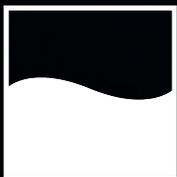


2024

IMPACT
REPORT



BENEATH THE WAVES

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BENEATH THE WAVES



**Beneath The Waves is a nonprofit,
tax-exempt charitable organization
under Section 501(c)(3) of the
Internal Revenue Code.**

MISSION

Beneath The Waves is dedicated to promoting ocean health and using science and technology to catalyze ocean policy, with a focus on ocean giants, blue carbon, and the deep-sea.

Our research creates the conservation evidence needed to inform broad-scale and region-specific ocean policies, while also providing solutions to new or emerging conservation challenges.

APPROACH



At the core, our mission is simple: to promote healthy and abundant oceans for future generations. We do this through cutting-edge science with tangible conservation outcomes, and also through storytelling that connects people to the wonders of the ocean and the discoveries our team is making.

LETTER FROM THE CEO

As we closed out 2024, I found myself reflecting on a remarkable chapter in the story of Beneath The Waves. This year marked the culmination of many ambitious projects we began back in 2020, underscoring an era defined by rapid growth, bold experimentation, and a commitment to excellence and innovation. Almost 5 years later, those investments have matured into real impact: cutting-edge research outputs, policy wins, expanded partnerships, and new scientific discoveries that continue to position our team at the forefront of ocean conservation.

Our Ocean Giants research program reached new heights, generating long-term datasets on movement, physiology, and habitat use, as well as major scientific findings now relied on by governments, NGOs, and academic partners around the world. Our deep-sea initiatives blossomed into one of the most comprehensive and innovative approaches of its kind, completing biodiversity surveys in several regions globally which revealed new species and insights that will influence conservation decisions for decades. Meanwhile, our blue carbon program continued to unlock the ecological and climate value of seagrass, mangrove, and salt marsh ecosystems, helping shape national frameworks and inspiring new commitments to protect and restore these habitats at scale.

2024 was also a year of global activation. Our scientists and collaborators led expeditions from the Atlantic to the Pacific, shared insights at major international convenings, and strengthened interdisciplinary links across conservation, technology, and policy. This multi-pronged approach reaffirms two core beliefs we share: that advancing ocean health requires both local action and global connectivity, and that great science travels best when it is designed to serve people as well as ecosystems.

As we transition into our 10-year anniversary cycle (2024 - 2025), we are energized by what lies ahead. The next several years will see new approaches, more integrated discoveries, the use of next-generation field technologies, and deeper partnerships with governments and communities. We will continue to push the boundaries of ocean exploration and research through a shared commitment to hard work, productivity, and innovation.

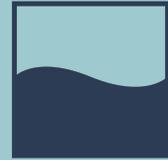
I am immensely proud of our team of scientists, collaborators, donors, board members, and partners. As always, they are the collective who make our work possible. As we enter our next decade, our perspective expands as we continue to be driven by curiosity and wonder for what exists on the frontiers of our blue planet.

With gratitude and excitement for what comes next,

Dr. Austin J. Gallagher
Founder and CEO, Beneath The Waves



MEET THE TEAM



CORE STAFF

Austin Gallagher, PhD
Founder & CEO

Carlos Duarte, PhD
Director of Research Innovation

Rosemary Mann
Chief of Strategic Initiatives
and Partnerships

Rebecca Simon
Director of HR and Finance

Shannon Aldridge
Operations Manager

Olivia Dixon, MsC
Research Coordinator

Kathryn Ayres, PhD
Research Scientist

Monica Moritsch, PhD
Research Scientist

Jeremy Jenrette
Research Scientist

Brendan Shea, MsC
Research Associate

Tadzio Bervoets, MsC
Regional Expert

Drew McDougall
Creative Specialist

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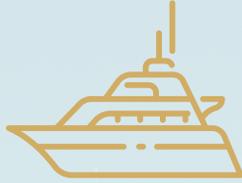
BY THE NUMBERS

