

Women in Ocean Food goes global

The next chapter for Hatch Blue and Conservation International Venture's global movement to support female entrepreneurs in transforming aquatic food systems.

SOUTH AFRICA, July 24, 2025
/EINPresswire.com/ -- The launch coincides with the renewal of their Women in Ocean Food Latin America programme, which is set to be repeated after the success of its previous two editions.

Building on momentum from previous editions, which have taken place in Southeast Asia and Latin America, the programme is now also setting its sights on sub-Saharan Africa. With aquaculture growing rapidly across the region, there's never been a better time to back African women leading sustainable changes in seafood, conservation and marine innovation.



The next editions of the Women in Ocean Food programme will take place in East Africa (starting December 2025) and Mexico (starting January 2026). The programme is moving from a 2-week to a 12-month format. Applications are now open for both editions.

As Wayne Murphy, co-founder of [Hatch Blue](#), reflects: "The Women in Ocean Food programme has been an inspiring journey, bringing together remarkable companies and visionary female leaders from around the world. We're now thrilled to expand this initiative to Africa, building on the momentum and impact of our previous programmes, most recently in Latin America. The LATAM community continues to thrive, strengthened by a growing network and the unwavering support its members offer one another. Our goal is to foster that same sense of connection, collaboration and empowerment within the African community.

"By expanding to Africa, we are taking a significant step in our mission to build a powerful, diverse, and interconnected global network of female entrepreneurs, one that is shaping the future of sustainable blue food systems where it matters most."

Since its foundation in 2021, Women in Ocean Food has supported over 70 women globally. Programme alumni have collectively raised over \$263 million and, in Latin America alone,

created 34 jobs since 2024. The African edition will support both scalable startups and locally rooted businesses through hands-on venture support, mentorship, and access to a global network of mentors and experts.

"Women in Ocean Food recognises African women entrepreneurs' critical stewardship role for ocean health and socio-economic development. CI Ventures is thus delighted at this unique opportunity to broaden and deepen our investments in Africa's seascapes for the prosperity of the people and the oceans." said Bjorn Stauch, senior vice-president, [Conservation International Ventures](#).

The programme will be delivered by Hatch Blue and Conservation International Ventures, combining expertise in startup acceleration and impact investing. This partnership allows support for a wide range of solutions, both startups and local businesses, each playing a crucial role in building sustainable ocean food systems.

The details

The 12-month African edition of Women in Ocean Food will kick off in December 2025, and will be hosted in East Africa, although the exact location is still to be confirmed. It has been made possible thanks to the support of the DOEN Foundation and Mustard Seed Foundation and applications are open from across sub-Saharan Africa.

"Sub-Saharan Africa is a priority for Conservation International, and we're thrilled to launch the Women in Ocean Food innovation studio in the region. On a personal note, I'm especially excited to begin reviewing applications - we know the talent and innovation among female entrepreneurs here will be truly outstanding," explains Gracie White, director, Conservation International Ventures.

"The blue economy in Africa offers great potential for both regeneration of our marine ecosystems as well as entrepreneurship for (coastal) communities. Women especially play an important role in the sector and livelihoods in African coastal regions. The Women in Ocean Food programme from Hatch Blue aims to help female entrepreneurs in the development of their plans and thereby accelerates the African blue economy," adds Maaïke Broekhuis, programme manager regenerative economy, DOEN Foundation.

Meanwhile, Women in Ocean Food will return to La Paz, Mexico, at the end of January 2026, to support Latin American and Caribbean female startup founders, entrepreneurs and community leaders who are building solutions and driving change across sustainable aquaculture, marine biotech, seafood value chains, ocean conservation and blue carbon.

Businesses that participated in previous editions have achieved notable successes. Aquit raised \$832,000 in a pre-seed round led by Hatch Blue and GridX. Marea Rosa became the first shrimp farm on the continent to join ASC's Improver Programme after being introduced to ASC through

the programme. And several participants have also been invited to speak at prominent industry events, thanks to the Hatch Blue network.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the programme has been possible by the continued sponsorship from Alumbra Innovations Foundations, Builders Initiative, Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC), Schmidt Marine Technology Partners, a program of The Schmidt Family Foundation, Beyster Foundation for Enterprise Development and Sea Forward Fund.

Further information

Applications are now open for both Women in Ocean Food Africa and Latin America & the Caribbean.

Apply for Africa by 17 October, 2025:

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/HATCHBlue1/WomenInOceanFoodAfrica>

Apply for Latin America by 31 October, 2025:

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/HATCHBlue1/WomenInOceanFoodLatinAmericaCaribbean>

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