

QUARTERLY UPDATE

QUARTER 3, FY23

Headline updates and organisation developments, from the period January to March 2023

SUMMARY

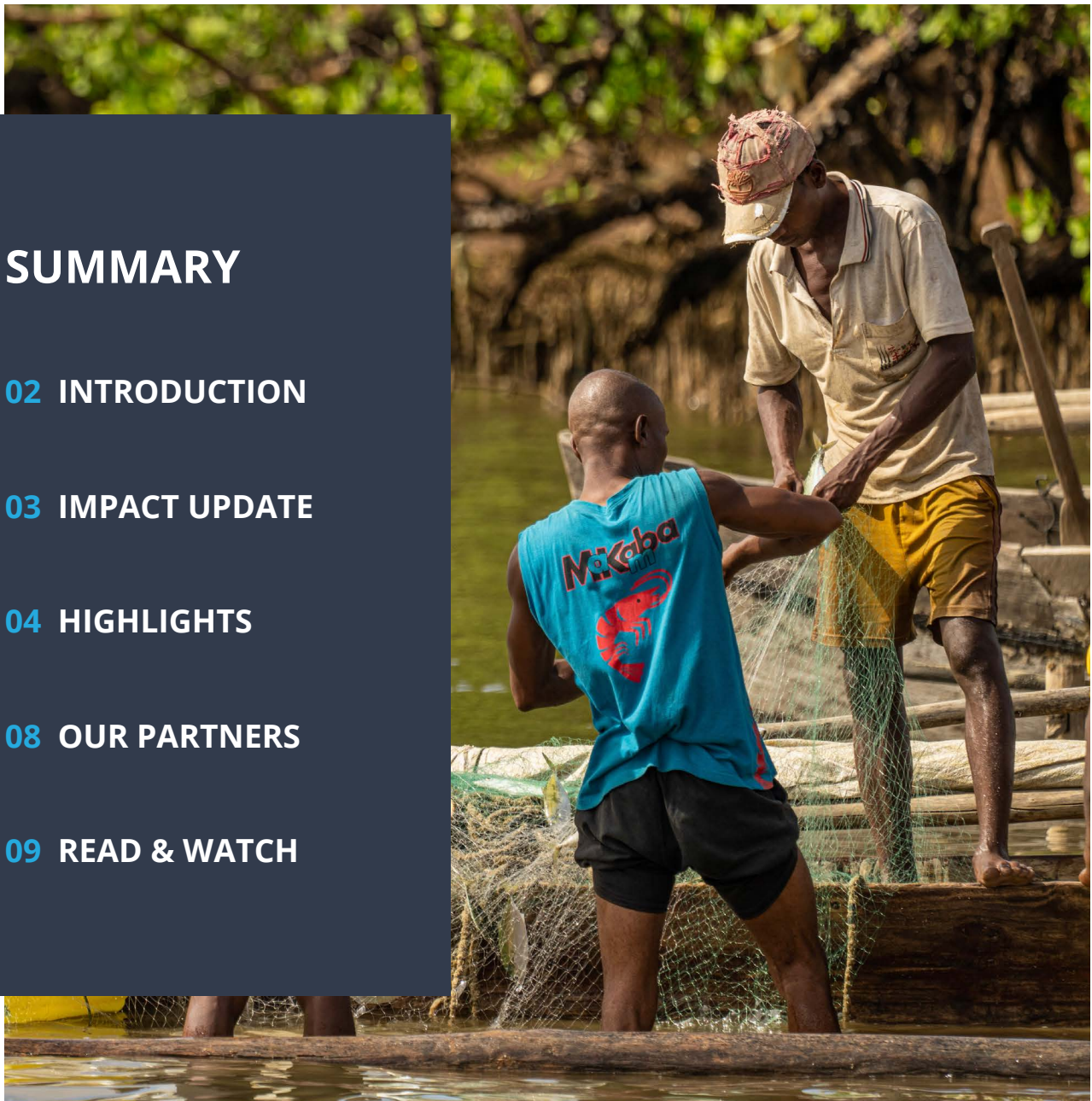
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INTRODUCTION FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Last month we witnessed first hand the effects of the recent and exceptionally intense tropical [Cyclone Freddy](#) on coastal communities on both sides of the Mozambique Channel. This record-breaking deadly storm, which ricocheted around the southern Indian Ocean for weeks, is just one chilling example of our rapidly destabilising climate system. These events highlight the urgency and importance of supporting local communities to better prepare for these challenges, and to rebuild in their wake more quickly. The [latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#), released just a few weeks ago, highlights that rebuilding depleted fisheries is an effective way to help avert dangerous climate breakdown: reducing negative climate change impacts, while supporting food security, biodiversity, human health and well-being.

