”

Ann, Youth Program Participant

“Feeling the salt water on my face, seeing the wildlife around us, and learning alongside other passionate youth allowed us to connect with the environment and community that we don't get to experience in our daily lives.”

Caio, Youth Program Participant





This is What Love for the Ocean Looks Like

In the small, close-knit community of Sherbrooke, Nova Scotia, life is shaped by the nearby ocean.

With a population of just under 400, everyone knows their neighbours. This year, something extraordinary happened. The Whale Sanctuary Project chose Sherbrooke to host its first-ever World Ocean Day celebration, featuring the Ocean Wise Sea Dome.

Nearly 500 people – more than the town’s entire population – gathered around a massive blue and white striped tent, salvaged from an old circus.

The day was a true celebration of all things ocean. Visitors enjoyed ocean-themed games, face painting, and interactive displays from Ocean Wise and the Sea Dome. Children, their eyes wide with wonder, dashed off to bring their friends to experience the magic of the Sea Dome, which even welcomed its first-ever canine visitors.



What truly made the day special was the heart and effort the community poured into making it happen. Being remote, Sherbrooke faced significant logistical challenges. Yet, the people of Sherbrooke rose to the challenge. They found accommodation for the visiting team and the perfect tent to house the Sea Dome. When a member of the Mobile team couldn't align their flight with the rest, a local volunteer stepped in, driving two hours to the airport to ensure everyone from Ocean Wise could be there.

For everyone who stepped inside the Sea Dome that day, it was an experience they won't forget. The warmth, unity, and determination of Sherbrooke's residents turned World Ocean Day into a powerful celebration of community spirit and the deep bond people share with the ocean.

“Having the Ocean Wise team join us for our inaugural Ocean Day Celebration was a highlight for both us and our community!”

The Ocean Wise team was incredibly kind and collaborative to work with, and we hope to welcome them back for future celebrations.”

Alexandra Vance, Whale Sanctuary Project



Celebrating Sustainable BC Salmon

Using large dip nets in clear water, Gitanyow fishers selectively harvest sockeye salmon from the Nass River, carefully managing harvest numbers.

This sustainable way of fishing helps the Gitanyow community restore healthy wild sockeye runs in the Meziadin watershed and protect the delicate balance of the environment. However, despite these sustainable harvest methods, the Gitanyow fishery was excluded from sustainable seafood programs until last year.

In 2024, Ocean Wise reached a significant milestone in identifying sustainable salmon options on Canada's West Coast.

A better, faster way was needed to check if this popular seafood is sustainable. That's why Ocean Wise launched the Salmon Advisory Panel, bringing together leading experts on B.C. salmon. By combining their unique guidance and knowledge with the Ocean Wise Rapid Assessment Standard, we were able to identify 15 new Ocean Wise Recommended B.C. Salmon options, including the Gitanyow Sockeye Dip Net Fishery.

These recommendations provide guidance for sustainable seafood decisions for your next meal and also help to protect the livelihoods of ocean-friendly fisheries.



“By supporting our sustainable economic fishery, you are supporting the protection of our lands, waters, and our way of life.”

Joel Starlund/Sk'a'nism Tsa 'Win'Giit,
Executive Director of the Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs, Wilp Wii Litsxw of the Lax Gibuu Clan



Small-scale fisheries like Gitanyow's are vital to coastal communities. However, they are often overlooked by sustainable seafood programs due to perceived insignificance and the high cost of conducting sustainability assessments.

But you are helping to amplify the voices of these communities, elevating their conservation efforts and ensuring their traditional practices remain a key part of sustainable salmon harvesting.



Three Months that Changed Everything

Moronke Harris has always had a passion for community and volunteering.

One to think big, she was looking for opportunities to pursue her desire to inspire the global community to build a world in which the ocean is healthy and thriving — all while pursuing her goal of becoming an Oceanographer.

The Ocean Bridge program — designed for youth under 25 — provided the perfect launchpad for a youth eager to dive into ocean conservation. As a participant in the program, Moronke connected with a team that became her mentors, challenging her to push beyond her boundaries and providing hands-on experience in ocean conservation.

But that was just the beginning...

Moronke felt a strong desire to build on the connections she had formed and took on key roles with the Ocean and Climate Literacy Strategic Planning Team, the Ocean Bridge Advisory Committee, and most recently, earned a seat on the Ocean Wise Board of Directors. Reflecting on her journey, she shares, “These placements connected me to like-minded conservationists and provided an invaluable opportunity to impact the national community positively.”

