

Annual Impact Report 2023

A year of defending our oceans

Thriving oceans for a healthy planet.

Our Mission

We are the guardians and voice for marine life. We connect people, science and action to protect Australia's extraordinary oceans.

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Penelope Figgis AO, President
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Paying Respect

AMCS acknowledges and pays respect to Australia's First Nations people as the traditional owners and custodians of this country. We recognise that sovereignty over land and sea countries was never ceded. AMCS acknowledges First Nations people hold deep and complex knowledge of land and sea country and have cared for and actively stewarded this Country for millennia.

AMCS aspires to be a positive actor for reconciliation, and we acknowledge we can do better. We consider building, nurturing and continuing relationships with First Nations people as part of our core business.

Cover: Green turtle, Great Barrier Reef, Tracy Olive

CEO's Report

We are delighted to report that 2023 was an incredibly successful year for AMCS.

One of our strengths is constantly adapting and responding to current challenges and developments. This year we kicked off a new offshore oil and gas campaign with outstanding support from thousands of you. The campaign helped hold back a damaging seismic blasting proposal over a vast stretch of sea between Victoria and Tasmania.

There have been many other significant wins this year. The World Heritage-listed Macquarie Island Marine Park between Tasmania and Antarctica was expanded to bring 93% of the island's marine area under stronger protection. Queensland's Great Sandy Marine Park secured more protection, with sanctuary zones tripled in the marine park.

The Great Barrier Reef won a huge reprieve when the federal government rejected the Clive Palmer-owned Central Queensland Coal Mine, just 10km from the Reef Marine Park. At the end of the year the Queensland government announced ambitious climate targets to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 75% by 2035.

The Queensland government also announced the phasing out of destructive gillnets in Reef waters, starting with their immediate removal from Dugong Protected Areas.

We brought the plight of Tasmania's unique and endangered Maugean skate into the national spotlight, and our campaign to protect threatened sharks finally secured a nationwide approach to stopping live shark finning.

In the west, our AMCS Protect Ningaloo team took our call for National Heritage listing for Exmouth Gulf to Canberra, and the ALP then committed to consider an application for World Heritage listing with UNESCO.

Brilliantly, over 15,000 of you spoke out against a massive saltworks planned for the shores of Exmouth Gulf, home to sawfish, dugongs, whales and more.

We relaunched the GoodFish Sustainable Seafood app to empower more Australians to make smart seafood choices and our new Fair Catch campaign helped push the federal government to improve seafood labelling for restaurants and clubs.

We held supermarkets to account with the first-ever audit of their use of plastic packaging. And to top the year off, Australian music icon John Williamson's *Voice of the Sea*, which he recorded for AMCS, won a prestigious ARIA music award.

Whilst 2023 has been a hugely significant year for our oceans and our efforts to protect them, there is plenty more work to do. Helping guide our ship as we look to meet the challenges ahead, we are delighted to have announced internationally renowned Australian conservationist Penelope Figgis AO as our President.

We can be proud of what we have achieved together this year and we look forward to making 2024 an even bigger year. From all of us at AMCS, thank you for supporting us unwaveringly as we navigate the challenges our oceans face even during these tough economic times. We look forward to building on these achievements in 2024.



Darren Kindleysides
Darren Kindleysides
CEO, Australian Marine Conservation Society

2023: AMCS in action

2023:

AMCS by the numbers

- **47** AMCS crewmates – full time and part time staff
- **355,735** unique website visitors
- **\$1 million** raised on World Oceans Day
- **158,210** on our mailing list
- **345,611** social media followers across all platforms
- Over **133,692** petitions signed and submission actions taken
- Every dollar spent on fundraising raises **\$12** more dollars to support our conservation work.
- **41,000** of viewers of our top social media post
- **6,500** times AMCS appeared in national and global media

Over 15,000 supporters spoke out against a massive saltworks on the shores of Exmouth Gulf, home to sawfish, dugongs, whales and more.

Call for National Heritage listing for Exmouth Gulf taken to Canberra, and the ALP then committed to exploring World Heritage listing with UNESCO.

New fish labelling for hospitality from 2025 will give consumers greater confidence that they're purchasing what it says on the label.

Our Patron, Tim Winton, wrote and narrated the award-winning *Ningaloo Nyinggulu* documentary, which helped draw attention to Exmouth Gulf - Ningaloo's nursery - which is threatened by industrialisation.

Our GoodFish Sustainable Seafood app was relaunched with improved functionality, empowering more Australians to make sustainable seafood choices.

Victoria banned non-reusable plastics and for the first time Australia supermarkets have been held accountable for their plastics use.

Huge win for endangered species such as sea turtles and dugongs with destructive gillnet fishing banned in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

Reef report card released to track the QLD and Aus governments' progress towards protecting the GBR.

The Clive Palmer-owned Central Queensland Coal mine was rejected.

The Great Sandy Marine Park marine sanctuary areas (Green zones) more than doubled.

Win for sharks with endangered hammerhead sharks in QLD state waters safe from targeted fishing, and a 'fins naturally attached' rule in place in every state and territory.

The anthem for our oceans, John Williamson's *Voice of the Sea* song and video won an ARIA Award.

Almost 20,000 AMCS supporters took action opposing plans for seismic blasting in an area covering 45,000 square kilometres between Victoria and Tasmania including in a commonwealth marine park.

93% of Australia's World Heritage-listed Macquarie Island Marine Park is protected.



Watch our video celebrating our biggest achievements from 2023.

Defending ocean habitats and species

Campaign summary

- Establish a world leading network of marine protected areas
- Protect our World Heritage
- Protect and recover threatened species

Australia has highly biodiverse oceans, but we are facing an extinction crisis both on land and sea. Immediate action is required to protect threatened marine life and restore struggling habitats. Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are crucial for conservation, helping to safeguard biodiversity and improve resilience against climate impacts.

It is essential to expand and strengthen Australia's MPA network, focusing on areas with the highest conservation benefits and ensuring effective management and resources. Notably, iconic marine areas such as the Great Barrier Reef and Ningaloo-Exmouth Gulf require global protection efforts. As coastal industrialisation continues, Australia needs robust environment laws, institutions and funding to address the marine biodiversity challenge and reverse the extinction crisis.