We're proud to support a growing global movement of marine conservation initiatives developed by and for small-scale fishers and coastal communities. We're seeing time and again how local action to restore our oceans can achieve conservation and development goals; protecting ocean life, food security and vital sustainable coastal livelihoods. The FAO's long awaited [Illuminating Hidden Harvests \(IHH\) report](#) shines a light on the enormous importance of our oceans to humanity, and the vital role small-scale fisheries play in reducing global poverty and hunger, and boosting local livelihoods.

With the growing and converging crises of nature loss, climate breakdown and overfishing, the coming years will be the most challenging in Blue Ventures' journey to date. Yet the networks of small-scale fishers, local communities and indigenous peoples that we are so privileged to support are our ocean's frontline defenders. They have the knowledge and tools we need to harness our ocean's natural resilience and regenerate coastal ecosystems. They are the biggest group of ocean users by far, and we are wholly committed to doing all we can to support them to rebuild fisheries at scale.

Thank you for your support and partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alasdair".

Dr Alasdair Harris
Executive Director

IMPACT UPDATE

WHERE WE WORK



The number of countries we serve

15

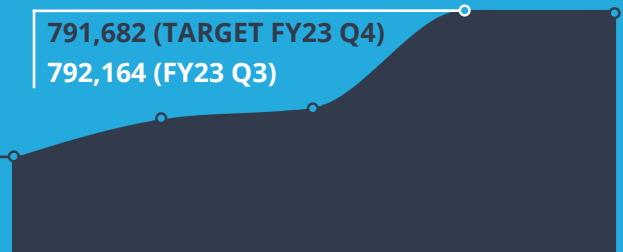
POPULATION REACH

The number of people reached by our work

792,164

751,840 (FY22 Q4)

791,682 (TARGET FY23 Q4)
792,164 (FY23 Q3)



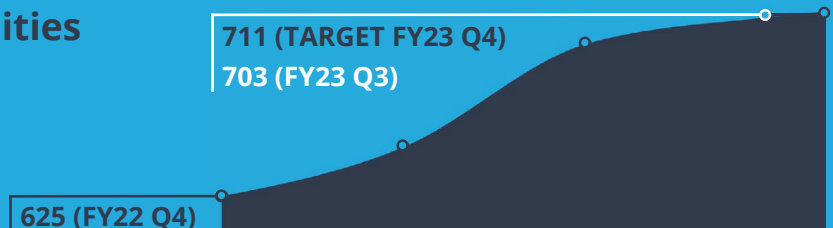
COMMUNITIES SUPPORTED

The number of communities we support

703

625 (FY22 Q4)

711 (TARGET FY23 Q4)
703 (FY23 Q3)



OCEAN PROTECTED

Ocean waters protected within Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs)

17,570km²

16,790km² (FY22 Q4)

23,676km² (TARGET FY23 Q4)

17,570km² (FY23 Q3)



QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS

Hosting learning exchanges

For two decades, we have been carrying out the simple yet transformative work of bringing together fishers and starting conversations that catalyse local action. Seeing is believing when it comes to inspiring local action for conservation, and [fisher learning exchanges](#) are instrumental in helping coastal communities learn from each other about fisheries management and marine conservation.

This quarter, we held three separate learning exchanges in East Africa, stimulating conversations, new friendships and partnerships between communities and local organisations.

1



Anjouan Island, Comoros to Kwale County, Kenya

“The three day visit allowed me and fellow fishers from Comoros to learn the different kinds of fisheries management styles used by fishing communities in Kenya and how they engage in conservation. I was also pleased to see women running alternative income-generating activities. I learnt about a community bank where women involved in conservation lend money to each other and can access loans if they engage in conservation activities. The women have used the funds to educate their children and build homes, which I want to share with my peers in Comoros.”

Bahati Anli, fisher from Comoros. She is part of the leading, [all-female fishers' association Maecha Bora](#) that we support with our Anjouan-based partner [Dahari](#).



Community participants in the Comoros to Kenya learning exchange in Kwale County, Kenya

2



Zeila District, Somaliland to Tsimipaika Bay, Madagascar

“As soon as I return, I want to restore and replant mangroves again. I did not know that different mangrove species grow at different paces. We have been planting mangroves with some success, but I did not realise that there is a technique to apply, so I now have new knowledge.”

Omar Dahir Hussein, fisher from Zeila in Somaliland.

3



Pemba to Pombwe, Tanzania

“Thanks to our support, communities understand that fishery closures allow them to have a more bountiful catch over a longer period. Fishery closures also allow communities to lead efforts in managing their environment while participating in conservation.”

