IMPACT REPORT

MARE
Madeira

2025

CLIMAREST ALGAE RESTORATION, © JOÃO MONTEIRO

DISCOVER

Our mission is to expand our collective understanding of aquatic life and ecosystems for more empowered communities, more effective conservation and more informed policy

INSPIRE

We also recognize our responsibility to share our science and inspire others with the wonders of our blue planet

D E M O C R A T I Z E

And we seek to innovate new, more accessible ways to do research – for a future of science that is fairer to all

BLUE STORIES WORKSHOP 2025, © BEATRIZ ARRAIOL

W H O W E A R E

MARE-Madeira is a non-profit aquatic research centre in Madeira, Portugal

We are a regional research unit of the Marine and Environmental Sciences Centre (MARE), co-hosted by ARDITI and the University of Madeira. What began in 2013 as a team of two researchers (founder João Canning-Clode and long-standing technician Patrício Ramalhosa), has grown to a team of over 45 staff and two dozen collaborators. Although still a small research center in global terms, we have garnered international recognition and trust in the scientific community through our creativity, high productivity and integrity.

MARE is a multi-regional marine research and development centre in Portugal, with eight research units across the country.

▶ **Link**

The Regional Agency for the Development of Research, Technology and Innovation (ARDITI) is a government agency that supports science and innovation in Madeira.

▶ **Link**

The University of Madeira (UMa) is a Portuguese public university founded in 1988 and committed to science and innovation.

▶ **Link**

MARE

arditi

UNIVERSIDADE da MADEIRA

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dear MARE-Madeira Team, Partners, Sponsors and Friends,

As we close the chapter on 2025, I find myself reflecting not just on what we have achieved, but on what we are becoming. This was a year that reminded me, once again, that persistence and purpose are the most powerful tools a small institute can have.

One of our proudest moments was hosting the **International Conference on Marine Bioinvasions (ICMB)** here in Madeira, welcoming 270 participants from over 40 countries. To bring the world's leading voices on this topic to our island was a statement: MARE-Madeira is not just a participant in global marine science, we are a host, a key actor, and now also a hub.

In the context of TWILIGHTED, we organised our first **Impossible Things Workshop**. In my view, this name captures everything I like about how we approach our work. We have always believed in dreaming beyond the obvious, and this event embodied that spirit perfectly.

Scientifically, 2025 was our best year ever. Seventy-seven publications, 77! This is the highest since our foundation. We continue to have one researcher ranked in the global top 2% by research impact, and I sincerely hope that this is contagious among our team because Excellence inspires Excellence.

We also took important steps in translating our science into action. We launched **our first MARE policy brief**, a milestone in our commitment to stepping outside the typical academic bubble, engaging local communities and informing decision-makers. This is something I care deeply about, and I am proud we are finally planting this flag.

BLUE STORIES WORKSHOP, ©BEATRIZ ARRAIOL

Our team continues to grow, we are now 46 resident researchers, 61% of whom are women. This is something I am genuinely proud of. A diverse team is a stronger team, and the talent and dedication I see around me every day gives me enormous confidence in our future.

Our **Youth Ambassador Program** is consolidating beautifully, and through our **Blue Skills Academy** we organised another workshop for local young people, this time focused on blue storytelling. Science without communication is science that stays in a drawer and we really need to step out of that academic bubble. Encouraging the next generation to tell their stories is as important as teaching how to do science.

And now, a more personal note, one that was not easy to write…

After much reflection, and following my re-election for another 3-year term as Director, I made the decision to announce to the team that this will be my last term. I am a proud founder of MARE-Madeira, and serving as its director has been one of the greatest honours of my life. But I believe deeply that healthy organisations need change. They need new ideas, new energy, and new leadership styles. I have always believed that the best thing a leader can do is prepare the ground for those who come next.

This will not be an abrupt transition. I am here for another full term, and we have 3 years to prepare thoughtfully for what comes next. MARE-Madeira has an extraordinary team, full of skill, ambition and heart. I have no doubt that its best chapter is still ahead.

Thank you for your trust, your dedication, and for continuing to dream big alongside me.

As always, we keep pushing,

João Canning-Clode

HIGHLIGHTS 2025

XII ICMB, © BEATRIZ ARRAIOL

XII International Conference on Marine Bioinvasions

It was a privilege to host the world's largest gathering for marine bioinvasion science in Madeira: the ICMB, coordinated by the Society for the Study of Marine Bioinvasions. We welcomed over 270 attendees from 40 countries, who delivered over 240 presentations on marine bioinvasion research and policy interventions. **▶ Blog** **▶ Video**

The Impossible Things Workshop

To address the impossible challenges of deep-sea research from a small island, we invited deep-sea experts and creative thinkers from beyond marine research to a three-day workshop in Madeira. The results surpassed everything we hoped for. **▶ Website** **▶ Video**

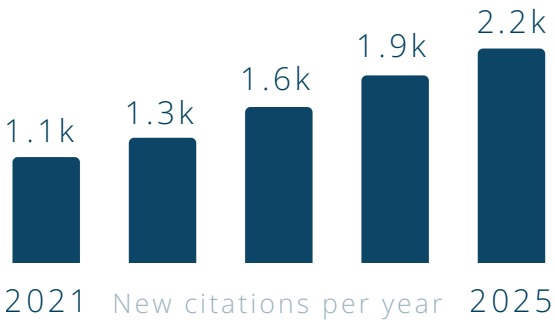
'Whales in a Plastic Ocean'

Our research on the impacts of plastic pollution on marine megafauna and ecosystems around Madeira was featured in a Changing Seas documentary, broadcast to audiences across the US and watched around the world. **▶ Blog** **▶ Video**

OUR IMPACT ON SCIENCE

As a research center, our impact begins with peer-reviewed science publications. Our publication record demonstrates our efficiency and value to science, averaging 1.2 publications per team member in 2025 and 27 citations per publication throughout our history.

CITATIONS



77
PUBLICATIONS

Impact factor

0.5 — 1.3 — 9.1

To aid equal access to our science, we cover the fees of open access publications whenever possible. We also present our work at national and international conferences. In 2025, we gave 51 presentations at 18 conferences.

PARABLENNIUS SALENSIS, © ALEJANDRO ESCÁNEZ

2 POLICY BRIEFS

Our MARE Policy Briefs translate our most relevant science for Madeira policy-makers to aid informed aquatic ecosystem management decisions. In 2025, we delivered a management strategy for non-indigenous species in Madeira's marine protected areas and recommendations for the conservation of the endangered European Eel in Madeira's freshwater systems.