MARINE RESEARCH



8

MARINE RESEARCH
EXPEDITIONS



34

DAYS ON THE WATER
CONDUCTING RESEARCH



15

PEER REVIEWED
PUBLICATIONS

GLOBAL AWARENESS & POLICY



7

WORKSHOPS /
CONFERENCES



48

MAJOR PUBLICITY
EVENTS



1,242,969

IMPRESSIONS ON
SOCIAL MEDIA

PROGRAM CAPACITY



2

NEW RESEARCH
PARTNER GROUPS



1

NEW RESEARCH
PROJECT LAUNCHED



2

SCHOOL GROUPS
ENGAGED

FEATURE FOCUS: CNN CALL TO EARTH



CALL TO EARTH

CNN Call to Earth, in partnership with Rolex's Perpetual Planet Initiative, provides a platform that highlights some of our Earth's most critical challenges today and the solutions that individuals and organizations are creating to address the concerns.

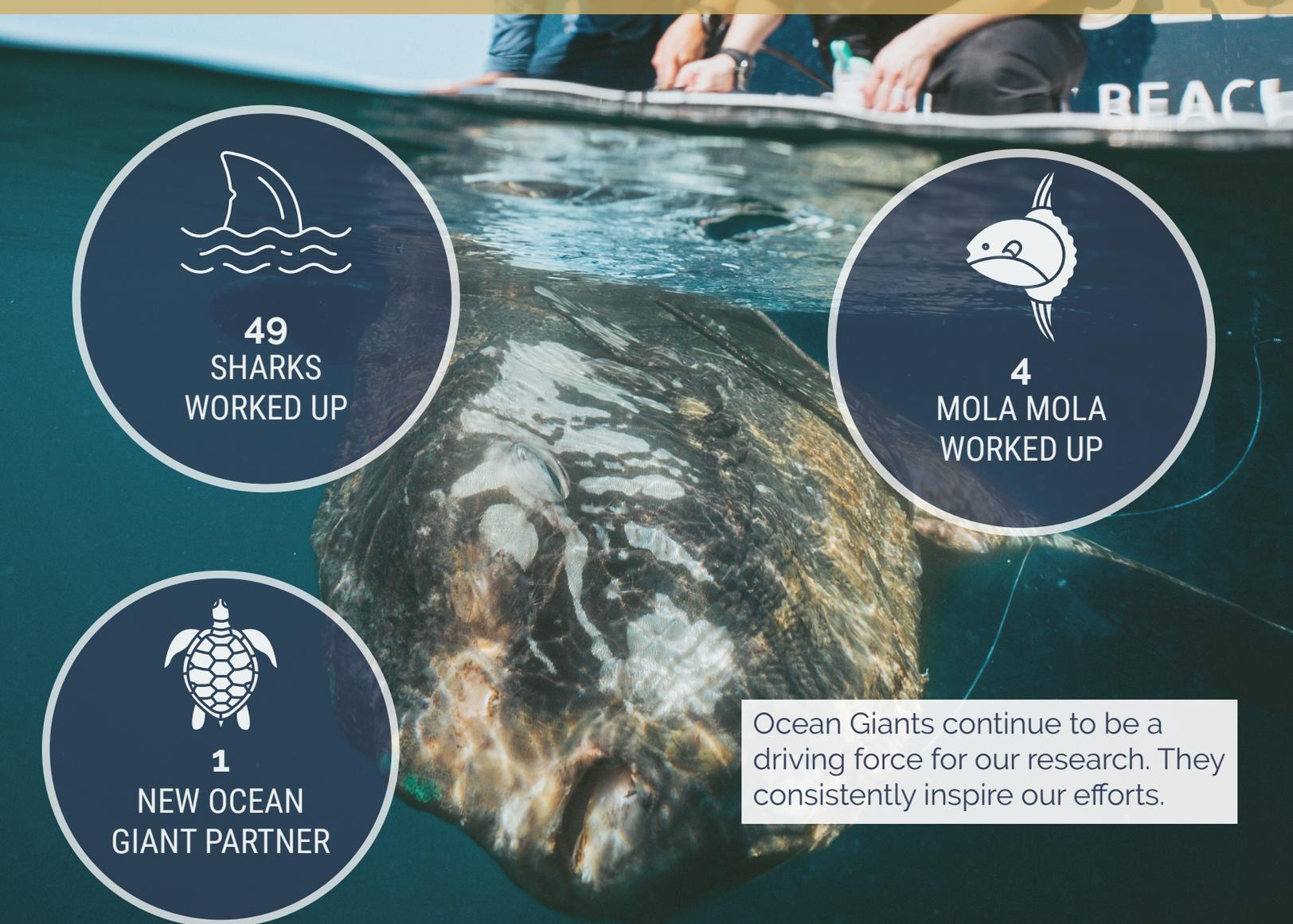
Dr. Austin Gallagher and the Beneath The Waves team were selected to be one of the CNN Call to Earth features for 2024. A short-form virtual documentary and series of press articles highlighted the essential work that the BTW team has conducted throughout The Bahamas, connecting large Ocean Giants to critical Blue Carbon habitats.

