

## **“OCEAN TRIBUTE” AWARD 2026: FIVE NOMINEES FOR PUBLIC VOTE**

Marine conservation is in the public spotlight with prominent supporters

With the initiation of the ocean tribute award in 2017, the Monegasque Prince Albert II Foundation, the German Ocean Foundation and boot Düsseldorf set themselves a clear guideline: To support people, projects or initiatives in their commitment to marine conservation. boot director Petros Michelidakis stated: “With the ocean tribute, we want to raise awareness for extraordinary projects and show what is possible and, above all, what is necessary. All of the projects nominated by the jury represent the respect we should show for the oceans on this planet.” boot, the world's largest yacht and water sports trade fair, will be held from January 17 – 25, 2026 at the fairgrounds in Düsseldorf, Germany.

The ocean tribute Award 2025 is now entering the final route. After the award jury has reviewed all submitted applications in terms of effectiveness, participation and networking and selected five particularly worthy finalists, the public is invited to vote for their favorite marine conservation projects at [https://www.boot.com/ota\\_2](https://www.boot.com/ota_2) . Public voting ends on December 19.

On January 20, 2026, the winning project will be presented and announced at a ceremony in the Düsseldorf City Hall. The award comes with a prize of €20,000.

The following five projects have been nominated (in alphabetical order):

### **Iberian Orca Guardians / Spain**

The Iberian Orca Guardians are campaigning to protect one of the rarest orca populations in Europe with the “Save The Iberian Orca” campaign. Only around 35 individuals still live in the waters of the Strait of Gibraltar and off the Iberian Peninsula. They are threatened by shipping traffic, illegal fishing, human aggression and invasive research. The approach: raising awareness, patrols at sea and non-invasive research. They actively promote the co-existence of orcas and humans and build bridges to the sailing community travelling in the same habitat. We raise awareness of the critical situation of animals through documentation, international media work and educational projects. The aim is to ensure the long-term protection of Iberian orcas and to preserve them as part of Europe's natural and cultural heritage.

### **Marinecultures.org / Switzerland/Zanzibar**

The oceans are under huge pressure: climate change, overfishing and pollution are threatening coral reefs – hotspots of biodiversity. Intact reefs provide food, coastal protection and habitats. Their conservation is crucial for humans and the sea. Coral restoration & sponge farms [marinecultures.org](https://marinecultures.org) has been operating coral farms in Zanzibar and on the Tanzanian mainland since 2008. Marinecultures.org maintains 40 coral tables per farm and plants up to 10,000 corals per year on degraded reefs. This revitalization creates biodiversity and new habitats for fish, increasing the fish population in the long term. In addition, they are working with partners to develop the innovative project of larval propagation – the sexual reproduction of corals – to promote genetically more diverse and resilient reefs. In addition, they have established sustainable sponge farming as an environmentally friendly form of aquaculture. Sponges clean the seawater, improving reef health and providing women's co-operatives with a stable income. Their sponge farms thus combine ecological impact with social empowerment and offer a sustainable alternative to fishing.

### **One Ocean Planet Foundation / Spain**

One Ocean Planet Education is a global program that places children and youth at the center of climate and ocean action. Their goal is simple: it's time to stop saying the problem is someone else's and empower the next generation to act now. Through their global campaign The Power is in Us, they inspire students to see themselves as part of the solution. The foundation works through three interconnected initiatives: University Challenge, engaging master's students in real-world problem solving; Generation Blue, a school curriculum blending Carlos Duarte's Ocean Wedges, Planetary Boundaries and kindness with project-based learning; and Hero Kids, a youth-led movement sparking early action. In partnership with 10% for the Ocean, they launch their entry with the powerful documentary Ocean with David Attenborough, helping schools and communities understand why the ocean is central to solving climate change. Because the future is blue — and it starts in our classrooms.

### **Sailing Insieme / F2 Eco / Austria**

F2 Eco is the consistently environmentally friendly antifouling alternative: an extremely hard, smooth coating that inhibits fouling and can be easily cleaned mechanically if necessary – without releasing toxins into the environment. F2 Eco contains no biocides, no silicone, no PFAS/PTFE, no VOCs and no other toxins. No washout, no annual repainting: one application protects for 5+ years and significantly reduces material and labor costs. Suitable for GRP, aluminum, steel and wood; visually high-quality and can also be used as osmosis and propeller protection. This reduces the amount of pollutants and microplastics – in

harbors, estuaries and inland waters. Their attitude: every hull matters. Let's change the way we do antifouling.

### **Turtle Foundation / Cape Verde**

On the Cape Verdean island of Boa Vista, we protect the endangered loggerhead turtle, whose nesting beaches are among the most important in the world. Local rangers and international volunteers protect the mother animals from poaching while they are laying their eggs. At the same time, the foundation cleans beaches of plastic waste, which is processed into sustainable products in their upcycling initiative LixoLimpó. Educational programs, workshops and, in particular, swimming courses for children promote environmental awareness: by gaining confidence in the sea, children develop a personal connection and a sense of responsibility for the oceans. The involvement of schools, volunteers and partner organizations creates a network that passes on knowledge, stimulates commitment and has a tangible long-term impact on coastal ecosystems. The project combines species conservation, education and community and brings to life the importance of healthy oceans for people and nature.

For information on visiting or exhibiting at boot 2026, contact Messe Düsseldorf North America; Telephone: (312) 781-5180; E-mail: [info@mdna.com](mailto:info@mdna.com); Visit [www.boot.com](http://www.boot.com) and [www.mdna.com](http://www.mdna.com). Follow us on <https://www.linkedin.com/company/mdnachicago/>

For hotel information, contact TTI Travel, Inc. at (866) 674-3476; E-mail: [info@ttitravel.net](mailto:info@ttitravel.net); [www.ttitravel.net](http://www.ttitravel.net) or use the booking platform on the boot website: [https://www.boot.com/en/Exhibit/Information/Hotel\\_CityInfos](https://www.boot.com/en/Exhibit/Information/Hotel_CityInfos)

### **The world's largest yacht and water sports trade fair**

With more than 200,000 visitors from over 100 countries and 1,500 exhibitors on 220,000 square meters in Halls 1 to 17, boot Düsseldorf is the world's largest yacht and water sports fair. Both sailors and motor boaters will find a wide variety of boats, dinghies, superboats or luxury yachts. The popular water sports of diving, surfing, kite surfing, stand up paddling, skimboarding or canoeing are available at boot in all facets and with the appropriate equipment. Attractive stage programs with the stars of the scene, the latest trends and a high-caliber mix of workshops and hands-on activities, both for leisure sports enthusiasts and experts, make the trade fair unique worldwide. But marine conservation and innovative, sustainable technologies will also be in focus at boot 2026. In cooperation with the European Boating Industry (EBI), for example, the blue innovation dock offers a unique dialogue format with political, economic, technological and media expertise. The next edition of boot Düsseldorf will open its doors from January 17 – 25, 2026. [www.boot.com](http://www.boot.com)