▶ **Briefs**

PILOT WHALES DURING CETACEAN FIELDWORK
© DIANA COSTA (YOUTH AMBASSADOR)

9 REPORTS

▶ **Marine habitat restoration guide**

▶ **Marine litter monitoring methods**

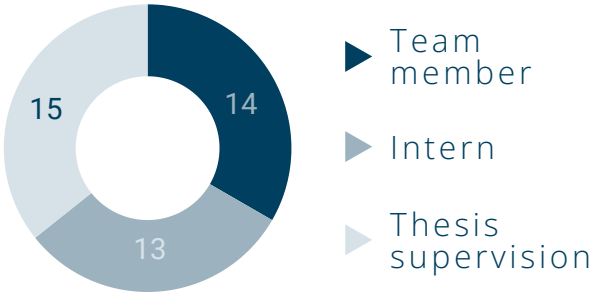
Our pioneering marine forest restoration efforts in project CLIMAREST have demonstrated the potential to recover Madeira's lost macroalgae forests, while our use of remote sensing is supporting more efficient marine litter detection.

OUR IMPACT ON CONSERVATION & POLICY

OUR IMPACT ON THE NEXT GENERATION

42

STUDENTS MENTORED



For know that career development opportunities for young scientists is essential for a thriving, sustainable and future-ready scientific community. We strive to seek a balance between helping as many students as possible explore and pursue a career in science, and moderating our student intake to offer quality supervision.

SUPERVISION RATIO

1 : 2

PhD holder Students

We also offer a youth ambassador program for young people on Madeira, giving motivated youth from high school, university and beyond the opportunity to work together and have an impact on science and their community. Learn more on page 21.

11 YOUTH AMBASSADORS

Active in 2025

FRESHWATER FIELDWORK WITH OUR

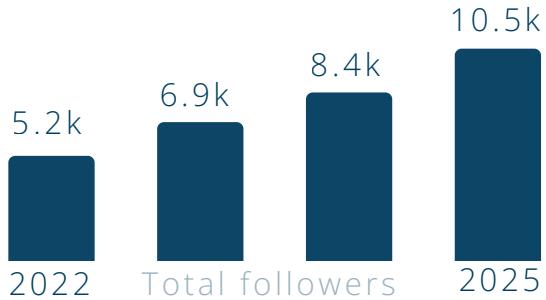
INTERN & YOUTH AMBASSADORS

AQUACULTURE TOUR DURING CIÊNCIA VIVA NO VERÃO, © CÉSAR GOMES

In 2025, we delivered 28 outreach activities, 57 school visits and 3 exhibitions for the public. These activities challenge us to think creatively about how to showcase our science in meaningful ways. They are also essential for ensuring more inclusive discussions on science and conservation policy in Madeira and beyond.

SOCIAL MEDIA

26% Annual growth



ACTIVITIES

85 Outreach & education activities

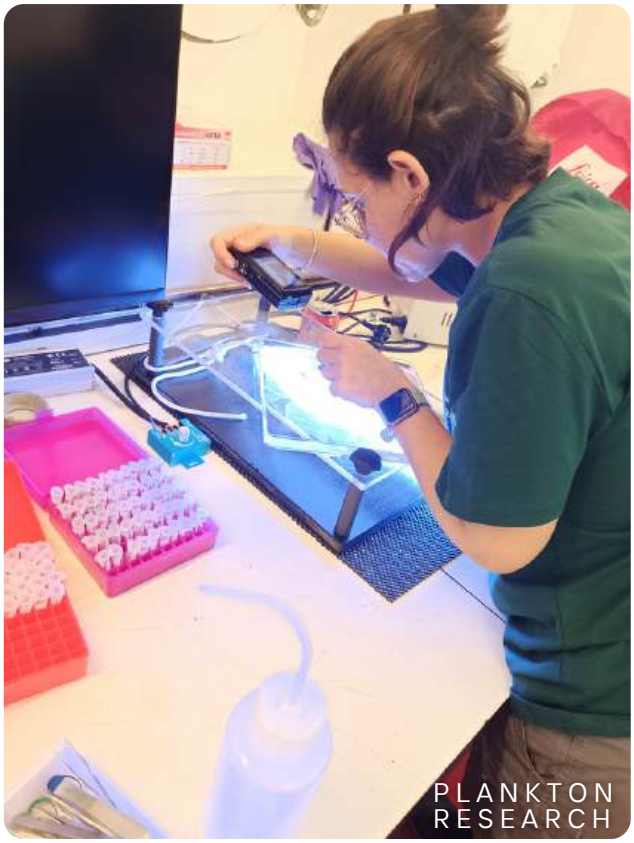
2,800+ PEOPLE REACHED

Increasing global engagement on online platforms brings immense opportunity to share our science in more inspiring and accessible ways. With support from the Ma'at Environment Fund, collaborations with documentary makers and our own creativity, we are improving our digital storytelling efforts. In 2025, our MARE-Madeira-made videos tallied over 50,000 views and our episode of Changing Seas was broadcast to its 130 million viewership.

OUR IMPACT ON COMMUNITY

OUR RESEARCH

Our research is divided into four research teams and executed across a wide range of projects. In 2025, we had seventeen active projects funded by European, national and independent grants. From mitigating whale-ship strikes in the Atlantic to the active conservation of the Manx Shearwater, from implementing citizen science for monitoring marine biodiversity to developing methods for promoting the blue economy, our research addresses knowledge gaps that are critical for more informed policy decisions, a more engaged society and a more sustainable world.


PLANKTON RESEARCH


©SONIA KM GUEROUN

CLIMATE CHANGE & HUMAN PRESSURES

LED BY JOÃO CANNING-CLODE AND JOÃO MONTEIRO

Our work seeks to understand climatic and anthropogenic threats to aquatic ecosystems and identify best-practices to improve their health and resilience. Areas of research include:

- Marine bioinvasions
- Marine litter
- Coastal & freshwater ecology
- Conservation & restoration
- Deep-sea research

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- We developed a spatial index for non-indigenous species (NIS) proliferation risk, which was published in Biological Invasions and used to produce the first MARE Policy Brief.
- We consolidated our habitat mapping capabilities for coastal and seafloor mapping using aerial drones, remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) and autonomous underwater vehicles (AUVs).

HABITAT MAPPING OF NORTH COAST (PORTO MONIZ)

MARINE TECHNOLOGY & AI

LED BY MARKO RADETA

We leverage electrical engineering expertise and novel hardware and software solutions to innovate low-cost tools for aquatic research and conservation. We also apply language learning models to improve data analysis and reduce scientist workloads, accelerating research timelines.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- We invented a programmable multi-purpose auto-release system, successfully deployed to and recovered from >275m depths.
- We invented an open-source biotelemetry sensor using the Internet of Things (IoT) for marine megafauna monitoring.