Haji Machano, our partner support coordinator in Tanzania.

Expanding marine protection

In southern Madagascar we've seen a groundswell of local interest in marine protection, particularly of nearshore seagrass meadows, which are threatened or have already been overfished by destructive [beach seine fishing practices](#). Across a network of LMMAs in Atsimo Andrefanana region, fisher-led community conservation associations have organised exchange visits and built local support for the creation of new seagrass reserves, protecting these critical nursery grounds. New permanent reserves have been declared in the Velondriake, Teariake, and Manjaboake LMMAs, leading to significant outcomes for fishers. They have begun to see invertebrates and fish diversity which has not been seen in nearshore areas in over a decade.

In all three of these sites, the expansion of conservation has been prompted by community-led monitoring of these high biodiversity, carbon-rich ecosystems: fishers trained by Blue Ventures' technicians have documented the state of the seagrass meadows through scientific surveys and underwater video, sharing their results and recommendations with local communities. After just a few months of protection, [fishers are documenting and sharing results](#) that highlight the staggering productivity and natural resilience of these remarkable ecosystems.



Community members prepare marker buoys prior to declaring a new no-take zone (NTZ) in Teariake, Madagascar

Scaling up in West Africa

The cool upwelling systems in the tropical eastern Atlantic make West African fisheries some of the most productive on earth, supporting some of the world's largest artisanal fisheries. The region's inland estuaries are home to enormous mangroves and lagoons with staggering biodiversity, from mesmerising migratory birdlife to hippos, dolphins, manatees, reptiles and a huge abundance of fish and marine invertebrates.

We've identified this region as a priority for scaling up our model because of the huge importance of fishing to communities. We've spent six months carrying out intensive field-based scoping, and we're excited to be formalising our first partnerships in the region to support existing locally based organisations working with coastal communities.

From Guinea-Bissau to The Gambia, via the vast [mangrove deltas of Casamance](#) and Sine-Saloum, our scoping has given our team new insights into the many challenges facing coastal ecosystems and small-scale fishers in this region, at a time of rapid environmental change. In particular, we're learning about the challenges facing women here, who play a huge but under-recognised role in fisheries and marine management.

We're encouraged by the tremendous opportunities on this coast for supporting local action to address these threats, and inspired by the local leaders driving community movements against threats from destructive and unregulated fishing, illegal coastal developments, and coastal erosion.

Our first partners in this region – from [Tinguena in the stunning Bijagos islands](#) of Guinea-Bissau, to Kawawana in Casamance, Senegal – are pioneers of small-scale fisheries management in West Africa. We're excited to learn from them, and develop new learning networks between this region and communities in East Africa and further afield.



***Above: Artisanal fisher in Abéné,
Casamance, Senegal***

***Below: Cultivating mangrove oysters,
Casamance, Senegal***



Organisational updates

We are proud to welcome our first ever Chief Programmes Officer, [Dr Steve Box](#), based out of Denpasar in Indonesia. Steve brings broad experience to the role, including decades of field experience developing small-scale fisheries management efforts with communities in Africa, Southeast Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean; as well as his technical experience developing fisher-focused data systems to guide local decision making for conservation and fisheries management.

HEAR FROM OUR PARTNERS



Q&A with [Dr. Patrick Kimani](#), Director, [The Coastal & Marine Resource Development \(COMRED\)](#). A Blue Ventures Partner since December 2019, COMRED currently supports 13 coastal communities in Kenya.

How did the partnership come about?

When we first met representatives from Blue Ventures, it was clear that we held similar values. We both put communities at the centre of everything we do and hold a passion for conservation - a partnership was born.

What do you think the key achievements of the partnership have been?

One of our biggest achievements has been the creation of our new strategic plan, which reorients the organisation from just working on individual projects to having structured programmes with greater longevity.

Thanks to funding from Blue Ventures, we've also managed to grow from a team of five to twelve, which has helped us reach more communities in the region.

What impact are you most proud of?

We have noted tremendous growth in capacity and involvement in the beach management units (BMUs), so communities are much more receptive to conservation and willing to learn and engage. Because of Blue Ventures' financial support, we now have 18 data collectors recording fisheries information, 10 community trainers who are working on an [eco-credit project](#), and plans to increase our team even more. Recruiting community members helps us to grow the community's knowledge and interest to take care of their environment, and arms them with useful skills to empower them in their society to earn a livelihood.

What are some of the benefits of flexible, long-term funding from Blue Ventures over other types of funding?

For us, the biggest benefit of Blue Ventures' model of funding is adaptability. The funding from Blue Ventures came about from listening to the needs of the [communities we work with](#). The communities voiced what they needed resources for and Blue Ventures adapted the designed projects accordingly. That's why we see success in these projects.