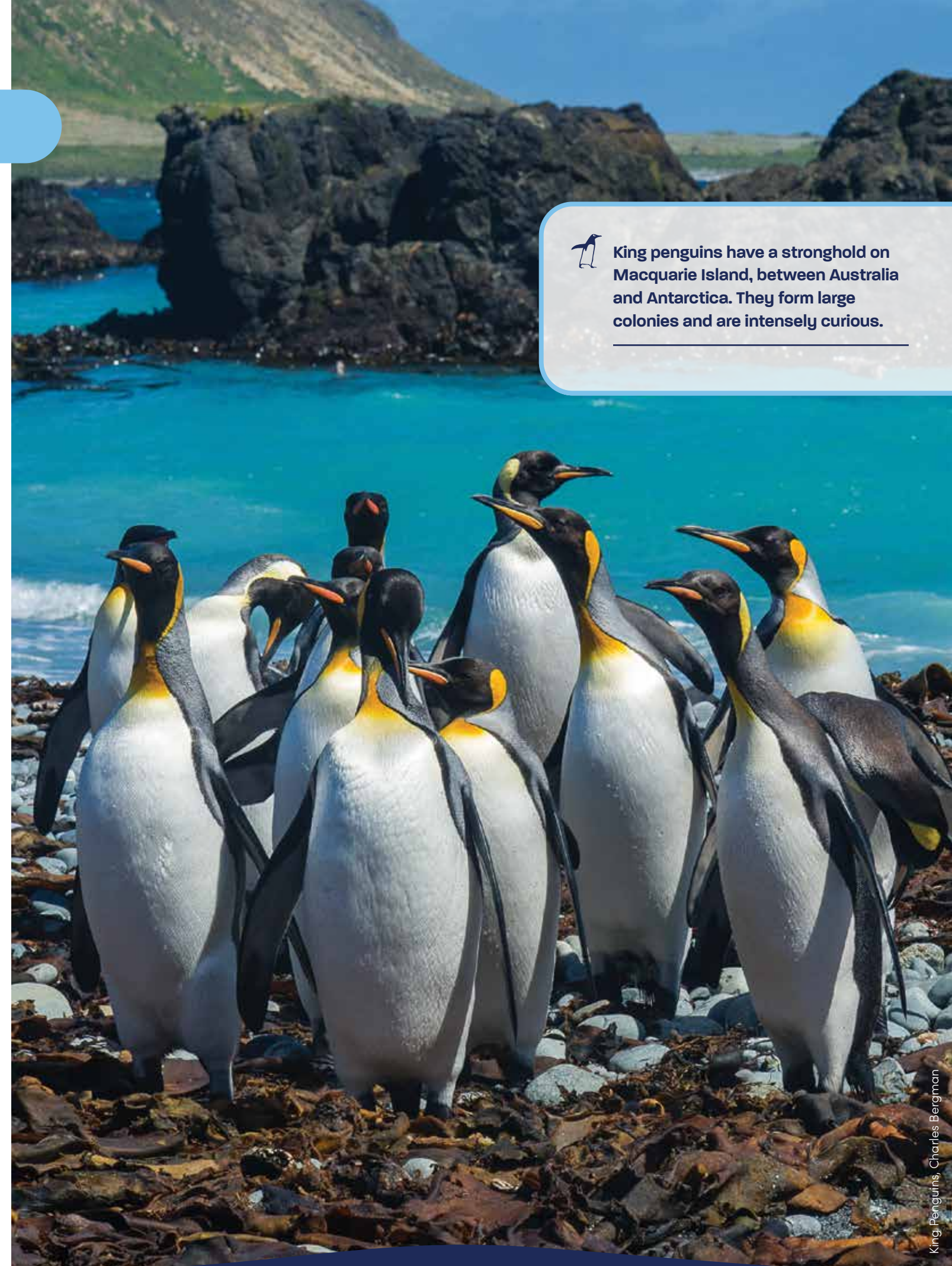
2023 Achievements

Establishing a world leading network of marine protected areas

- The High Seas Treaty was finally completed. We welcomed the completion of the High Seas Treaty – a landmark international agreement for the conservation and sustainable use of marine life in areas beyond national jurisdiction, also known as the high seas.
- The Great Sandy Marine Park got more protection, with marine sanctuary areas (Green zones) more than doubled within the marine park. Threatened species such as turtles, dugongs and the Australian humpback dolphin won a reprieve with the removal of commercial gillnets from around 65,000 hectares of Conservation Park (Yellow) zones, while the Australian east coast's only known gestation site for the critically endangered grey nurse shark got enhanced protection.
- Protect Ningaloo took its call for National Heritage listing for Exmouth Gulf to Canberra. The AMCS Protect Ningaloo team and our Patron, Tim Winton, presented a petition of more than 14,000 signatures calling for greater protection to Federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek. Then, more than 15,000 people showed their opposition to a massive industrial saltworks at Exmouth Gulf, proposed by global corporation K+S.



King penguins have a stronghold on Macquarie Island, between Australia and Antarctica. They form large colonies and are intensely curious.



King Penguins, Charles Bergman

Defending ocean habitats and species

2023 Achievements

Protecting our World Heritage

- The Australian Labor Party's national conference in August agreed to consider an application to UNESCO for the inclusion of Exmouth Gulf in the Ningaloo Coast World Heritage Area.
- The Albanese government announced in 2023 the expansion of the World Heritage-listed Macquarie Island Marine Park, bringing 93% of the island's marine area into a fully protected marine sanctuary. This lush and windy wonderland, located 1500 km south of Tasmania and halfway to Antarctica, teems with wildlife, including albatross, seals, whales and royal penguins, that are found nowhere else on Earth.
- Historic victory for our Great Barrier Reef. Federal Environment Minister Tanya Plibersek rejected the Clive Palmer-owned risky Central Queensland Coal mine – the first time a coal mine has been rejected by the federal government after assessment.
- Pressure was maintained on the World Heritage Committee to keep the Great Barrier Reef under scrutiny with UNESCO's draft decision to keep reef on watch list. We attended the World Heritage Committee meeting in Saudi Arabia, reflecting our reputation as respected experts on the Great Barrier Reef, and securing another strong Committee decision to maintain pressure on the Queensland and Australian governments to step up Reef protection through climate action, improved water quality and biodiversity conservation efforts.