ORCINUS ORCA, ©ELIETTE HAMARD

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES & BLUE ECONOMY

LED BY ANA DINIS AND CARLOS ANDRADE

We study the complex interactions between human activities and marine ecosystems to help government, industry and society navigate more sustainable practices and policies. Our evidence-based approach supports the valorization of ecosystem services from marine environments and the development of more sustainable practices for fisheries, aquaculture and other blue economy activities.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Collaborating in a new EU project, SEA4FUTURE, marks the start of our direct involvement in shark conservation, conducted in close collaboration with Madeira's black scabbard fishing fleet.
- Translating our science for the aquaculture industry, we published a practical guide for sustainable aquaculture best practices.

MARINE MEGAFAUNA & OPEN OCEAN

LED BY FILIPE ALVES

Our long-standing megafauna research and monitoring programs contribute to the local and global understanding of Madeira's elusive and vulnerable marine megafauna species, including sperm whales, beaked whales and monk seals. Our open ocean research explores the ecological dynamics of phytoplankton and zooplankton, essential to understanding ocean foodwebs and biochemical cycles.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- Our team participated in scientific campaigns in the Mediterranean, Cabo Verde and French Polynesia.
- Using satellite telemetry and photographic identification, we identified preferred areas and pathways of the short-finned pilot whale in the Macaronesia region. This research is important for identifying blue corridors and conservation planning.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

MANX SHEARWATER CONSERVATION RESEARCH

EUROPEAN EEL MONITORING PROGRAM

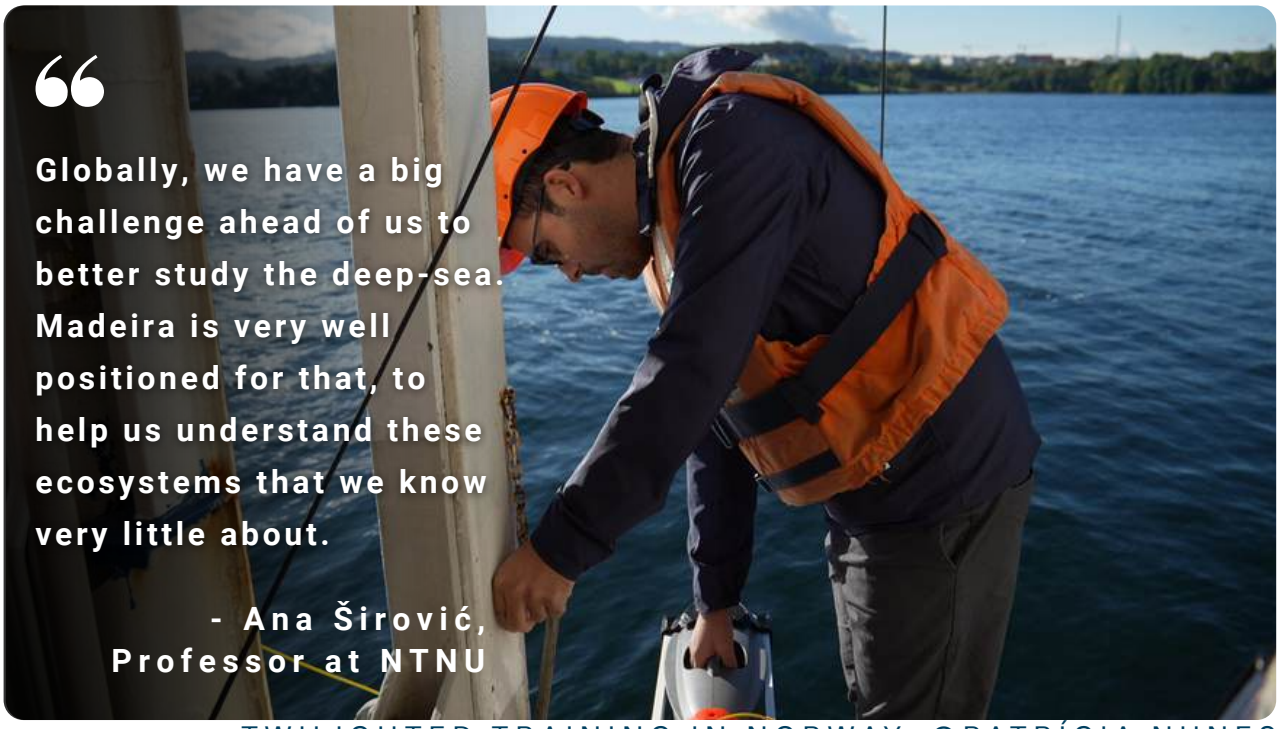
DEVELOPING A **DEEP-SEA RESEARCH** HUB

Deep-sea research has long been the realm of the best funded research institutions. Yet the best access to the deep sea is often around small islands and developing countries – places without the resources to fund state-of-the-art deep-sea programs.

The TWILIGHTED project (TWInning Laboratory for an Innovative, Global Hub To Explore the Deep) is an innovative capacity-building project that marks the beginning of our deep-sea research program.

With project partners at GEOMAR and NTNU, we are building our local understanding of deep-sea research techniques, while also developing and trialling lower-cost methods that can be deployed in Madeira.

> For me, that has been an eye-opener. We need large-scale research campaigns to have snapshots of ecosystems in great detail, yes. But we also need lower-cost methods and easy access to the ocean to have a continuous perspective. Then we can have really high resolution datasets that will allow us to document change in these ecosystems.
>
> **- Henk-Jan Hoving, Head of Deep-Sea Biology at GEOMAR**



> **Globally, we have a big challenge ahead of us to better study the deep-sea. Madeira is very well positioned for that, to help us understand these ecosystems that we know very little about.**
>
> **- Ana Širović, Professor at NTNU**

TWILIGHTED TRAINING IN NORWAY, ©PATRÍCIA NUNES

CREATION OF MARS RELEASE SYSTEM, ©PATRÍCIA NUNES

> SEAMPHONI is about leveraging this network and bringing our technologies together to improve conservation of marine protected areas. We'll do cruise work together and combine low and high cost techniques, so it's essentially everything that we've started in TWILIGHTED, now in a bigger research project.
>
> **- Jan Dierking, Senior Scientist at GEOMAR**

TWILIGHTED TRAINING IN GERMANY, ©SONIA KM GUEROUN

Our deep-sea research program expanded in 2025 with two new, exciting projects: SEAMPHONI, a Horizon Europe project to assess off-shore marine protected areas, and Darwin Lab, a FCT-funded project to strengthen deep-sea research and collaborations in Madeira.

