

# Our action plan

for a thriving protected  
ocean supporting species,  
people and planet



## Our ocean covers over 70% of our planet. It provides more than half the oxygen we breathe and absorbs nearly a third of our carbon emissions

But today, it's in poor health because of human activity. Right now, we're polluting our waters and destroying precious habitats. This is not only harming the species that live there, it's also reducing the ocean's ability to help fight the climate crisis.

We must come together for the future of our ocean to protect habitats and regenerate ecosystems in partnership with communities, businesses and governments.

### Our purpose is to regenerate and enhance the health of our ocean by:



# 70%

of our planet is ocean



#### Enabling Ocean Regeneration

Working with communities, partners and companies, to regenerate healthy seas, to enhance biodiversity, protect marine life and support resilient coastal economies.



#### Ensuring Effective Ocean Management

Adopting a whole-seas approach that is supported by effective management of fishing, investment and offshore development to ensure industries prioritise ocean health and regeneration.



#### Ending Ocean Pollution

Tackling harmful forever chemicals, single-use plastics and sewage at local and government level to improve water quality and help our rivers and seas recover.



**A thriving protected ocean will support all people and our planet. We must take action today to protect our seas and all life in them for the sake of tomorrow**



Sandy Luk, CEO, Marine Conservation Society

## Our security at risk



Marine pollution and industrial use of our ocean is fueling the biodiversity crisis, **threatening 37% of marine mammals with extinction** and destroying habitats and fish populations.



Oysters and blue mussels that purify the ocean, and seagrass meadows that provide some of the most effective carbon stores in the world are our strongest allies in the fight against climate change. **But populations have collapsed.**



**Every year, between 8 and 13 million tonnes of plastic enters our ocean**, whilst harmful forever chemicals like PFAS enter our rivers and seas but never break down. They pollute everything from plankton to porpoises and will impact the marine ecosystem for generations.



The ocean is increasingly used for energy production, shipping, fishing, tourism, and other industries, leading to competition for space and resources. **This increased human activity places additional stress on marine ecosystems.**



**Sea temperatures are rising faster than ever before**, and the ocean is becoming increasingly acidic making it harder for life to survive



**This action plan sets out how we will fight for the future of our ocean by driving political and social change through people, partnerships, science and evidence to regenerate and enhance the health of our ocean**



## Enabling Ocean Regeneration

**Our projects deliver increased ocean health and resilience, greater species richness and abundance, and an improved ability for the ocean to protect our world against the impacts of climate change**

**We will do this by:**

- **Strengthening ecosystem resilience** by establishing a suite of scalable projects to support marine ecosystems. Delivering and developing community-led, place-based marine regeneration projects across UK seas that test and apply innovative approaches and generate the biological, social, and economic evidence needed to scale marine recovery
- **Improving marine protection, sustainable fisheries, and priority species and habitats in the UK Overseas Territories** by establishing community conservation projects and supporting governments, communities, and partners to contribute to targeted, locally appropriate marine regeneration where it adds value

## Ensuring Effective Ocean Management

**Our projects influence nature positive marine planning and sustainable fisheries management in the UK and UK Overseas Territories**

**We will do this by:**

- **Integrating the health of the ocean's ecosystems with human activities** by ensuring holistic marine planning is embedded to put nature and climate at the heart of policy and industry
- **Delivering funding for marine recovery and regeneration** by developing mechanisms and strategies that encourage businesses to invest sustainably in building a blue economy
- **Influencing seafood purchasing decisions** across UK suppliers and supermarkets and among consumers to support low-impact, traceable fishing and seafood farming practices by providing well researched and trusted sustainability information





# Ending Ocean Pollution

**Our projects campaign for chemical and plastic pollution to be below levels that cause lasting harm to species and the environment**

**We will do this by:**

- **Strengthening regulations** to restrict and monitor forever chemicals perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS,) and supporting decisive action by businesses to eliminate PFAS from products and supply chains
- **Making certain the reform of water legislation and management is adopted and effective** across all UK nations to ensure regulations are in place and improving infrastructure to help stop plastic and chemicals of concern entering the sea
- **Making certain that Deposit Return Schemes operate effectively** across the UK by 2027, reducing marine litter and plastic pollution
- **Working for national (marine) litter strategies** to include effective measures for reducing plastics including macro plastics like fishing gear, and micro plastic sources such as single use cups and wet wipes containing plastic
- **Providing evidence and support** through empowering thousands of volunteers and engaging local communities to gather evidence through citizen science projects including through our beach clean programme

**OUR OPERATIONAL GOAL:**

## To enable us to be as effective as possible, we need to be a Sustainable Organisation

**A high-performing, values driven organisation whose organisational culture is underpinned by sound systems and processes that allow us to understand our impact in all areas - environmentally, socially and regulatory - and to motivate our staff, volunteers and partners to take action for the ocean.**

**We will do this by:**

**Driving evidence-base cases and measuring effective impact**

Generating and applying trusted, independent marine evidence and impact reporting that informs policy and decision-making, strengthens advocacy, and enables communities and the public to take informed action to improve the health of our seas.

**Delivering sustainable operations, sound financial management and good governance**

Using good financial management with sound budgeting and reporting systems. We are sustainable and understand our carbon footprint, striving to minimise it and ensure our work benefits both current and future generations.

**Motivating our staff, volunteers and supporters**

Constantly evolving to deliver inclusive and supportive ways for staff, volunteers, and partners to contribute meaningfully and develop the skills and confidence needed to work together effectively with great impact.

**Establishing strong funding partnerships and support**

Fundraising responsibly and transparently, building meaningful partnerships and a strong membership base with people and organisations motivated by the urgent need for a healthier ocean.



# How we make a lasting, sustainable impact





© Matthew Johnstone

There are so many ways to get involved and make a difference. Campaign, donate or volunteer and you'll join a movement of people across the United Kingdom fighting to protect our ocean.

Our citizen science programme underpins our work providing vital data to business and governments on pollution and threats to the environment through litter and indicator species surveys.

Corporate and industry partners are vital to our work, helping us regenerate habitats and ecosystems - making a positive impact on the health of our ocean, our wildlife, our communities, and climate.

[Join us](#)



Registered charity in England and Wales 1004005 and in Scotland SC037480. Registered company limited by guarantee in England and Wales 02550966. Registered office: Overross House, Ross Park, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 7US. VAT number: 321491232. COM-006-21



[mcsuk.org](#) [f mcsuk](#) [@ mcs\\_uk](#) [mcsuk](#) [@ mcs\\_uk](#)