What started as a three-month program has now forever impacted her professional horizons, deepened her knowledge, and supported her path to becoming a researcher, prominent leader, and asset to the global community.

Achieving her dream of becoming an oceanographer, she is now a rising voice in the climate engineering field, leading research expeditions and founding The Imaginative Scientist, blending science with art to make ocean issues relatable and engaging for people everywhere.

Moronke's story is living proof of the transformative power of inclusive youth programs. Investments into youth programs like Ocean Bridge shape our future so that informed, passionate leaders are equipped to protect our planet. These programs are available nationwide to all early-career ocean professionals, providing them with the tools they need to make a lasting impact on our ocean.



Ocean Wise empowers young ocean champions like **Moronke Harris**, who is now a deep-sea explorer sharing solutions on the TEDx stage.

700 Pounds of Trash Gone. Hundreds of Leaders Born.

“The way we treat the Earth is how we are treating our future. Taking initiative through Heal Our Planet’s Day of action encouraged my community to better protect the Earth by tackling these issues on a local scale.” – Nadia K., Oviedo, Florida.



In 2024, Nadia was one of 20 inspiring young leaders from across the United States who stepped up through the Heal Our Planet campaign – a powerful collaboration between Girl Up USA and Ocean Wise.

Over 550 girls, between the ages of 13–24, took the opportunity to become leaders and host Shoreline Cleanups in their own communities, collectively preventing nearly 700 pounds of litter from polluting our waterways.

Not only did they plan and bring friends and community to these cleanups, they also participated in citizen science, adding data to our littler dataset to better inform plastic pollution policy on a larger scale.

They came away with cleaner shorelines and the confidence that their actions created real, measurable change for the ocean. This experience sparked a spirit of collaboration and leadership, proving that when young people are given the tools and opportunities, they rise to the challenge.

**“We are more than just girls.
We are leaders, change-makers,
advocates...we are the future.”**

Nadia K., Oviedo, Florida.

“Water is as essential to our life as oxygen is.

Every day I’m amazed at how the ocean shapes our weather, nourishes our forests, and even filters the air we breathe – it’s just so intricately connected. I am proud to have been supporting Ocean Wise for over 11 years to help protect all marine life, revitalize the water that gives us life and fight climate change.”

Jessica Bayne Hogan, Ocean Wise Monthly Donor





Sharing Knowledge & Restoring Underwater Forests

The Broken Group Islands, located on the west coast of Vancouver Island, are a stunning maze of small islands and rocky reefs.

Their unique geography hosts a dynamic marine environment, where open ocean swells meet sheltered bays, creating ideal conditions for kelp forests to bloom. These ecosystems provide critical shelter, food, and nursery space for commercially and culturally important species like herring, which rely on kelp to spawn. Hundreds of marine species depend on kelp forests and have been an integral part of local First Nations' way of life since time immemorial.

Over the last decades, kelp forests have disappeared from much of the world's coastline. For the Tseshaht First Nation, whose hahuuti (territory) includes these waters, the disappearance of kelp, particularly canopy kelps like giant and bull kelp, is deeply concerning.



BIG. BOLD. GLOBAL.

In 2024, Ocean Wise successfully launched a community-led kelp cooperative with our Indigenous partners in the Los Lagos region of Chile. By working together, members gain fair market access, shared resources, and technical support, overcoming barriers faced by small-scale producers.

Beyond economic benefits, the cooperative will facilitate the restoration of kelp forests, create sustainable livelihoods and support biodiversity, and provide a model for sustainable, community-driven marine economies.

In B.C., these forests are under pressure from two major threats: rising ocean temperatures and unchecked sea urchin populations.

The loss of kelp in Barkley Sound isn't just an ecological concern — it's a crisis with real cultural and economic impacts. With kelp forests shrinking, key species like herring have lost their spawning grounds, threatening the species and forcing the Tseshaht First Nation to import herring roe, a traditional food source, instead of harvesting it from their own waters.

In September, in collaboration with the Tseshaht First Nation and West Coast Kelp, Ocean Wise took an important step toward ocean restoration and Indigenous-led conservation in the region.

The team travelled to Barkley Sound, part of the Tseshaht hahuuti, and transplanted nearly 2,000 adult giant kelps to a restoration site. Three incredible youth from School District 70 joined the crew and had the unique opportunity to learn about kelp restoration and assist in the restoration work.