PROJECT	FUNDER	COORDINATOR	DATES
TWILIGHTED	Horizon Europe	MARE-Madeira (ARDITI)	2024-27
SEAMPHONI	Horizon Europe	Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya	2025-28
DARWIN LAB	FCT	MARE-Madeira (UMa)	2026-29

RESTORING MADEIRA'S **MARINE FORESTS**

Macroalgae forests used to flourish along the coastline of Madeira. Rich with marine life, these habitats acted as nurseries, a source of food and havens from predators for many species. These forests have largely disappeared since the late 1990's and early 2000's. Perhaps from coastal development or imbalances in the food-web from overfishing, only small patches of native macroalgae remain today.

Beginning in 2022, our researchers developed and piloted a macroalgae restoration program, which saw early signs of success in its transplantation trials. Learn more in our short film and TV interview.

We also created a citizen science mobile app (Dive Reporter), used by 12 local diving centers to help us monitor marine species at our restoration sites. This initiative has recorded over 17,000 species sightings in two years, contributing valuable insights into coastal biodiversity in Madeira.

DIVE REPORTER SHOWCASE, ©DINARTE VIEIRA

©MATEJ BUZINKAI

> A big part of this project was to work with local stakeholders, especially local diving centers. They were very involved in how we picked the locations for the restorations and monitoring biodiversity after the transplantations. It was the first time we did long-term stakeholder engagement at this level and it was a great success.
>
> **- Susanne Schäfer, Postdoc at MARE-Madeira**

FUNDER	COORDINATOR	DATES
Horizon Europe	SINTEF Ocean	2022-25

CLIMAREST

FUNDER	COORDINATOR	DATES
Interreg MAC	MARE-Madeira (ARDITI)	2025-27

> It's hard to get information with scientific surveys in all the places all the time. Citizen science provides an opportunity to get additional information. Dive Reporter collects a wide array of biodiversity monitoring data from stakeholders and divers and makes this data available for science and resource management.
>
> **- João Monteiro, Co-Head of Climate Change & Human Pressures team**

DiveReporter-MAC

Supported by a new project, Dive Reporter Capitalization, our Dive Reporter app is also being rolled out in Cyprus, the Azores, the Canary Islands and Cabo Verde. Each region will be able to choose which species are of greatest relevance to science, policy and sustainable resource management to create tailored profiles for each location.

Buzinkai, M. et al. (2023) **Crowdsourcing biodiversity data from recreational SCUBA divers using Dive Reporter**. Ecological Informatics. 77. ▶ **Link**

BIODIVERSITY MONITORING, © JOÃO MONTEIRO

AQUAFISH

FUNDER	COORDINATOR	DATES
Interreg Atlantic Area	CTAQUA (Cádiz)	2023-26

Aquafish0.0 is working to improve the sustainability and public perception of seafood, particularly in increasing the sector's resilience and reducing waste. In Madeira, we've been working to raise awareness on overfishing, combat misinformation around aquaculture and showcase the value of fish by-products (e.g. with a culinary competition at Madeira's Hospitality and Tourism School, EHTM).

> Fishing is deep-rooted in our identity as Madeirans. But two of our four main marine resources are in a very complicated situation, with quotas down and fishing efforts too high. Our resources are finite and we need to take good care of them. Everything we use should have a purpose and we should minimize waste.
>
> **- César Gomes, Research Technician**

Madeira's wild fishing depends primarily on tuna, black scabbard, pelagic fishes (e.g. sardines and mackerel) and limpets. Limpets and pelagic fishes have suffered from lower stocks in recent years, causing season closures and reduced catches.

CULINARY COMPETITION, ©PATRÍCIA NUNES

One way to reduce pressure on wild fishing is through aquaculture. Yet, in Madeira as in many places, aquaculture faces its own challenges of aesthetics and public misconceptions.

"Information from the internet or documentaries can be misleading," César explains, noting that regulations in Europe that protect consumers and the environment are very strict. "I think the opinion is getting better year on year. People are getting used to this industry and I know many people enjoy eating species that are produced in aquaculture – salmon, seabream and trout."

Beyond Madeira, the project is working to create new, sustainable seafood products. Like the Sea Sausage, which uses off-cuts of fish, as traditional sausage uses meat, or Sea Nachos, which are made with seaweed. César vouches for the effort: "We've done tastings and it's really nice! I was surprised."

Watch out for the **'Sea of Ideas'** podcast on ARDITI's and MARE-Madeira's YouTube/ Spotify profiles!

FUNDER	COORDINATOR	DATES
Interreg MAC	University of La Laguna	2025-27

> There are quite a few projects on macro litter across the region. But microplastics is the invisible threat, so to say. It has to be analysed by microscopes and other special equipment. IMPLAMAC CAP is a very important project because it reinforces technical and skills investment across the region, giving Macaronesia the capability to monitor this threat.
>
> **- Ana Dinis, Co-Head of Ecosystem Services team**

Microplastics, now found across and throughout the ocean can enter the food chain and affect all trophic levels, including the food we eat. Monitoring and mitigating this threat is as important for human health as it is for ocean health and conservation.

IMPLAMAC Capitalization is a new project leveraging the microplastics monitoring protocol developed in IMPLAMAC, to enable coordinated assessments of microplastics across Macaronesia.

Supported by the FAM Foundation, Project BLUE works to advance our understanding of marine megafauna habitats and corridors, especially in the open sea. The project also has a strong education element, helping the public engage with marine wildlife conservation and encourage good practices.

Biotelemetry provides valuable information about marine animal ecology and helps define areas for marine protection. Through BLUE, our team improved our biotelemetry tracking efforts, investing in more tags and improving our data portal. Stay tuned for the release of this new site!

> I really enjoy the educational aspects of Project BLUE because I think it's so important. We go to schools and talk about the importance of biotelemetry for conservation, which is a pretty difficult topic for young kids, but they take it all in and ask great questions!
>
> **- Anita Alessandrini, Research Technician**

FUNDER	COORDINATOR	DATES
FAM Foundation	MARE-Madeira (ARDITI)	2025-26

OUR PEOPLE

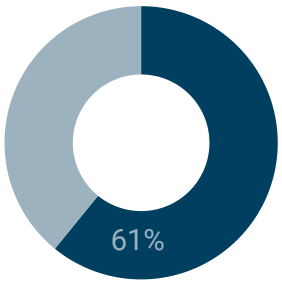
We have a fast-growing team comprised of 46 core members and 28 active collaborators around the world. Despite operating on project funding, we prioritize the retention and development of our staff, whose contributions continue to grow year after year.