"The ultimate goal of the work that I'm doing is to create empathy for the ocean and to also preserve what we have for future generations. To live harmoniously with these ecosystems, to find ways to live harmoniously with sharks, to protect these ecosystems like seagrass. It's creating marine protected areas, it's enhancing existing conservation measures for threatened species like sharks, but it's about making sure that the legacy of these incredible ecosystems remains as intact as possible for as long as possible." - Dr. Austin Gallagher

The feature consisted of an article with a short video and the full 30-minute segment, [CNN Call To Earth: Expedition Bahamas](#), that aired on CNN International multiple times throughout the week to account for timezones around the world.



PROGRAM FOCUS: OCEAN GIANTS



49
SHARKS
WORKED UP



4
MOLA MOLA
WORKED UP



1
NEW OCEAN
GIANT PARTNER

Ocean Giants continue to be a driving force for our research. They consistently inspire our efforts.

PILOT EXPEDITION: MARINE TURTLE RESEARCH



As we continue to expand our knowledge of connections between Ocean Giants and Blue Carbon habitats, we joined forces with a new species in 2024: sea turtles.

With the assistance from the team lead by Dr. Mariana Fuentes at Florida State University in [The Marine Turtle Research, Ecology and Conservation Group](#), we were able to successfully work up and release four green sea turtles with satellite tags.



The satellite tracks will provide insight to the daily movements of Green sea turtles around The Bahamas, and when overlapped with seagrass and shark data, may unlock more secrets to further our initiatives.

PARTNER FOCUS: RE:WILD

Beneath The Waves is proud to have partnered with Re:wild and other stakeholders to embark on the Search For Lost Sharks. An initiative born from the list of elasmobranchs that have not been documented by scientists in at least 10 years.

“Several of these lost species are likely to occur in areas of the ocean that are logistically very difficult to explore, such as the deep-sea. We are excited to bring to this initiative our extensive experience using innovative technologies to highlight rarely seen shark species.” - Dr. Austin Gallagher.



ReShark



PERSONNEL SPOTLIGHT: REBECCA SIMON

Where does your passion for the ocean come from?

I grew up in Huntington Beach, California, where the ocean wasn't just a backdrop — it was part of my identity. Some of my earliest memories are of sandy feet, salty air, and a sense of calm that only the ocean could bring. Over time, that connection turned into a deep respect for marine ecosystems and a desire to protect them. It's really meaningful to now be part of an organization where that passion can be turned into impact.

What is a fun fact about you?

I've been lucky enough to travel to over 14 countries, and in 2024 I visited the Philippines where I gave a TEDx talk on self-leadership and the importance of knowing and embracing your shadow — the parts of ourselves we often keep hidden. It was one of the most powerful experiences of my life, and it's shaped how I show up as a leader and teammate in every space I'm in.

What is your favorite memory from working with BTW in 2024?

One of my favorite memories was helping build and roll out new systems that made communication across our global team smoother and more intentional. Watching our people feel more supported, aligned, and connected — even across time zones — made me proud of the culture we're creating. It reminded me that behind every conservation milestone is a team of passionate, thoughtful humans making it all happen.

What are you most looking forward to in 2025 with BTW?

In 2025, I'm excited to continue investing in the people behind the mission — strengthening our internal culture, growing our leadership team, and making sure every team member feels seen, heard, and empowered to do their best work. I believe that when our people thrive, our impact does too.



