

Draft Press release:

Yacht builders launch a GT-based re-investment programme for ocean conservation

A group of prominent shipyards has committed to setup a structural approach for reinvestment into the regeneration and conservation of our precious oceans. They now call on fellow yacht builders to join them in this important commitment.

Abeking & Rasmussen, Ameryachts, Baglietto, Feadship, Gulf Craft, Heesen Yachts, Horizon Yacht, Lürssen Yachts, Oceanco, Royal Huisman, Sanlorenzo, Silveryachts, Southern Wind, Tankoa, Turquoise Yachts, and Vitters are the first builders that have agreed to reinvest based on the Gross Tonnage (GT) of yachts they deliver.

The importance and logic of ocean conservation for the yachting sector

From 2021 onwards, the United Nations declared the next 10 years the 'Ocean Decade', aiming to catalyse transformative ocean science solutions for sustainable development. Oceans absorb more than 90% of the excess heat generated by global warming and are taking in over 25% of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, making them the planet's largest carbon sinks. In short, the oceans' health determines all life on Earth.

The builders are also well aware that without healthy oceans there is no sustainable future for the yachting sector. It is therefore logical that the entire yachting community would take on the role of ocean stewards – not as philanthropy, but as an investment in our common future.

"Today, an innovative approach towards ecological transition is about acknowledging the ocean-climate nexus and the central role of marine ecosystem conservation for a healthy planet," says Dr Vienna Eleuteri, Water Revolution Foundation's initiator and sustainability scientist. "I am very pleased with this group of builders taking the lead in setting up structural reinvestment by the yachting sector to regenerate our oceans."

Taking real action means simultaneously reducing our environmental impact while regenerating the oceans' capacity to recover from negative impacts. For the latter, we need to embrace nature's very own solutions and weapons against climate change. Marine mammals and their marine ecosystems play a crucial role and therefore their natural habitats need to be protected as blue carbon ecosystems.

Import Marine Mammal Areas

The entirety of funds collected will go to Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs), endorsed by Water Revolution Foundation and promoted as one of the most effective programmes for ocean conservation among the entire yachting community to support.

IMMAs is an existing programme of the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Task Force on Marine Mammal Protected Areas. The premise of this programme is simple: when seeking to protect the ocean, we need to know where to start.

Through identifying the areas important for marine mammals, these can be prioritised for protection measures by governments, intergovernmental organisations, conservation groups, and marine stakeholders. This does not automatically mean banning human activities – in fact, it is about aligning human activities with the needs of nature, so-called 'sustainable ocean use'. By being aware and adapting to nature's needs, all marine human activity – including yachting – can operate in a much

more conscious way at these critical areas. The IMMA programme works very well too for yacht crew to participate through citizen science.

With 159 IMMAs already established across the Southern Hemisphere, the scientists behind the IMMA programme are now looking to the Northern Hemisphere. In total, there are nine regions of the ocean still to be mapped. The North Atlantic is next up, which is the common crossing route for yachts and superyachts between the Mediterranean and Caribbean seasons.

What is the commitment?

The shipyards are committing to contributing the amount of €1 per gross ton they delivered in 2021. For each new yacht delivered, the yards will match the gross tonnage in euros and reinvest this via Water Revolution Foundation into IMMA for its North Atlantic project which starts in early 2022.

The amount of €1 per GT is based on the €555,000 target funding needed to start the two-year North Atlantic IMMA project. This target amount was divided by the 455,000 total expected GT to be delivered in 2021 and rounded off to €1. The builders that committed have so far delivered around 60,000 GT in 2021.

Call to action

The first committed yacht builders now call on their colleagues to join in on this commitment and choose the coordinated approach to raise the required funding for this important ocean conservation programme. The yards also encourage other players in the yachting sector to band together and make a similar commitment to protect what is most dear and critical to our common future.

Final notes

At a time where the focus is on countries and politicians at the COP26 in Glasgow for international action to tackle climate change, industry plays a key role too. Instead of waiting for legislation, taking our own measures to reduce and regenerate will be more constructive, more appreciated and therefore most effective.

Note that this coordinated contribution to ocean conservation is not meant to offset the impact of the yachts delivered nor their production processes, but to structure reinvestment by builders into the most critical natural resource for the yachting sector and to reach the target funding for IMMAs, as the first collectively supported ocean conservation programme.