NEW DOCTORATE

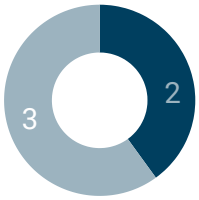
A long-standing researcher on our Marine Megafauna and Open Ocean team, Rita Ferreira received her doctorate from UMa in 2025. Her thesis investigated the biogeography, population and trophic ecology of cetaceans in a warm-temperate habitat.

▶ Rita's publications

46 TEAM MEMBERS



BOARD



FROM **11** NATIONS

RETENTION

94%

5-year rolling retention rate

RITA FERREIRA ON A FIELD CAMPAIGN, ©PATRÍCIA NUNES

YOUTH AMBASSADORS

The MARE-Madeira Youth Ambassadors is a leadership program that offers young people in Madeira aged 16-30 the opportunity to design, co-create and implement inspiring events and initiatives that engage the public in ocean science. Our ambassadors also participate in our fieldwork, gain access to our international network and attend workshops beyond Madeira that broaden their career prospects.

In 2025, our ambassadors led the creation of a community art competition, MARtístico, including an exhibit and award ceremony realized in partnership with the National History Museum of Funchal and the Funchal Municipality.

▶ TV interview **▶ Video**

Overall, eleven of our ambassadors led or participated in six outreach activities, reaching over 250 community members, joined five fieldwork activities and attended four workshops and conferences in 2025. We are grateful for our ambassadors' energy and creativity, and the support from our partners that elevates this program.

> This program gives us the freedom to share our ideas and make them happen. MARE-Madeira helps us, but we are responsible for the activities. I learned how to organize a beach clean and how to create competition rules from scratch. In this way, I feel it's preparing us for the future.
>
> **- Catarina Freitas, Ambassador since 2023**

JOANA CAMACHO PRESENTING AT THE NATIONAL OCEAN LITERACY CONFERENCE IN LISBON, ©PATRÍCIA NUNES

> We, as young people, can see things from a different perspective, and use that to help others understand the challenges facing the ocean. We also get to use our imagination to create events that attract people and raise awareness.
>
> **- Luana Silva, Ambassador since 2025**

COOL 25

SPLASH-EU

NATIONAL OCEAN LITERACY CONFERENCE

BLUE STORYTELLING WORKSHOP

MARTIM, JOANA AND ALEX AT COOL25 IN LISBON

ALEX AND LUANA LEADING THE CHANGING SEAS PANEL, ©BEATRIZ ARRAIOL

WHALE FEST

EUROPEAN MARITIME DAY

CIÊNCIA VIVA NO VERÃO

CHANGING SEAS SCREENING

> This has been a launching pad for my career in a thousand different ways. It's brought me a team of people who care about the same things as me, a platform to raise issues and great opportunities to learn and connect with the community. COOL25 was also memorable because what we did there was taken to the UN Ocean Conference. It was really satisfying to see that what we are doing matters on a global level.
>
> **- Martim Moniz, Founding Ambassador**

WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM

Ma'at Environment Fund

Edinburgh OCEAN LEADERS

ALEX LEADING THE

MARTÍSTICO CEREMONY

©BEATRIZ ARRAIOL

ACADEMIA AZUL
BLUE STORIES WORKSHOP, ©JOÃO RODRIGUES

OUR COMMUNITY

In addition to our research efforts to expand understanding of aquatic life and ecosystems, we also dedicate ourselves to improving our community and supporting future generations. Inspired by our young researchers and interns, inspired by our ambassadors and inspired by the potential we see in Madeira, we have grown this element of our work and now have even bigger dreams...

OUR FUTURE

ACADEMIA AZUL

Academia Azul (the Blue Skills Academy) is a MARE-Madeira initiative to help young people, especially those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, attain essential career skills related to the blue economy. In its full form, this Academy will seek to address the global need for greater ocean literacy, ocean-positive leadership and more environmentally conscious enterprise.

Since 2024 and with generous philanthropic support from Baillie Gifford, we have been piloting modules that we hope to integrate into our future Academy program. These 'Blue Skills Workshops' offer young people aged 16-30 the opportunity to explore careers, learn new skills and gain insights into the opportunities within the blue economy.

2024

BLUE STARTUPS WORKSHOP

▶ Video ▶ Website

2025

BLUE STORIES WORKSHOP

▶ Video ▶ Website

2026

WAVE MAKERS WORKSHOP

©BEATRIZ ARRAIOL

THE BLUE SKILLS ACADEMY

BLUE STORIES

WORKSHOP 2025

IMPOSSIBLE THINGS
WORKSHOP

©BEATRIZ ARRAIOL

C O M M U N I T Y

Imagine a vibrant valley of ocean innovation, education and entrepreneurship. Imagine a place where the community, scientists, artists, businesses, policy-makers, students and life-long learners can join forces to create a thriving blue economy in Madeira Island.

C R E A T I V I T Y

The heart of Campus Azul is Academia Azul. Its lifeblood is the collaborations between all stakeholders in the blue economy – locally and internationally.

Campus Azul is a place-based initiative currently in its concept and design phase, aiming to transform existing infrastructure in Madeira into a hub for inclusive ocean capacity building and connectivity. The initiative brings together all stakeholders across the blue economy – from entrepreneurs to policymakers, from the local community to researchers – to encourage open, dynamic and transdisciplinary idea exchange and economic development.

Imagine how your support can transform this vision.

C A M P U S A Z U L

OUR SUPPORTERS

The work and the impact shared in these pages is made possible by a powerful combination of our dedicated team and visionary supporters. It is a privilege to work with our partners -- the public funding bodies, the philanthropic organizations and the charitable individuals who believe in the value of aquatic research and innovation, who help us inspire our communities to care for our ocean and waterways. Thank you for your support for our blue planet, for future generations and for your belief in our team.

VOLUNTEERS AT THE XII INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MARINE BIOINVASIONS (ICMB),©BEATRIZ ARRAIOL

> The team at MARE-Madeira enthusiastically embraces a range of diverse, entrepreneurial actions that have a huge impact. Funders can have confidence that their support will be deployed strategically to further the goals of youth and community engagement in securing healthy oceans.
>
> **- David Holberton, Trustee at the Ma'at Environment Fund**

PUBLIC FUNDING

Our core funding for operations and research projects in 2025 was provided by national and European public funding.

Funded by the European Union

Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia

ARNET AQUATIC RESEARCH NETwork

PHILANTHROPIC SUPPORT

associação Oceano Atlântico

A supporter of our research since 2022 and an early supporter of our deep-sea research, the AOA generously supported the International Conference of Marine Bioinvasions in 2025.