Protecting and recovering threatened species

- The Queensland and federal governments committed to a net-free Reef. All Dugong Protection Areas, the most important areas for dugongs and safe havens for other protected species such as turtles, dolphins and sawfish, will be closed to gillnet fishing from January 2024. A maximum of 40 fishers remain in the fishery until the reef becomes entirely gillnet free in June 2027. The remaining fishers will be independently monitored.
- Australia has a nationwide approach to stop illegal live shark finning as Western Australia became the final state to make sure sharks are delivered to port with fins intact.
- All hammerheads are a no-take species in commercial fisheries. The Queensland government legislates the protection of all hammerhead species in state-managed waters.
- AMCS played a key role in the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation's commitment to fund a bycatch reduction trial in the trawl fishery to innovate and reduce catch of threatened sea snakes, sharks and rays.



SPOTLIGHT: The Maugean Skate

The Maugean skate (*Zearaja maugeana*) has lived in Australian waters since the Tyrannosaurus Rex roamed the Earth. Today it is found only in Macquarie Harbour, on the remote south-west coast of Tasmania. The harbour covers 300 square kilometres, making the Maugean skate one of the most geographically restricted shark or rays in the world.

Ongoing impacts of salmon farming, climate change, manipulated river flows for producing hydroelectricity, and other historical impacts could directly cause the world's first modern-day marine fish extinction within 10 years. Emergency conservation action is needed.

In 2023, the federal government took the unusual approach of releasing "Conservation Advice" for the Maugean skate in anticipation of a critically endangered listing under the EPBC Act – typically a decision is made first on a change in threat status to a species before Conservation Advice is released or updated. The independent scientific advice pointed the finger squarely at salmon aquaculture as the primary threat and a 'catastrophic' risk to the skate's existence.

AMCS is the official conservation representative on the Maugean Skate National Recovery Team, which is leading efforts to prevent the skate's extinction.



Learn more about this incredible species and how we can save it here www.marineconservation.org.au/maugean-skate

Climate action for our oceans

Campaign summary

- Reduce emissions and support rapid transition to clean energy
- Increase the resilience of our oceans
- Protect and restore blue carbon systems

Marine life, evolved over millions of years, faces severe threats from warming oceans, acidification, rising sea levels and extreme weather. To ensure a safe future for both humans and nature, we must prioritise reducing emissions, bolster natural system resilience and enhance protection for carbon-storing habitats. Addressing emissions is paramount in combating climate change, and safeguarding coastal ecosystems can efficiently sequester carbon from the atmosphere.

Throughout 2023 we pursued actions and policies to reduce emissions, support strong climate change mitigation targets and the rapid transition to clean energy. We launched our new campaign to oppose new offshore oil and gas developments and continued concerted efforts to ensure Australia's oceans are more resilient to the growing impacts of climate change.

2023 Achievements

- Plans for seismic blasting in an area covering 45,000 square kilometres of our ocean between Victoria and Tasmania, including in marine parks, was delayed following AMCS engagement with federal parliamentarians and the offshore regulator NOPSEMA.
- Over 36,000 AMCS supporters took action by making public comments to the offshore regulator NOPSEMA opposing seismic blasting proposals in our ocean and marine parks.
- The Queensland Government stepped up efforts to tackle climate change by announcing a new 75% emissions reduction target by 2035.
- AMCS called for the Queensland Government to do more to address land clearing in the Great Barrier Reef catchment, after the government released a report by the Native Vegetation Scientific Expert Panel.
- The Victorian Rock Lobster Fishery begins a new rebuilding approach for this keystone climate species that should ensure faster and more precautionary recovery in climate-impacted eastern Victorian waters.
- We continued leading on Reef water-quality issues, resulting in the Australian and Queensland governments committing funds to reduce soil erosion and sediment pollution, and towards compliance officers to enforce the Queensland reef water quality regulations.
- In partnership with WWF, we launched groundbreaking research showing how our plastics consumption contributes to the climate crisis. The report showed that the plastics Australians consume in one year produce as much greenhouse gas as 5.7 million cars on our roads annually. Crucially, the report showed that we can cut plastic emissions by up to 70% by cutting plastic use by just 10%, improving recycling rates and using renewable energy.



Blue Whale

SPOTLIGHT: Offshore Oil and Gas

In 2023 we launched a whole new campaign to halt the rampant expansion of offshore oil and gas developments.

Australia's oceans contain the richest, most diverse life on Earth. The oil and gas industry threatens our seas and marine life with damaging seismic blasting and drilling, and the very real risk of oil spills. Further fossil fuel exploration and extraction production will increase greenhouse gases adding to climate change risks.

Australia must stop allowing our ocean to be handed over to fossil fuel companies for exploration through 'acreage release' processes, and cease approving new oil and gas extraction to save our climate. This is especially crucial in our ocean where the devastating impacts of climate change and marine heatwaves pose significant threats to marine life and coastal communities.

Seismic blasting is how the oil and gas industry surveys the ocean floor. Seismic vessels tow an array of airguns and audio receivers behind them in the water. The powerful airguns fire loud blasts of compressed air every 10 to 15 seconds, 24 hours a day. The sound waves penetrate deep into the seabed to locate the most likely place to find oil and gas reserves under the ocean floor. These blasts are among the loudest human-made sounds in the ocean, just short of those caused by explosive devices, and have a devastating effect on marine life.

The next step after seismic blasting is exploration drilling. At time of publication, there are two live seismic blasting proposals and a test drilling proposal threatening marine life and ocean ecosystems in our south east ocean and commonwealth marine parks.



Take action here to halt offshore oil and gas development here
www.marineconservation.org.au/oilgas

Clean, thriving oceans



National media coverage was achieved when we launched the Plastics Emissions Report and the Supermarkets Report with the Boomerang Alliance (AMCS/Boomerang Alliance).

Campaign summary

- Support sustainable low-impact fisheries
- Tackle plastic pollution
- Promote sustainable management of our oceans

Australia's species-rich oceans have been historically misused for waste disposal and excessive exploitation. To change this, we must ensure 100% sustainable management of Australia's oceans. Key actions AMCS is taking include promoting sustainable fisheries, opposing destructive fishing practices, addressing plastic pollution at its source, and endorsing sustainable marine industries and comprehensive ocean management.

