

How The Ocean Race 2022-23 drove action to protect the seas

The Ocean Race 2022-23 featured the most ambitious sustainability programme in the Race's 50 year history

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- * The Race featured the most comprehensive science programme created by a sporting event, with more than 4 million pieces of ocean data collected
- * Support for Ocean Rights was gathered throughout the world, from heads of state to race fans
- * 30,000 school children learnt about ocean health in the Race's host cities
- * The event was Climate Positive, with emissions reduced by over 75% compared with the previous edition

The Ocean Race 2022-23 featured the most ambitious sustainability programme in the Race's 50 year history, including initiatives that were firsts in the event industry and sports' world, from efforts to influence global ocean policy to pioneering ways to reduce plastic on site.

Driving support for the recognition of the ocean's rights was a central theme of the round-the-world sailing Race. Through The Ocean Race Summits policy-makers, scientists, business



11th Hour Racing Team, winners of The Ocean Race 2022-23, used solar panels to generate energy onboard CREDIT Pierre Bouras / 11th Hour Racing Team / The Ocean Race



The Ocean Race 2022-23, Learning Programme at the Ocean Live Park in Cape Town CREDIT Sailing Energy / The Ocean Race

leaders, athletes, youth and ocean advocates gathered to advance solutions to protect the seas. Prime Minister of Cabo Verde, Ulisses Correia e Silva, First Lady of Panama, Débora Carvalho and Secretary of the Indigenous People Ministry of Brazil, Eunice Kerexu, were among the speakers who voiced their support for ocean rights, along with 30,000 people who signed the [One Blue Voice](#) petition for a Universal Declaration of Ocean Rights. The petition, along with draft principles on ocean rights, which have been developed in tandem, will be presented to members of the UN General Assembly in September.



GUYOT environnement - Team Europe. View of the African coast as they get closer to Cape Town CREDIT Charles Drapeau / GUYOT environnement - Team Europe / The Ocean Race

The [Racing with Purpose](#) sustainability programme, which was created in collaboration with [11th Hour Racing](#), also featured the most comprehensive science initiative created by a sporting event. The fleet - arguably the fastest 'research vessels' in the world - collected over four million measurements during the six-month race, many from remote parts of the planet where data is lacking. This information will feed into major reports about the ocean and climate.

There was a significant focus on slashing greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs), resulting in a reduction of over 75% compared with the previous edition(1). More GHGs were drawn down through supporting blue carbon restoration and conservation programmes than were produced, making the event climate positive. Sailing teams, host cities, partners and suppliers were also engaged and supported to reduce their GHGs.

Meegan Jones, Senior Sustainability Advisor, The Ocean Race said: "Sport has the power to make a difference, and in this edition of the Race we have been able to inspire action for the ocean like never before. We set out not just to make our event as sustainable as possible, but also to use our unique platform to reach diverse audiences and champion the rights of the ocean. Along the way we have gained support from heads of state, helped thousands of children understand the crucial role that the ocean plays, provided valuable data to leading science organisations and pioneered new ways to host an event sustainably.

There has also been an unprecedented spirit of collaboration during this edition of the Race. Our work wouldn't have been possible without the support of race teams, partners, and host cities. It has been the ultimate example of teamwork."

Key achievements of the Racing with Purpose sustainability programme during The Ocean Race

2022-23:

SCIENCE ONBOARD

- * Over 4 million measurements were captured by sailing teams, in the most comprehensive science initiative in the sporting world
- * 15 different types of data were captured including sea surface temperature, dissolved carbon dioxide and microplastics, along with several new variables, such as oxygen levels and trace elements
- * Innovative methods were successfully trialled, including eDNA sampling to test ocean biodiversity
- * 14 autonomous drifting buoys were deployed in the southern hemisphere
- * 13 science organisations across the world are analysing the data, which feeds into crucial reports that inform critical decisions about global environmental policy
- * A new science platform for exploring the data launched: theoceanracescience.com

OCEAN RIGHTS

- * 30,000 people signed the One Blue Voice petition calling for a Universal Declaration of Ocean Rights
- * 108,500 people visited the One Blue Voice Immersive Experience in Ocean Live Park (the site in each host city where visitors got to experience the Race firsthand) to discover the race to protect the ocean

THE OCEAN RACE SUMMITS

- * 5 Summits focused on how recognising the ocean's rights could help to protect our blue planet were held on four continents
- * Speakers included UN Secretary-General António Guterres, Prime Minister of Portugal, António Costa, Freeride World Champion 2022, Jess Hotter and Josh Angulo, World windsurfing champion
- * 150 experts took part in the Genova Process - the initiative which is drafting principles underpinning ocean rights - the results of which will be presented to members of the United Nations General Assembly in September

LEARNING

- * 30,000 school children learnt about the importance of the ocean at Ocean Live Park
- * Over 10,000 people took part in Wisdom's Way in Ocean Live Park - the self-directed, family-friendly activity, centred around ocean health, ocean rights, science and the Race

SUSTAINABLE EVENT

- * The Race was climate positive, drawing down more emissions than were produced, and organiser emissions were slashed by at least(1) 75% compared with the previous edition of the Race
- * The first circular flag(2) in sport was flown at two of the stopovers. In a pioneering initiative aimed at reducing the amount of wasted branding at event sites, 30 kg of flags from The Ocean

Race Europe were made into yarn and woven into new flags.

* No single-use plastic was used in the food and drink service at Ocean Live Park, with a range of alternatives including reusable cup systems, returnable food containers, water refill points and compostable serveware

* The Race's plastic footprint was measured⁽³⁾, marking the first time any major sporting event has taken such efforts.

ISO 20121 Event Sustainability Management System. The Ocean Race implemented the global standard in event sustainability management and was externally audited by World Sailing and certified by Bureau Veritas Italy.

Todd McGuire, Managing Director at 11th Hour Racing, Premier Partner of The Ocean Race and Founding Partner of the Racing with Purpose sustainability programme said: "Through the Racing with Purpose program, The Ocean Race has created a blueprint for how global events can use their platform to leave a positive impact and legacy."

"Our involvement with The Ocean Race is about creating lasting and positive change — and the Racing with Purpose initiatives do exactly that. They enable other sports, teams, event organisers, and communities to utilise and learn from resources that have proven successful in helping restore planetary health."

Working with partners, teams and stakeholders was critical to the sustainability efforts. All of the sailors signed The Ocean Race Team Sustainability Charter, in a fleetwide commitment to sustainable operations and supporting a healthy ocean. Teams also brought their own sustainability campaigns to the Race to encourage action for the ocean and climate.

The nine cities that hosted the Race were also instrumental to the success, with many pioneering new sustainability initiatives. For example in Aarhus, Denmark, the main stage was powered by GEM, an installation that runs off energy created by wind, solar and hydrogen fuel cell energy, while in The Hague, Netherlands, the 800 meals a day for crew and volunteers were provided via a new reusable, returnable take out container service.

FOOTNOTES

1. This reduction applies to the event organiser-controlled emissions. Specific percentage of the emissions reduction will be available later this year once all data has been processed.

Additionally, the report will include stakeholder GHG impacts and reductions.

2. A circular supply chain is where used products or their parts are returned or processed so they can be repaired, resold, refurbished or recycled – which reduces waste from the supply chain and is more sustainable

3. A detailed report on The Ocean Race's plastic footprint will be available towards the end of 2023.

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