Baillie Gifford™

A supporter of our work since 2022, Baillie Gifford's support has been instrumental in developing our deep-sea research program and beginning our Blue Skills Academy.

FAM FOUNDATION

The FAM Foundation supports Project Blue to advance marine megafauna research, conservation and community engagement.

Ma'at Environment Fund

Supporting our work since 2023, the Ma'at Environment Fund provides valuable mentorship and support for our digital storytelling and Youth Ambassador program.

Edinburgh OCEAN LEADERS

The Edinburgh Ocean Leaders gifted support to our Youth Ambassador program in 2025.

BlueRobotics

Blue Robotics supported travel grants for our Impossible Things Workshop in 2025, increasing the accessibility of this event.

INDIVIDUAL DONORS

We are grateful for the generous donations from individual supporters around the world, supporting our research and community engagement work in 2025:

S. SKERLOVA	Czech Republic	B. MASTRIANNI	USA
A. AVAS	Portugal	ANONYMOUS	Canada
M. IDORN & B. HAUGUM	Denmark	S. TROMP (SILLO FOTOGRAFI)	Netherlands
A. GASMI	France		

MIUT MADEIRA ISLAND ULTRA-TRAIL®

Our partnership with the Madeira Island Ultra Trail in 2025 also creates a new avenue for receiving philanthropic support from the international community.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MARINE BIOINVASIONS

We received substantial support from public and private institutions to host the XII International Conference on Marine Bioinvasions in Madeira, augmenting the support from the Society for the Study of Marine Bioinvasions.

Office of Naval Research Global Science & Technology

Monte Palace Madeira Tropical Garden

associação Oceano Atlântico

Associação de Colecções — Culture for life — Associação Colecção Berardo

Região Autónoma da Madeira Governo Regional

Secretaria Regional de Turismo, Ambiente e Cultura Gabinete do Secretário Regional

GiMaRIS

PICES

PeerJ

BORDAL Madeira Hand Embroidery Bordados da Madeira

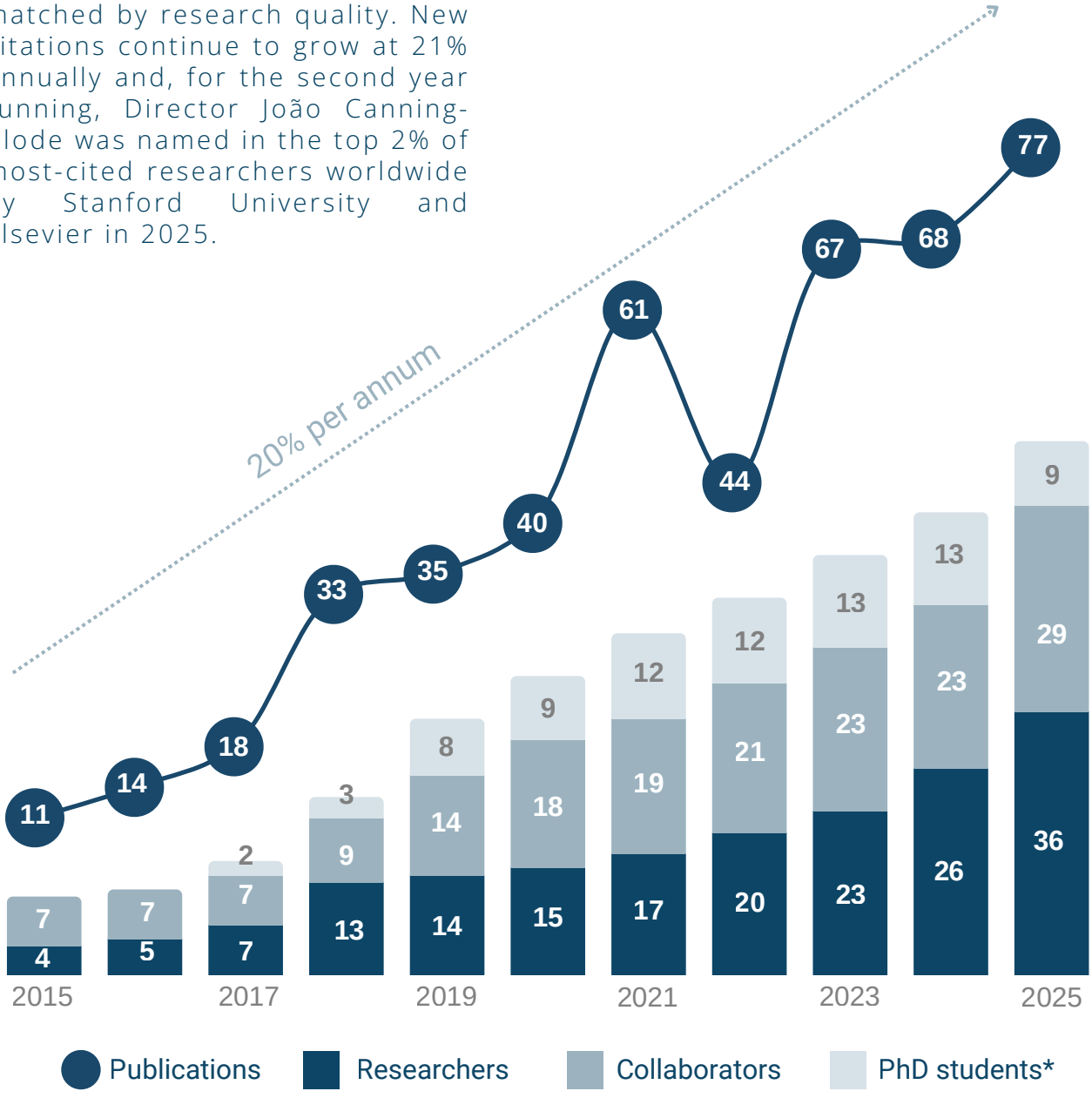
WINDSOR Premium Travel 1974 50 Years

EUROMARINE European Marine Research Network

BY THE NUMBERS

From a team of two researchers in 2013 to a team of 36 researchers, 9 PhD students and 29 collaborators in 2025, MARE-Madeira has grown rapidly in both personnel and performance these past twelve years. Importantly, our scientific, peer-reviewed publications have grown in line with our headcount, demonstrating our consistent productivity and impact on science.