Great progress was made towards ensuring we don't take too much from our oceans. During 2023 we updated our GoodFish Sustainable Seafood Guide – although the

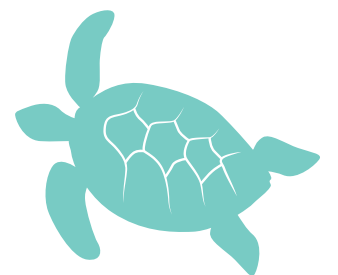
word update seems inadequate to describe the huge amount of work involved in assessing individual fisheries. It's the robust nature of the data and research that AMCS undertakes that makes GoodFish the most reliable, accurate and trusted source of information consumers can use to inform their seafood choices.

Australia's imported seafood also faced wider scrutiny thanks to our Fair Catch campaign, which targets the illegal, unregulated and unsustainable seafood that enters our market with alarming freedom.

Our campaign to stem the tide of plastics flowing into our oceans progressed in leaps and bounds in 2023. More state governments announced further restrictions on single-use plastics, Australia is taking a leading role in establishing a Global Plastics Treaty, and we launched a major report into Australia's supermarkets and their bad plastics habits.

2023 Achievements

- Further single-use plastics bans continued to be rolled out nationwide, with Victoria's ban commencing on non-reusable plastic items, and the ACT, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia adding more items to the growing list of problematic single-use plastics banned in their jurisdictions.
- Following advocacy from AMCS supporters, Queensland announced its plan to expand the Container Deposit Scheme to include glass wine and spirit bottles.
- Australia's Environment Ministers committed to transition Australia to a circular economy and agreed to make industry responsible for the packaging they place on the market.
- The Australian government announced a new \$60 million investment in hard-to-recycle plastics recycling, including soft plastics.
- Coles and Woolies joined ALDI in committing to phase-out heavyweight plastic shopping bags.
- AMCS and the Boomerang Alliance launched the findings of our first annual audit of supermarket plastics, holding the major supermarkets accountable for their lack of progress. The report Unwrapped: Plastic Use in Australian Supermarkets secured national media attention.
- AMCS participated in the third session of negotiations on a global plastics treaty in Nairobi, Kenya, which brought progress on measures to address ghost fishing gear across the full lifecycle.
- Large foreign factory trawlers from New Zealand have stayed home for the first time in several years, instead of fishing Tasmanian deepwater seamounts for winter breeding aggregations of orange roughy. This was a win for these fish and for deep sea coral reefs in Australia's most destructive fishery, and comes from AMCS and WWF preventing eco-certification greenwashing in 2021, taking away their lucrative export market access.
- The GoodFish app was relaunched. The redeveloped app for Android and Apple not only enables Australians to easily make sustainable seafood choices, but also allows them "favourite" seafood options and find out which GoodFish partner is nearest to them.
- Progress was made towards better seafood labelling. From 2025, menus in all restaurants, cafes and clubs in Australia must tell you if seafood is from Australia, imported or mixed sources. It's a good step towards traceability and transparency, but AMCS will be campaigning for much better labelling, including where the seafood was caught, where it was processed, and whether it's farmed or wild caught.



Single-use plastics bans continued to be rolled out nationwide.

Ben Shewry (chef and founder, Attica) and Dr Leonardo Guida serve up some sustainable fish and chips at our GoodFish and Chips Van event in Bondi, NSW.



SPOTLIGHT: Goodfish

Fish now, fish forever

Imagine if you went to a butcher and the meat was labelled only as red meat or white meat rather than whether it's beef, lamb or chicken? Yet the current seafood labelling rules are so flimsy that some seafood products are simply labelled as "fish". Until we fix our imported seafood label rules, fish from other countries – even Australian fish – have all sorts of different names.

AMCS is calling for clearer, more transparent labelling of all seafood products to ensure consumers are given the right to choose.

The best way to choose sustainable seafood is still to use the GoodFish Sustainable Seafood Guide.



You can find it in our new app, along with hospitality venues all over the country who have pledged to go sustainable.



SPOTLIGHT: Fantastical Sharks and Rays

We launched the **Fantastical Sharks and Rays Competition** to raise awareness and drive action for threatened endemic species. The initiative is a collaboration between AMCS, HSI (through our Shark Champions alliance) and the Australian Museum. Phase 1 is a nationwide children's art competition which will inspire professional artworks of 10 endemic species. Phase 2 will be the opening of the exhibition at the Australian Museum in September 2024 where winning drawings and professional artworks will be showcased together in a multimedia educational exhibition.

Communities creating change for our oceans



AMCS supporters stood up for stronger nature laws with events around the country highlighting the urgent need for national environment law reform.



Campaign summary

- Empower communities to create change for our oceans
- Support Traditional Owners to manage Sea Country
- Promote sea smart living

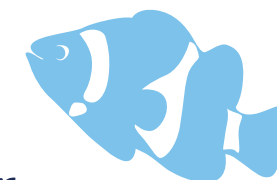
AMCS is able to achieve more for our oceans with our crew of fantastic supporters. Through our campaigns, we empower communities to create waves in marine conservation. The 2023 referendum on the Voice to

Parliament was unsuccessful, but we remain committed to playing a role in reconciliation and championing the rights of First Nations people to manage Sea Country. Our mission to protect and restore our marine estate and incredible diversity of wildlife is founded on our collective responsibility to minimise our impact on both land and ocean. Fostering partnerships and community engagement across Australia is vital for safeguarding our coasts and oceans, leading to healthier communities and marine environments.