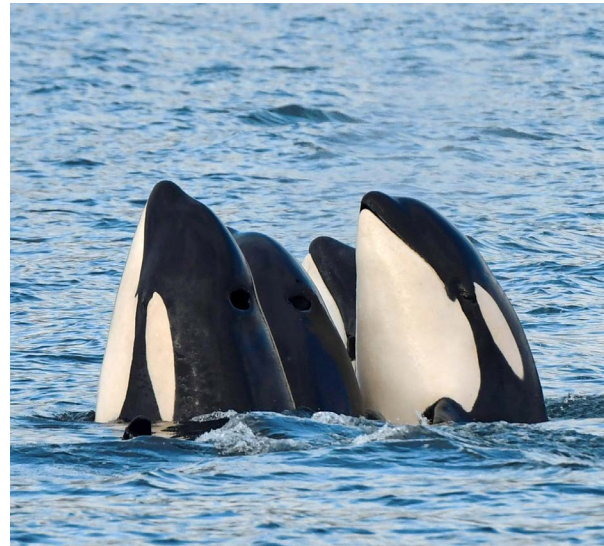
CSI ON THE OCEAN

Unlocking the Secrets of Winter Whale Behaviour

Decisions can change everything, just ask Dr. Chloe Robinson of the Ocean Wise Whales Initiative.

One seemingly small choice altered the course of her career — and the future of ocean conservation. Chloe’s decision to dedicate her life to protecting whales has led to making a real difference for whales and the ocean.

From Canada’s leading marine eDNA research lab, our whale experts have been braving the cold to study whale behavior during the winter months.



“Winter is a crucial time for many whale species, yet it remains vastly understudied,” Chloe explains. In 2023, Ocean Wise initiated a multi-year field study to learn where endangered whale populations go and what they eat in the Salish Sea.

“In a world where good news is hard to find, the team at Ocean Wise are one of the very brightest of lights for us all to hold high.”

Simon Carpenter, McLean Foundation



This research has already provided important insights. “The fish scales we collect reveal the species, age, and origin of the fish, helping to target salmon conservation efforts more effectively,” Chloe notes. “Using cutting-edge techniques, developed at our eDNA lab, we are able to gather data without disturbing the whales.”

Chloe is also quick to point out the power and importance of community engagement and citizen science she has seen while at Ocean Wise. Both

the Whales Initiative and the Plastics Program rely on dedicated members of the public to protect whales and keep our beaches clean. “We really wouldn’t have the same level of impact without the involvement of the public. It’s the community that drives so much of what we do.”



Dr. Chloe Robinson,
Advisor & Technical Lead of the
Ocean Wise Whales Initiative

A Community of Ocean Champions

We know that real change happens when people come together with a shared purpose. Protecting the ocean takes all of us – individuals, businesses, and partners – working toward a future where marine life thrives and the waters we depend on remain healthy and resilient.

HONOURING OUR GENEROUS PARTNERS

Thank you to all our donors and partners who have made it a priority to support Ocean Wise in 2024. Here, we recognize supporters whose lifetime giving has reached \$10,000 or more, as well as our 2024 Shoreline Cleanup Champions.



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A LEGACY OF IMPACT

We are deeply grateful to our supporters who left a lasting legacy that ensures marine life, coastal communities, and future generations benefit from a healthy, thriving ocean.

DECADES OF GRATITUDE

The supporters listed below have supported Ocean Wise consecutively for 10 years and beyond.

20+ YEARS OF GIVING

Dr. Simon & Dale Baker
 David Hoar & Noreen Rudd
 Sabina H
 Paul E. Oker
 Allyson Reid

10+ YEARS OF GIVING

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 Marie Brown
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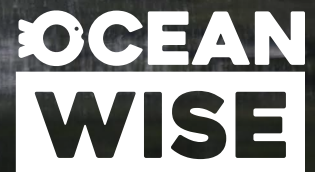
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Every effort has been made to list current and accurate information. If you see an omission or error, we would love to hear from you. Please share any feedback on this publication with us at support@ocean.org or 1 800 375 8776.

Thank You

As we look back on the year, we can't help but be filled with gratitude and hope. Together, we've navigated a year of challenges and opportunities. But one thing has remained true: extreme collaboration will help us meet the moment.

Thank you to everyone who supported our work in 2024. When we unite in purpose there is no limit to what we can achieve.



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