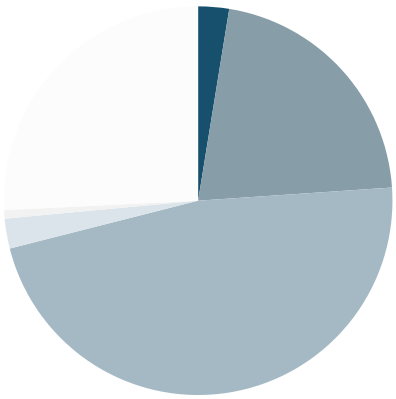
Our productivity and growth is matched by research quality. New citations continue to grow at 21% annually and, for the second year running, Director João Canning-Clode was named in the top 2% of most-cited researchers worldwide by Stanford University and Elsevier in 2025.



*Note: in other calculations of researchers in this report, we include our PhD students as part of our research team. We separate in this graph only to illustrate our commitment to training early career researchers.

FINANCIAL REPORT

FUNDING



Total
€2,151,215

Base funding (FCT)	€55,110	3%
Project funding (PT)	€459,470	21%
Project funding (EU)	€1,013,644	47%
Donations	€53,443	2%
Services	€15,000	1%
External human resourcing	€554,548	26%

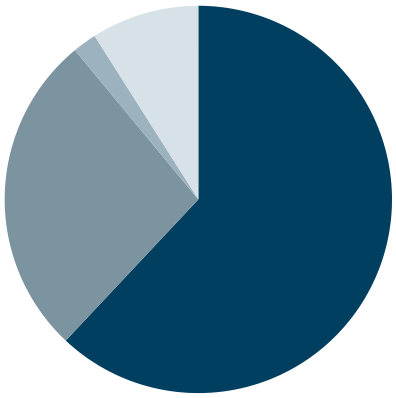
In 2025, 3% of our annual funding was base funding covered by the Portuguese National Science Foundation (FCT).

The majority of our funding continues to be short-term project funding (68%), secured through applications to competitive national or EU grants. Most of our external human resourcing (26% of funding) is from fellowships secured from competitive regional, national or international calls.

We also received generous support from private donors. This support greatly increases the range of activities and impact we can achieve.

EXPENSES

Our funding is primarily used to cover human resourcing expense (62% of expenses in 2025). The remainder is for research (27%, including equipment, laboratory facilities and travel), communication (2%, including outreach and education) and ARDITI support costs (9%), used for governance and administrative expenses.



Staffing	62%
Research	27%
Communication	2%
Support costs	9%

OUR TEAM

INTEGRATED MEMBERS

Ana Amaral
Ana Dinis*
André Almeida
Andreia Braga Henriques
Anita Alessandrini
Annalisa Sambolino
Carlos Andrade*
Cecilia Bernasconi
César Gomes
Diane Esson*
Diego Castejón
Dinarte Vieira
Elena Jiménez Soto
Eliette Hamard
Eva Iñiguez
Filipe Alves*
Francesca Soster
Gal Vered
Hervé Vela
Inês Dias
Inês Ribeiro
Isabel Fagundes
João Canning-Clode*
João Monteiro*
João Pestana
Laura Piazzese
Laura Redaelli
Mafalda Freitas
Manfred Kaufmann*
Marc Fernandez
Marisa Gouveia
Marko Radeta*
Mieke Weyn
Moritz Klaassen
Moritz Klaassen
Nuno Castro
Paola Parretti
Patrícia Nunes
Patrício Ramalhosa
Raquel Alves
Rita Ferreira
Rodrigo Silva
Rúben Freitas
Sabine Rech
Sara Bettencourt
Sílvia Almeida
Silvia Mortati
Sílvia Valsecchi
Sofia Nogueira
Soledad Álvarez
Sónia Costa
Sonia Gueroun*
Susanne Schäfer
Tim Hartmann

YOUTH AMBASSADORS

Alex Vieira
Camila Dávila
Catarina Figueira
Catarina Freitas
Diana Costa
Diana Dias
Joana Camacho
João Oliveira
Kateřina Svoboda
Laura Correia
Luana Silva
Martim Moniz
Matilde Gouveia
Sara Catanho

COLLABORATORS

Alejandro Bernal-Ibáñez
Alejandro Escánez
Ashlie McIvor
Bárbara Cavaleiro
Begüm Uzun
Carla Freitas
Cátia Gouveia
Cátia Jardim
Claudio Rodrigues
Deise Faria
Dennis Brenneke
Emanuel Almada
Eva Cacabelos
Filipa Paiva
Filipe Henriques
Francesca Gizzi
Ignacio Gestoso
Joachim Jakobsen
Joana Vasconcelos
Juan Sempere-Valverde
Kirsten Jakobsen
Luísa Costa
Manuel Biscoito
Margarida Hermida
Matej Buzinkai
Raul Triay-Portella
Ricardo Araujo
Ricardo José
Ricardo Luís
Ricardo Sousa
Sahar Chebaane
Sara Ferreira
Thomas Dellinger
Thomas Rost

2025 MARE-MADEIRA RETREAT

Bold: **Board member** *Leadership team

2013

Canning-Clode Marine Lab Founded

2014

Join GEOMAR's GAME program

GAME
GLOBAL APPROACH BY MODULAR EXPERIMENTS

2017

Become MarineGEO's European Observatory

MarineGEO
THE TENNENBAUM MARINE OBSERVATORIES NETWORK
Smithsonian Institution

Go Jelly

2018

First EU-funded project (GoJelly)

2019

The Whale Team joins

arditi

Join MARE family; hosted by ARDITI

2021

Become regional unit of MARE

MARE

Edinburgh OCEAN LEADERS

2022

Wave Labs joins to build Marine Technology and AI team

2023

João Canning-Clode named Ocean Leader

Jovens Embaixadores do MARE Madeira

Youth Ambassador program begins

First Academia Azul Workshop

2024

Begin deep-sea research program

TWILIGHTED

2025

Host XII ICMB

Featured in the 'Whales in a Plastic Ocean' documentary

Share vision for Campus Azul with community

PUBLICATION HIGHLIGHTS

De Girolamo, M. et al. (Eds.) (2024) **Production of marine invertebrates at early stages – Manual for best practices**. Arquipelago. Life and Marine Sciences. Supplement 14, 62pp. ▶ **Link**

Kako, S. et al. (2026) **Remote sensing and image analysis of macro-plastic litter: A review**. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 222, 118630. ▶ **Link**

Klaassen, M. et al. (2025) **Trends in marine species distribution models: a review of methodological advances and future challenges**. Ecography e07702. ▶ **Link**

Oliveira, B. et al. (2025) **A multi-dimensional approach to improve validation practices for qualitative models of marine social-ecological systems**. Current Research in Environmental Sustainability. 9, 100273. ▶ **Link**

