



OCEANO AZUL  
foundation

## Government of the Azores Announces progress on Legal Framework for Marine Protected Areas Network Implementation

**Oceano Azul Foundation** has praised the Regional Government of the Azores for its ambitious and pioneering leadership in ocean protection. This commendation follows the announcement by José Manuel Bolieiro, President of the Regional Government, at the *Our Ocean Conference* in Athens. Bolieiro revealed that the legal framework required to implement the Marine Protected Areas Network is now complete and will soon be submitted for parliamentary approval.

With this revision of the Azores Marine Park, the **Azorean sea will achieve 30% protection** – six years ahead of the international target – including at least **15% fully protected**. Spanning an area of **300.000 square kilometres**, it will form the largest network of Marine Protected Areas in the North Atlantic, fully implemented before 2030.

The **Blue Azores** programme, a partnership between the Regional Government of the Azores, Oceano Azul Foundation, and the Waitt Institute, has developed a science-driven, community-supported initiative led by the Regional Government. This inclusive approach ensures ocean protection benefits all stakeholders by safeguarding and restoring marine ecosystems while maximising the economic opportunities of conservation.

By advancing the creation of this Marine Protected Areas Network, the Azores assertively position Portugal as a global leader in ocean protection.



## **About Oceano Azul Foundation**

The Oceano Azul Foundation is an international foundation based in Portugal, established in 2017. Under the motto *From the ocean's point of view*, its mission is to contribute to a healthy and productive ocean for the benefit of all life on Earth. Guided by science, the Foundation's work focuses on protecting, developing, and valuing Blue Natural Capital. Key areas of action include Ocean Conservation, International Ocean Advocacy, and the Blue Economy, alongside strong emphasis on Literacy, Education, and Civil Society Capacity Building. The Foundation's model enables the development of projects centred on Marine Protected Areas and sustainable fisheries while providing advice to governments and decision-makers to advance the international ocean agenda. This work includes collaborations with other foundations, civil society organisations, the UN, and the EU. In addition, the Foundation develops communication campaigns to amplify its impact, raising awareness and fostering understanding of the critical importance of protecting and restoring the ocean.

## **MEDIA CONTACTS**

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