PARTNER FOCUS: SOSA



A research collaboration with The Senckenberg Ocean Species Alliance (SOSA) was activated this year, with the goal of accelerating the description of marine invertebrates and ultimately aiding in their protection by safe guarding biodiversity.

SOSA Mission: SOSA is dedicated to revolutionizing the description and naming of marine invertebrates. By streamlining species description processes, supporting conservation through IUCN Red List assessments, and raising public awareness, we unite scientific and global communities to protect vulnerable marine life for future generations.

By partnering with SOSA, we are able to continue our field research efforts discovering new species and surveying biodiversity, while they simultaneously accelerate the new species descriptions.

SPOTLIGHT FEATURE: GOPRO FOR A CAUSE

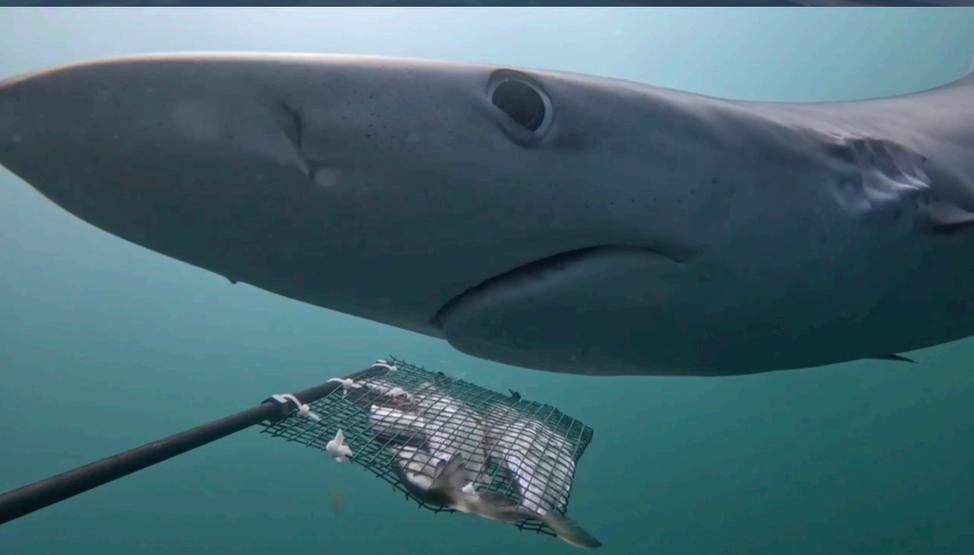
GoPro for a Cause is GoPro's nonprofit partnership and donation program, providing Beneath The Waves with important tools and resources to conduct field research.

This summer Olivia Dixon, MSc, Research Coordinator for Beneath The Waves, worked with four students from Thayer Academy, to build stereo-pelagic BRUVS featuring GoPro Hero 12 cameras. The team then deployed the stereo-pelagic BRUVS off the coast of Cape Cod, MA to complement Beneath The Waves' traditional shark tagging monitoring in the region. This investigation allowed the team to analyze and compare data from each collection method, helping validate the accuracy of this newer, non-invasive technique.

This summer project provided the students with the opportunity to be hands on throughout the entire process, highlighting all the crucial steps that must take place to execute scientific research.

"I've learned how important teamwork and communication are when working on a boat and conducting fieldwork." - Thayer Academy student

GoPro featured this project in their Heroes News - [GoPro for a Cause Spotlight: Revolutionizing Ocean Conservation with Beneath the Waves.](#)



PERSONNEL SPOTLIGHT: JEREMY JENRETTE



Where does your passion for the ocean come from?

I grew up around creeks, waterholes, and rivers developing an interest for what lies beneath the surface. My family included me in fishing and kayaking trips from a young age, and so I learned to enjoy water activities with others. When I was finally introduced to the Outer Banks on the North Carolina shore, I discovered a passion for recreational saltwater fishing, which fed my curiosity for larger ecological processes in the ocean.

What is a fun fact about you?

I grew up boating, kayaking, and camping along the New River, which is the oldest river in North America.

What is your favorite memory from working with BTW in 2024?