Many donors are not receptive to this kind of approach, and it is one of the reasons why we really value the partnership with Blue Ventures. We hope that this continues and expands, because this is what organisations on the ground really need to successfully implement projects.

Anything else you would like to add about the partnership?

We also enjoy the relationship between the two organisations' staff. Sharing an office in Mombasa is a testament to the thriving partnership, and very robust and powerful relationship we have.

READ & WATCH

January



[New research: Octopus fisheries shore up food security for tropical coastal communities](#) - New research co-authored by Blue Ventures researchers highlighted the importance of small-scale octopus fisheries as sustainable global sources of food and income



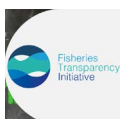
[Media: Dos and don'ts – Biodiversity market looking to carbon for guidance](#) - Carbon Pulse interviewed our mangrove expert Leah Glass about our new approach to funding mangrove conservation through blue carbon credits



[Media: Eco-credit scheme drives Kwale to protect habitat](#) - Kenyan newspaper The Star highlighted an eco-credit project we support to provide coastal communities with loans tied to marine conservation efforts



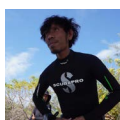
[Media: Stormier Seas Keep Fishers on Shore](#) - Hakai Magazine cited former Blue Ventures scientist's research in Madagascar's Barren Isles



[Blue Ventures' Advocacy lead joins FiTI board](#) - Fisheries industry transparency initiative elected our colleague Annie Tourette as its newest board member



[Toko Telo Event: Field experiences of community owned fisheries data and technology](#) - Catch up on the video and presentations from [Abalobi](#), [Mwambao](#) and our colleagues in Belize

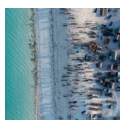


[Blog: Putting communities at the heart of reef management in Timor Leste](#) - We interviewed a Timorese conservation star about his journey from humble beginnings above water to discoveries below water



[Blog: Launching the first temporary mud crab closure in Sapat, Indonesia](#) - Our Indonesian partner Yayasan Pesisir Lestari (YPL) documented the success of communities in Sumatra to conserve a key fishery

February



[New research: Community action key to achieving global conservation goals](#) - We contributed to a study showing how partially protected waters, such as LMMAs provide effective and equitable pathways for marine conservation



[Media: BBC World Service](#) - The BBC produced a radio documentary for a solutions-focused global show and an [online video](#) for its main site and [social media](#) about how sea cucumber projects we support in Madagascar are benefiting communities, businesses, and the environment



[Blog: The Barren Isles - living on the edge of the world](#) - We launched a new joint project to provide vital support to island communities living in Madagascar



[Blog: Safety at Sea Training in Indonesia](#) - Our partner YPL wrote about the lifesaving effects of providing training to Indonesian small-scale fishers



[Blog: Celebrating fishers on the Kenyan coast](#) - We celebrated a new partnership in Kenya that kicked off with a conservation festival

March



[New Research: Illuminating Hidden Harvests](#) - Our colleagues in the UK and Madagascar contributed to this landmark global fisheries report published by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)



[Video](#): Instagram short explainer video of the importance of small-scale fisheries and other IHH major findings



[Blue Ventures: The High Seas Treaty is a triumph, but the devil will be in the details](#) - We published an opinion piece to mark the historic signing of a deal to protect large swathes of ocean



[Documentary: Ocean SOS](#) - Germany's largest public broadcaster ZDF featured our staff and projects in Madagascar for a TV show that has already attracted millions of viewers



[Blue Ventures: Supporting women in Mozambique to protect their marine areas](#) - We interviewed one of many formidable female colleagues for International Women's Day



[Media: Fishing News](#) - Our colleague Charlie Gough featured discussing our community conservation work in Madagascar



[Film: Seeing is Believing](#) - Our film about community-led conservation in Tanzania was nominated for a Charity Film Award



[Blog: Meet the communities using data to transform fisheries management](#) - We heard from Kenyan community members about the power of data to drive change



[Blog: Comoros to Kenya: A trip to learn from fellow fishers in Kenya](#) - We interviewed a representative from Comorian women fishers' association Maecha Bora about what she took from a Blue Ventures learning visit



[Newsletter: Transform Bottom Trawling Coalition](#) - The latest achievements and events from the TBT Coalition, including a campaigns webinar for Latin American partners



[Newsletter: PHE Madagascar](#) - The latest news and events from the PHE Network, including a webinar on sharing good PHE practices with Marie Stopes Madagascar and the Health in Harmony - GERP (Groupe d'Etude et de Recherche sur les Primates de Madagascar) partnership