2023 Achievements

- We supported Aboriginal Traditional Owners to advocate for the protection of their Sea Country within Australia and abroad by facilitating remote Aboriginal Rangers, Traditional Owners and Custodians to attend the 5th International Marine Protected Area Congress (IMPAC5) in Vancouver, Canada, alongside First Nations peoples from across the world.
- We supported Sea Country Planning and Aboriginal led development of the Limmen Bight Marine Park zoning plan.
- We increased the number of Reef tourism operators who want to speak out about the Reef and are happy to talk to the media at short notice, through the work of our stakeholder engagement officer Fran Rudischhauser. With our colleagues and partners on the Great Barrier Reef coast, we coordinated media coverage so that tourism operators have their voices heard in more traditionally conservative media, including the Cairns Post, Daily Telegraph and Herald Sun. Media training conducted by our communications team is resulting in more Reef tourism leaders being able to tell their stories and garner attention for the human and economic impact of an ailing Great Barrier Reef.
- At the first Queensland government regional parliamentary sitting in Cairns in 15 years, we took the opportunity to spread the message that we need stronger emissions reduction targets to help protect the Great Barrier Reef, gaining media attention and taking to the streets with a rally calling for climate action now.
- AMCS stood up in support of establishing the Voice to Parliament at the 2023 referendum because decisions about the protection and management of our shared natural heritage will be better, more effective and longer-lasting if made together. While the result was disappointing, AMCS reaffirmed its commitment to First Nations justice.
- We increased our collaboration with Traditional Owners at Exmouth Gulf Nyinggulu, in working for the health and protection of this important marine area.
- Achieving a strong media presence helps us gain attention for issues and deepens our engagement with decision-makers including ministers, crossbench and policy advisors. Throughout 2023 AMCS had widespread coverage in national broadcast, print and digital media, confirming our position as a trusted source of credible facts and opinions on marine conservation issues.

Achieving a strong media presence helps us gain attention for issues and deepens our engagement with decision-makers.



Strong, effective and respected leadership



Scan to view
**How Petitions
Work** video.



2023 Achievements

- Our crew of supporters around Australia is growing and to make sure we're providing the best opportunities for people to join our campaigns we needed a new system to handle the numbers. A new database project was rolled out during the year, which was a mammoth but necessary task. Sophisticated systems are crucial to enable us to campaign with the support of our communities.
- Our teams expanded with a new Reef community campaigner, two new crewmates in the Plastics Team who took charge of our new supermarket plastics campaign, a whole new team for the new Offshore Oil and Gas Campaign and a new communications manager for Protect Ningaloo.
- The *Voice of the Sea* campaign continued to collect prestigious awards for its impact on highlighting the plight of our oceans and marine life, and in 2023 we hit the red carpet, winning an ARIA Award for Best Use of an Australian Recording in an Advertisement. The campaign was produced by creative agency Innocean.
- Throughout the year we smashed media coverage records, spotlighting the biggest marine issues in the public and gaining the attention of decision makers with the power to bring desperately needed changes for our oceans and marine wildlife.
- Our presence on social media has also intensified, and we clocked over 33,000 followers on Instagram – an important channel to reach supporters.
- Our online store expanded, bringing much needed funds from the sales of top quality, ethically and sustainably made merchandise. Retail sales are up 250%.

Campaign summary

- Build a powerful community of supporters
- Nurture and empower our team
- Ensure we are a well governed and sustainable organisation

For AMCS to remain a strong and effective advocate for oceans in the future, it's crucial that we have solid foundations. Our supporters form the backbone of AMCS, shaping our work, influence, achievements and longevity. By fostering a dedicated team of staff and volunteers, ensuring financial stability, and upholding effective planning and governance, AMCS will expand its influence and effectiveness.

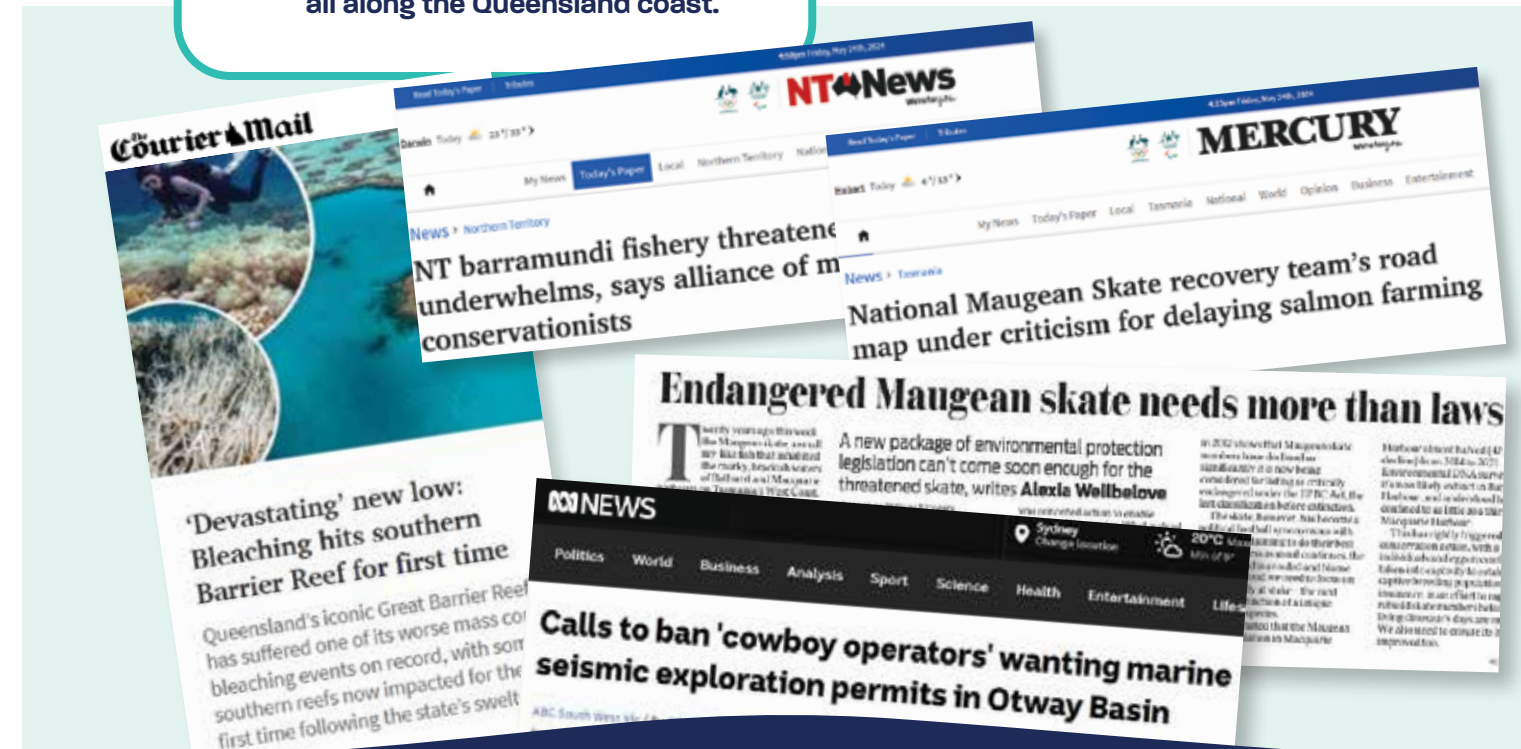
This year, we have seen significant achievements in strengthening our team and enhancing governance. We proudly