My favorite memory with Beneath The Waves from 2024 was the onboarding process, where I met up with Austin in Boston to get to know each other and discuss an exciting future at the organization. I take pride in my interdisciplinary skill set as a scientist, and he recognized this. Since then, Beneath The Waves has looked to utilize me in multiple projects where I can best contribute, all the while accommodating to my busy graduate school schedule.



What are you most looking forward to in 2025 with BTW?

In 2025, I am excited to embark on my first field expedition as a Beneath The Waves employee. With opportunities to explore cryptic deep-sea genetics, I am most looking forward to discovering adaptive evolutionary traits that can help inform conservation, but also medicinal applications such as gene therapy.

PROGRAM FOCUS: DEEP-SEA

From 2018 - 2023, the Beneath The Waves team had conducted many field expeditions for our various deep-sea research projects throughout the Greater Caribbean. Much of 2024 was focused on analyzing the footage from those deployments and generating new discoveries and publications.

The hard work in the field had paid off, as we were able to generate 5 publications specific to our deep-sea research in 2024, with more in the pipeline as the year came to a close. Many of the publications this year and prior were opportunistic observations that either expanded species locality or depth range, but one paper we are particularly proud of provided a comprehensive overview of deep-sea surveys from The Bahamas. From over 8,000 minutes of video footage from dBRUVS, the team was able to identify taxa from 22 families across invertebrates, teleost fishes, and elasmobranchs. The study provided new insights into deep-sea community composition and structure, and carbon flux in Caribbean deep-sea ecosystems, shedding light on previously unrecognized patterns of biodiversity.

Many of these observations and findings are guiding our priorities for future research objectives as we continue to dive deeper into this frontier ecosystem.



Roughskin Dogfish
(*Centroscymnus owstonii*)



Misty Grouper
(*Hyporthodus mystacinus*)

SCIENTIFIC PUBLICATIONS

OCEAN GIANTS

- Observations of biennial reproduction in Caribbean reef sharks '*Carcharhinus perezii*', <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2023.1160199>
- Renewed occurrence of schooling scalloped hammerhead (*Sphyrna lewini*) and of great hammerhead (*S. mokarran*) sharks in the Cayman Islands, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2024.1347285>
- Transboundary movements of porbeagle sharks support need for continued cooperative research and management approaches, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fishres.2024.107007>
- Orca (*Orcinus orca*) and shark predator-prey interactions within Cabo Pulmo National Park in the Gulf of California, Mexico, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2024.1407379>
- Reef fish biodiversity and occurrence of endangered sharks within a small marine protected area off Sint Maarten, Dutch Caribbean, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10641-024-01588-1>
- On the tracks of white sharks in the Mediterranean Sea, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2024.1425511>
- Killer whales (*Orcinus orca*) hunt, kill and consume the largest fish on Earth, the whale shark (*Rhincodon typus*), <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2024.1448254>
- An integrated multi-source dataset of elasmobranchs in the Red Sea following the Red Sea Decade Expedition, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41597-024-04262-4>

DEEP-SEA

- Depth Range Extension for the Misty Grouper *Hyporthodus mystacinus* Documented via Deep-Sea Landers throughout the Greater Caribbean, <https://doi.org/10.3390/fishes9040114>
- Novel deep-sea observations reveal twilight zone occurrence for two species of pelagic sharks: the bignose shark *Carcharhinus altimus* and the silky shark *Carcharhinus falciformis*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10641-024-01527-0>
- Community composition and organic carbon flux in twilight zone communities of The Tongue of the Ocean and Exuma Sound, The Bahamas, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dsr.2024.104373>
- First records of the roughskin dogfish *Centroscymnus owstonii* in the greater Antilles, central Caribbean Sea, Western Atlantic Ocean, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jfb.16008>
- Novel behavioral observations and body scarring for the bluntnose sixgill shark (*Hexanchus griseus*) offer clues to reproductive patterns and potential mating events, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2024.1305487>

BLUE CARBON

- High-resolution, precision mapping of seagrass blue carbon habitat using multi-spectral imaging and aerial LiDAR, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecss.2024.108832>
- Significant carbonate burial in The Bahamas seagrass ecosystem, DOI [10.1088/1748-9326/ad6a29](https://doi.org/10.1088/1748-9326/ad6a29)