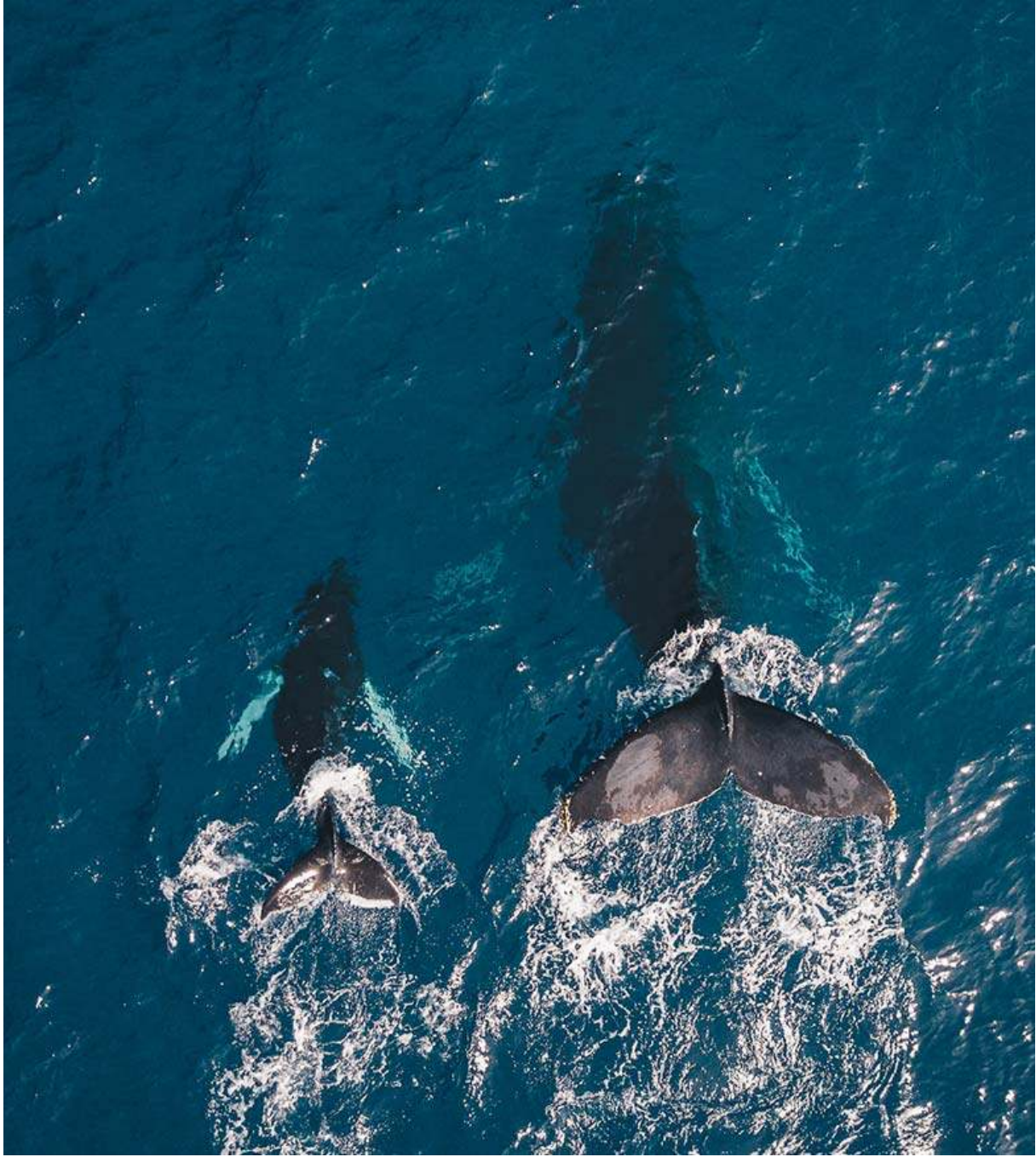
Note to editors

Water Revolution Foundation was started from within the yachting sector to help reduce its environmental impact and to preserve the oceans. For this action, the foundation served as coordinator and fund collector. 100 per cent of the funding goes to IMMAs for the North Atlantic project.

Images:



IMMAs' approach simplified by Water Revolution Foundation ©



Stock image of mother and calf whales