Radeta, M. et al. (2025) **MARS: Programmable multipurpose auto-release system for aquatic observations**. Limnology and Oceanography: Methods. 23, 376-388. ▶ **Link**

Radeta, M. et al. (2025) **TRITON—Open telemetry and location estimation for marine monitoring based on IoT and LoRa**. IEEE Journal of Oceanic Engineering. 50, 1244-1258. ▶ **Link**

Ramalhosa, P. et al. (2025) **The role of marine debris as a vector, dispersal agent, and substrate for non-indigenous species on oceanic islands (Northeast Atlantic)**. Marine Pollution Bulletin. 214, 117732. ▶ **Link**

Weyn, M. et al. (2025) **Satellite tracking and photographic-identification as connectivity-based tools towards conservation planning of pilot whales**. Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems. 35,e70053. ▶ **Link**

View all MARE-Madeira publications at https://mare-madeira.pt/publications/

APPENDIX I

OUR IMPACT ON SCIENCE

Table 1. MARE-Madeira publications and impact in 2025

	Journal articles	Book chapters	Books	Total publications	Average IF*	Open access	% Open access
MARE-Madeira publications**	70	4	3	77	1.3	59	84%
Publications by MARE-Madeira researchers	40	4	3	47	1.2	37	79%

*Impact factor (IF) of journal articles
**MARE-Madeira cited in paper

Table 2. Standardized impacts of MARE-Madeira integrated researchers and institutional funding in 2025

MARE-Madeira researchers	Publications	Publications per researcher	Funding	Funding per publication
46	47	1.17	€2,151,215	€46,770

Table 3. Standardized impacts of MARE-Madeira publications over the last 5 years

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	5-year total
MARE-Madeira publications*	61	44	67	68	77	**317**
Researchers + collaborators	48	53	59	65	75	**60 (avg)**
Publication/ researcher	1.27	0.83	1.15	1.05	1.03	**1.06 (avg)**
MARE-Madeira Citations*	1,018	1,200	1,540	1,897	2,215	**7,870**
Funding (in 1,000s)**	€937	€1,218	€1,631	€1,334	€2,151	**€7,270**
Citation per €1k funding	1.09	0.99	0.94	1.42	1.03	**1.09**

*MARE-Madeira cited in paper; source: Google Scholar
**Lump-sum project funding is smoothed over the course of the contracted project period

APPENDIX II

OUR IMPACT ON EDUCATION AND OCEAN LITERACY

Table 4. MARE-Madeira science communications in 2025

	Events organized	Events attended	Presentations given	Posters presented
Conferences & workshops	11	18	29	22

Table 5. Education and outreach activities in 2025

	Outreach activities	School visits	Exhibitions	Total
Activities delivered	28	57	3	**88**
People reached	931	1,837	10,000+ museum visitors during exhibits	**2,770+**

Table 6. Students or recent graduates mentored in 2025 by education level and degree of integration

High school	Bachelor's	Master's	PhD	Total
1	4	25	12	42

MARE-Madeira researcher	Internship	Thesis supervision
14	13	15

Table 7. News and media coverage in 2025

Digital press	Written press	TV coverage	Radio coverage
46	2	17	6

Table 8. Social media presence 2025

Profile since	2013	2021	2015	2023	2023	2023	2024
Followers	4,307	2,991	969	1,797	72	39	66
% growth from 2024	4%	68%	-2%	42%	132%	22%	25%

APPENDIX III

PROJECTS

ACUICONECTA
Collaborative Innovation in Aquaculture

Strengthening the link between research, industry and society to promote sustainable, productive and resilient aquaculture

AQUAFISH

Improving the acceptance and social awareness in the consumption of sustainable marine food products developed under the zero-waste philosophy

Atlantic Whale Deal

Reducing the occurrence of ship strikes in the Atlantic for the good of cetaceans, ocean biodiversity and the planetary carbon cycle.

BLUE
Biotelemetry for Life Underwater and Education

Promoting the conservation of marine megafauna through biotelemetry and education

CLIMAREST

Developing a flexible toolbox for monitoring and restoring coastal habitats, for climate resilience in coastal areas.

CircularOcean

Integrating marine litter into a more circular economy in the Eastern Mid-Atlantic by sharing regional resources, knowledge and capacities.

DiveReporter-MAC

Leveraging citizen science to create a network of marine biodiversity monitoring in Macaronesia

free litterAT

Freeing coastal communities of marine litter by identifying its sources and using innovative ways to detect and clean it.

eco maris

Promoting a blue economy and marine sustainability on islands by filling data gaps and aiding decision-making.

MAC DroneAI

Enabling the intelligent monitoring of marine litter in Macaronesia using drones and AI

IMPLACOST

Assessing the impact and risks of climate change on coasts in Macaronesia and creating warning systems.

IMPLAMAC
CAPITALIZACIÓN

Strengthening and implementing methodologies for monitoring microplastics in Macaronesia.

MAC PUFFINUS BESTLIFE 2030

Aiding conservation of the Manx Shearwater by identifying and monitoring nesting areas and raising awareness.

NATUR-EXT

Identifying renewable biological resources to aid industry, science and technology for a circular economy.

MARINE SABRES

Improving marine management by designing a user-friendly socioecological framework.

SEAMPHONI

Strengthening ecosystem-based assessments and monitoring of protected habitats in offshore marine protected areas.

TWILIGHTED

Increasing deep-sea research capacity in Madeira and improving global access to deep-sea environments with low-cost tools and methods.

INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS

GAME GLOBAL APPROACH BY MODULAR EXPERIMENTS

A global education program for young scientists to investigate global coastal changes in a collaborative, modular way.

MarineGEO THE TENNENBAUM MARINE OBSERVATORIES NETWORK Smithsonian Institution

A global network of partners tracking vital signs of coastal marine life and sources of change to inform science-based solutions for coastal resilience.

TWILIGHTED TRAINING OPPORTUNITY IN THE BALTIC SEA, ©JAN DIERKING

MARE-MADEIRA IMPACT REPORT 2025

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CREATED BY

Diane Esson, with support from Patrícia Nunes and Deise Faria and contributions from the entire MARE-Madeira team

COVER IMAGE

Ciência Viva no Verão event, 'Mergulhar no Mar Profundo' (TWILIGHTED project) by Beatriz Arraiol

THE FOULING QUILT,©PATRÍCIO RAMALHOSA

CIÊNCIA VIVA NO VERÃO,©BEATRIZ ARRAIOL

S T A Y
C O N N E C T E D

CIÊNCIA VIVA NO VERÃO,©BEATRIZ ARRAIOL