maintained a strong recruitment program, attracting experienced and passionate staff, and continued with low staff turnover. We also welcomed a new president. Penelope Figgis AO, who joined us in August 2023.

Our commitment to continuous improvement of our team was demonstrated through training opportunities focused on management, advocacy and other important organisational skills. Enhancements in financial management, the launch of a new database (CRM) system, and strengthened IT and cybersecurity measures ensure we remain a resilient and steadfast organisation. These efforts strengthen our foundation, enabling us to better serve our mission and prepare for future challenges and opportunities.



The gillnets story ran on ABC online and radio nationally, News Corp, Nine, Yahoo and commercial radio all along the Queensland coast.



GRATITUDE REPORT:

Protecting our oceans together

Thank you

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our ocean-loving community that stood by us in 2023.

Your support has significantly bolstered our efforts to safeguard marine wildlife. We're profoundly moved by the generosity of ocean enthusiasts in Australia and supporters worldwide who back our mission.

Volunteers

AMCS draws strength from a dedicated volunteer base of ocean enthusiasts across the nation. Our committed volunteers play pivotal roles through campaigns, informational booths, fundraising, and office assistance. Additionally, a special thanks to the generosity of our pro bono photographers and videographers for sharing their stunning imagery in support of marine conservation.

Members

A heartfelt thanks to our Honorary Life Members, for their extended service and dedication, and to all Members for your steadfast support in 2023. As valued members of the AMCS community, your ongoing contributions play a crucial role in the sustained effort to protect our beautiful oceans and sea life.

Ambassadors

AMCS welcomes the support of musicians, photographers, actors, chefs and other well known people who generously help us raise awareness and drive action for marine conservation through their fame. Whether it's advocating to protect Australian sea lions, writing an op-ed on the benefits of marine sanctuaries, providing images that help us tell the stories, or simply sharing our important messages, celebrities can help AMCS achieve impacts that protect and restore our oceans.

In 2023 we recognise and thank the following Ambassadors for our oceans:

- Ben Shewry, Owner and Chef, Attica @atticamelbourne
- John Williamson, singer, songwriter, Australian legend

Our Patron

Thank you to Tim Winton who remains a committed advocate for and patron of AMCS and Protect Ningaloo, and who was awarded an Order of Australia (AO) during 2023 for his services to literature and environmental conservation.

Special mentions

And a special mention to our creative agency partners, Innocean Australia, who have provided significant in-kind support through the creation and execution of the award winning Voice of the Sea creative campaign. We also thank the following for bringing the Voice of the Sea project to life:

Warner Music Australia

Director and animator: Jono Chong (Dropbear)

Illustrator: Andrea Innocent

Executive Producer: Oliver Lawrance (Photoplay/Playtime)

Donors

Ocean champions give to ensure AMCS can meet our mission to connect people, science and action to protect Australia's extraordinary oceans. They are the wind in our sails.

Advocates


With over 133,692 actions taken in 2023 we are blown away by the huge wave of support for ocean conservation, thank you!

You signed petitions, sent emails directly to MPs, attended rallies, webinars and community events, created signs and pledged to take action.


Your actions have an impact - when nature is a priority for Australians, it becomes a priority for the Government too. Thank you for being a part of a critical decade for our oceans.

Funding Our Mission 2023

Our financial supporters are guardians of our marine life. They give our oceans a voice. These ocean champions ensure AMCS can meet our mission to connect people, science and action to protect Australia's extraordinary oceans. Because of their extraordinary support, AMCS has had a strong year and we were able to achieve more ocean conservation outcomes than we had planned.

 **MARINE CHAMPIONS:** Amazing ocean champions, everyday ocean lovers like you and me, chip in to ensure our oceans have a voice. We are humbled and filled with joy that our strong community of passionate supporters choose to support marine advocacy and conservation. All of their support underpins all of our work.

We acknowledge individuals and organisations for their generous contributions in 2023. Thank you.


 **WORLD OCEANS DAY:** World Oceans Day is a global day to celebrate our amazing oceans. AMCS marks this day by hosting an annual matched-giving day to raise funds to protect marine life. In 2023, the ocean-loving community rallied behind a simple idea – oceans matter – and raised \$1.019 million to significantly boost and ensure that marine conservation projects such as opposing the largest fossil fuel seismic blasting on record and banning gillnets in dugong-protected areas on the Great Barrier Reef. **W:** worldoceansday.org.au.


We acknowledge individuals and organisations for their generous Wavemaker-matched giving contributions in 2023.

 **AMCS SHOP:** Look Good. Feel Good. Do Good. Supporters who shop with AMCS not only look good in marine-themed gear, they feel good in ethically sourced materials and do good with all proceeds supporting marine conservation. In 2023 we wanted to celebrate our ocean-loving community with new gear for *thalasophiles* (ocean lovers) to wear – and our community responded with our best merchandise sales year on record. We thank our supporters for contributing over \$116,000 towards our work in 2023. **W:** amcs.org.au/shop

 **SEA GUARDIANS:** Sea Guardians are a community of dedicated ocean lovers, who fight to protect our oceans and precious marine life with a monthly gift. They are the lifeblood of all we do. We thank our champions of ocean conservation for contributing \$973,524 as a collective community in 2023. **W:** amcs.org.au/seaguardian.

We acknowledge our Sea Guardians for their generous contributions in 2023 please visit amcs.org.au/2023GratitudeRoll.