PRESS MENTIONS



Forbes



yahoo!finance



Newsweek



Miami Herald

DISCOVER **wildlife**



LIVESCIENCE

MIT
Technology
Review

Profectio
Connecting Canada's Communities



MarketingPartnerships.com

NEW ATLAS
THERE'S ALWAYS A BETTER WAY

MAJOR SUPPORTERS & PARTNERS

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- Roger Sant & Doris Matsui
- Wanderlust Fund
- Sternlicht Family Foundation
- Mary O'Malley and Lupo Dion

INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERS

- Government of The Bahamas
- The Bahamas Department of Marine Resources
- The Bahamas Department of Environmental Planning and Protection
- Government of the Turks & Caicos Islands, Department of Environment and Coastal Resources
- Cayman Islands Department of Environment
- United States National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

CORPORATE SPONSORS

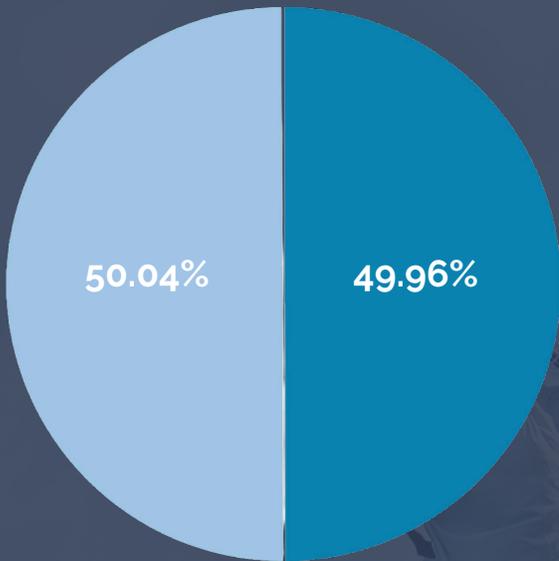
- GoPro
- Warner Bros. Discovery
- ScubaPro
- BACARDÍ
- Automark Co.

OPERATIONAL PARTNERS

- Dutch Caribbean Nature Alliance
- Big Blue Collective
- Caribbean Shark Coalition
- Re:wild
- Senckenberg Ocean Species Alliance (SOSA)
- Oregon State University, Big Shark Lab
- Top Tier Marine Management
- The International SeaKeepers Society

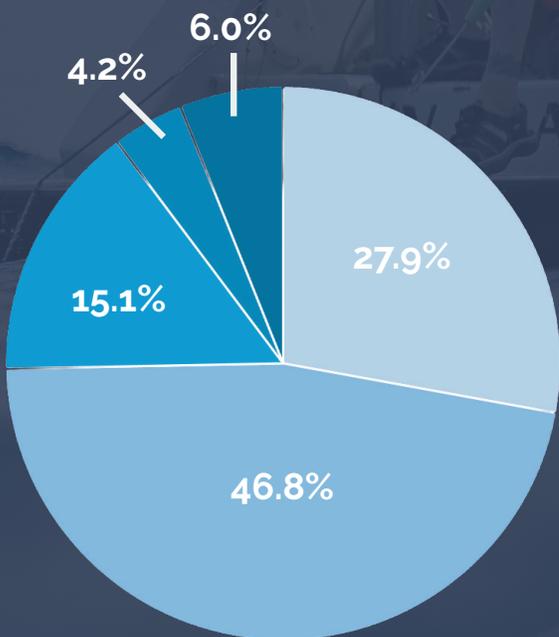
FINANCIALS

REVENUE:



Donations & Gifts	\$485,153
Grants	\$485,993
Total Revenue	\$971,146

EXPENSES:



General Administration	\$321,182
Program Services	\$191,188
Professional Services	\$103,389
Charitable Contributions	\$41,500
Fundraising	\$28,706
Total Expenses	\$685,964



BENEATH THE WAVES

Beneath The Waves is dedicated to promoting ocean health and using science and technology to catalyze ocean policy, with a focus on ocean giants, blue carbon, and the deep-sea.

PHOTO CREDITS

Drew McDougall
Austin Gallagher
Kaylam Pratt
Shannon Aldridge
Olivia Dixon

www.beneaththewaves.org





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