 **OCEAN LEGACY CIRCLE:** Ocean Legacy gifts are bequest gifts that leave a legacy reflecting your life's passion and the world you want to leave for future generations. We respectfully remember and honour these legacy gifts left to ocean conservation in 2023.

 **PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORTERS:** Generous supporters from philanthropic individuals to trusts and foundations have contributed significant gifts to ensure marine conservation has a voice, one that is amplified so those who need to hear it, hear it loud and clear. We thank these supporters who have made significant gifts in 2023, contributing more than \$1.329 million and creating a foundation for all the work we do.


We acknowledge individuals and organisations for their generous contributions in 2023.

 **BUSINESS SUPPORTERS:** AMCS is proud to work with our business supporters, both large and small. This community contributed more than \$302,000 to ocean conservation in 2023. The value of this support isn't just measured in dollars. Our business supporters lead by example by constantly striving to improve their products and practices, and to operate in the most ethical and sustainable ways possible. We would like to thank our business community for being a force of change for marine conservation.

We acknowledge our business supporters for their contributions in 2023.

 **COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING:** From children to adults, our community fundraisers have made a world of difference for our seas. From collecting containers for change, school discos, cupcake stalls, hiking on an Intrepid Adventure or celebrating a birthday, these supporters have collectively raised more than \$178,000 by rallying their local community to collect funds for ocean conservation.

We would like to acknowledge our community fundraisers for their generous contributions in 2023.

 **GRANTS FUNDING:** We thank and recognise the significant investment in ocean conservation made by funders contributing more than \$4.565 million to ensure we have thriving oceans now and into the future.

We acknowledge with gratitude the Foundations, Trusts, Organisations and Philanthropic Collectives on this year's honor roll for their generous contributions in 2023.

We acknowledge individuals and organisations for their generous contributions in 2023.

Please visit amcs.org.au/2023GratitudeRoll



Right Whale with calf

World Oceans Day Impact Report

Last year our World Oceans Day Wavemakers and 2,499 ocean lovers gave an astonishing \$1,019,790 towards ocean conservation that enabled us to achieve momentous impacts in the following months and year.

This fantastic outcome didn't just allow us to extend the reach and impact of our existing campaigns, it meant we were able to make a range of significant new ocean conservation projects a reality in 2023.

KEEP TOP END COASTS HEALTHY (KTECH):

Our Northern Territory campaign is helping protect one of the last relatively pristine tropical coastlines.

Your WOD support helped to build the local community campaign to protect Darwin Harbour – the heart of the city – from massive industrialisation. You helped to facilitate remote Aboriginal Traditional Owners and Sea Rangers to travel to Darwin to engage with Ministers, Senators and the community on protection of sea country and marine parks. You helped us to continue to work with government and Traditional Owners on developing the Limmen Bight Marine Park extension and zoning plan, as well as the next NT marine park.

FIGHTING FOR OUR REEF:

We've been relentlessly fighting to protect the Great Barrier Reef since 1965.

This year is no exception, and since World Oceans Day, you supported us in getting gill nets banned in dugong protected areas in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area starting this year. Your support helped us to campaign on the threat of climate change on the Great Barrier, which led to the Queensland Government committing to cut greenhouse gas emission by 75% by 2035.

PLASTIC BALLOON BAN:

Balloons are the #1 most lethal plastic for seabirds, and highly lethal for turtles who mistake them for jellyfish (their favourite food).

Now thanks to you, the QLD Government has banned deliberate balloon releases from September 2023, and the NSW government is proposing a ban too! With your help, we were able to reach communities all over the country with our message and deliver over 18,000 signatures calling for an end to mass balloon releases.

NATURE LAW REFORMS:

Our national environment laws need to be much stronger to protect our marine environment and prevent extinctions of unique species such as the Maugean skate.

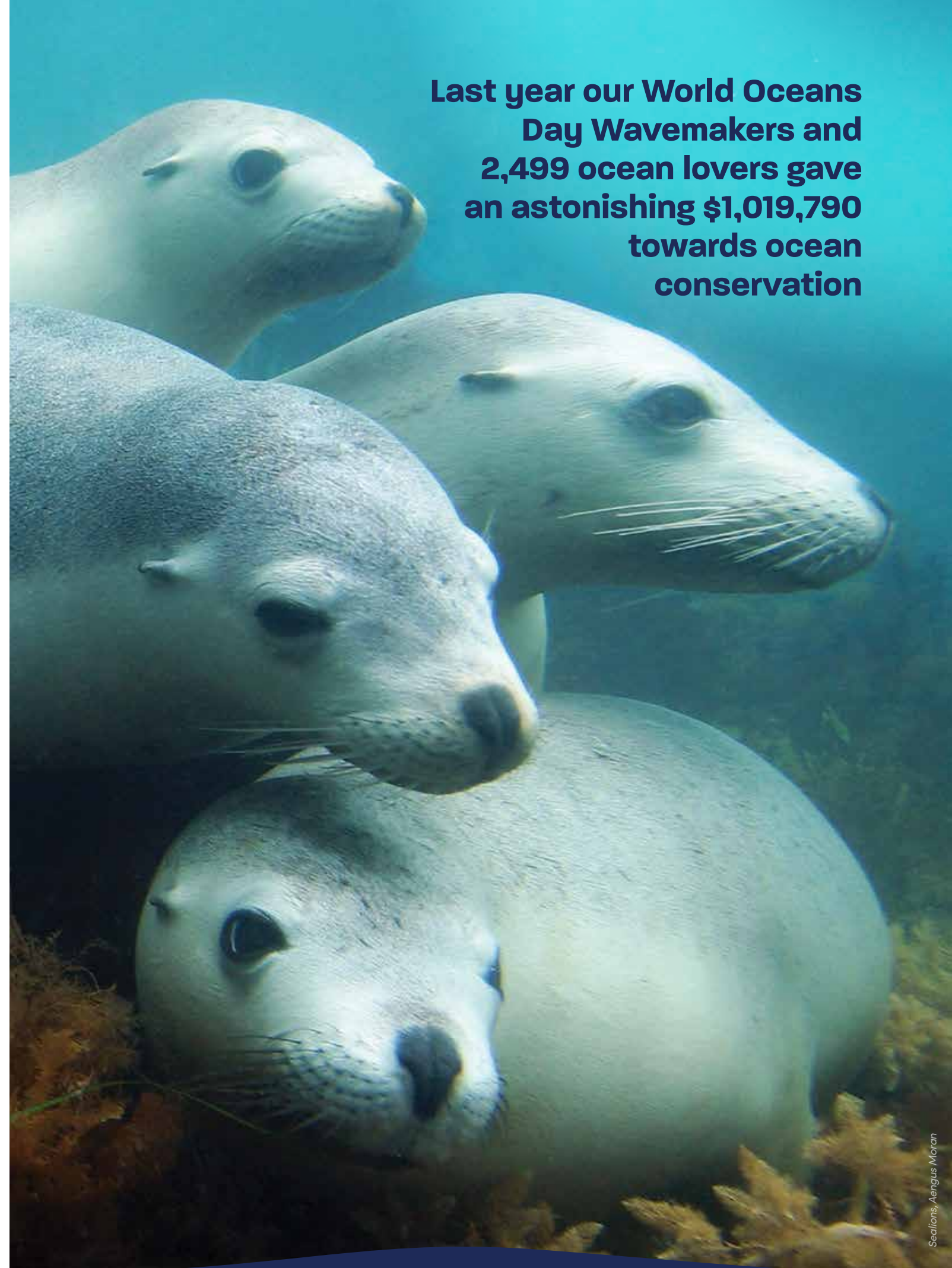
You have helped ensure these reforms have finally commenced, and we're continuing to work hard to make sure they better protect our oceans. We expect the new legislation will be introduced to Parliament in mid 2024. Your support has helped us to put these reforms high on the government's agenda and you're helping us to ensure they are the best we can possibly secure in the crucial months ahead.

GOODFISH:

We wanted to expand our GoodFish program and increase the impact of our sustainable seafood work.

You helped us achieve that – in the last few months we have updated the assessments on the guide so Australians have the most up to date information to inform our sustainable seafood choices. You also helped us relaunch our groundbreaking GoodFish sustainable seafood finder app and release SIX films highlighting sustainable aquaculture operations around the country.

Last year our World Oceans Day Wavemakers and 2,499 ocean lovers gave an astonishing \$1,019,790 towards ocean conservation

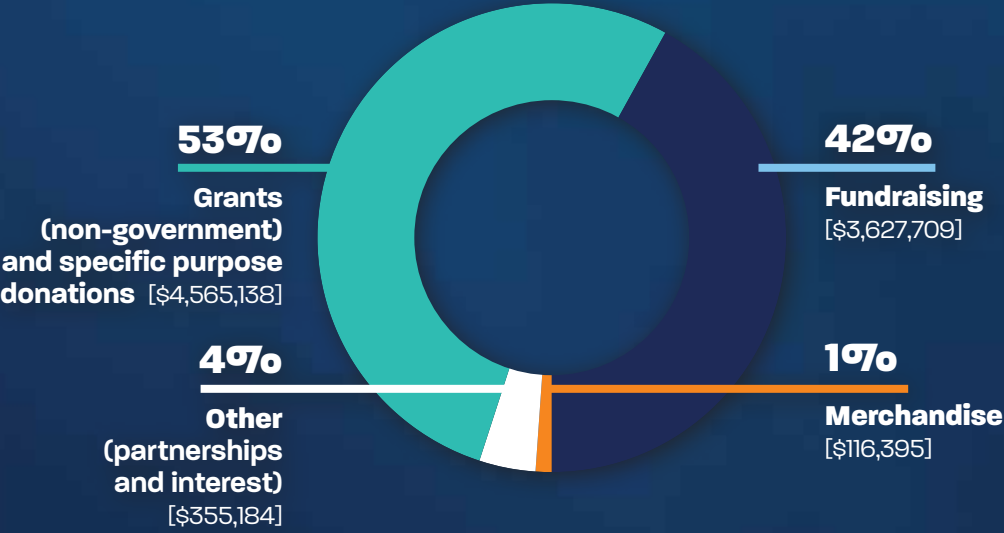


2023 Financial Summary

Every dollar spent on fundraising raised **12 more dollars** to fund our critical conservation work

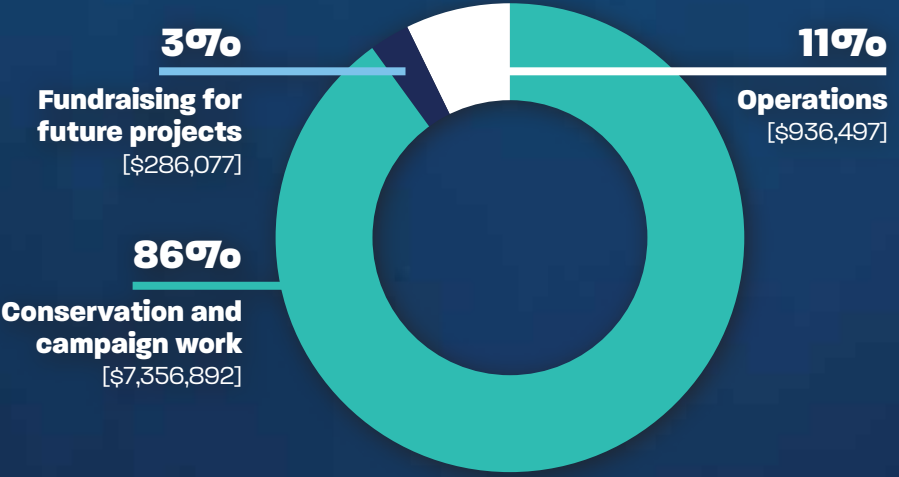
INCOME:

\$8,664,426



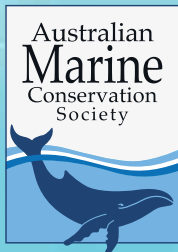
EXPENDITURE:

\$8,579,466



Our full audited financial accounts can be found at www.marineconservation.org.au/annual-reports-audited-accounts

Blue whale



Thank you

Contact Details

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-  amcs@amcs.org.au



The Australian Marine Conservation Society acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land and sea country, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We acknowledge that this land and sea was and always will be Aboriginal land and sea.



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