UN WORLD OCEANS DAY

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The United Nations World Oceans Day celebrates the ocean and its importance to the ecosystem and our existence while raising awareness about the myriad of threats it faces. As the threats grow, so too does our need for solutions. For that reason, the World Oceans Day theme for 2020 is “Innovation for a Sustainable Ocean!” Collaborators from around the globe shared their innovative ideas on how they support the health of our oceans. From June 1 to June 14, Peace Boat led a series of events as a member of the United Nations Friends of World Oceans Day group. Peace Boat presented Ecoship which will be the world’s most sustainable cruise ship and the platform for future voyages. The Peace Boat 2020 Youth Ocean Leaders from around the world also shared their individual solutions for the oceans.
Peace Boat is an international NGO with Special Consultative Status with ECOSOC of the United Nations, which since 1983 has been conducting advocacy and education programmes onboard a chartered passenger ship. Working in partnership with the UN SDG Action Campaign and other key stakeholders, Peace Boat’s activities onboard and in port empower participants, strengthen local capacity for sustainability, and build people-to-people cooperation beyond borders.

Peace Boat invites youth leaders from around the world working towards sustainability in their home communities together to travel onboard, engaging in capacity building, citizen science programs and experiences in the ports of call that enrich their understanding of marine science and climate action on a global scale. Educational programmes offered onboard utilize Peace Boat’s ship as a dynamic learning space and mobile classroom.

One such initiative is the Ocean and Climate Youth Ambassador Programme, launched at the UN Ocean Conference in 2017 and endorsed by the COP23 Presidency. For the past three years, it has brought young leaders on ocean and climate issues from Small Island Developing States (SIDS) onboard Peace Boat for capacity development and sharing their own personal experiences and calls for action.

Achieving the SDGs, and in particular SDG 14 for Life Below Water, requires mobilization of young people through entrepreneurship, volunteering, scientific marine research, education and other endeavors. Towards this aim, Peace Boat will continue to offer scholarships for regular educational programmes focused on the UN Sustainable Development Goals and marine science.
Peace Boat was honored to be invited to speak about the United Nations World Oceans Day on May 27, organized by the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification (OA Alliance) in collaboration with United Nations partners. The event which took place online as a webinar looked at how governments and UN agencies are keeping up momentum for the ocean and climate action as the world navigates the present COVID-19 pandemic and was moderated by Jessie Turner, Project Coordinator of the OA Alliance. The OA Alliance, of which Peace Boat is a proud member, brings together governments and organizations from across the world dedicated to taking urgent action to protect coastal communities and livelihoods from the threat of ocean acidification and other climate ocean impacts. Together, OA members are elevating urgency and ambition for climate action, integrating ocean into climate commitments, and translating knowledge into policy actions.

During the webinar, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for the Ocean, Ambassador Peter Thomson, emphasized that now is the time to better share our ideas and resources while bringing our most innovative and entrepreneurial talents to the table, as “The ocean’s well being depends on the drastic lowering of our emissions. If we care about it, then we will fight for unprecedented reductions”. Francois Bailet, Senior Legal Officer at the United Nations Division of Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS), and Emilie McGlone, Director of Peace Boat US introduced UN World Oceans Day as another way to keep momentum during this period. After the introduction to World Oceans Day, Programme Management Officer at the UNFCCC Secretariat Dr. Joanna Post spoke about the Ocean and Climate Dialogue launched at last year’s Conference of Parties (COP) in Madrid. It is a major step forward in elevating and integrating ocean across the UNFCCC, as well as how the postponement of COP 26 is being managed. Lastly, Secretary Vladimir Ryabinin shared some concluding remarks on how important it is to keep momentum going so people around the world can continue to be inspired by our oceans and all the ecosystems and species they host.

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- Ambassador Peter Thomson
United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for the Ocean
SeaAhead is a bluetech startup platform founded in Boston that helps with building companies for the oceans, running an incubator, facilitating investments and catalyzing a bluetech cluster for ocean research and development in the Northeast, bringing together ocean stakeholders that are coming together to create impact. On June 2nd, Peace Boat co-hosted a webinar on ‘Ocean Innovation’ with SeaAhead and BlueTech. The Free Swim Webinar shed light on innovative solutions that small businesses are implementing to help protect the ocean. The four leaders represented were Nicolaas Mink of Sitka Salmon Shares, Chip Terry of Oyster Tracker, Peter Battisti of SeaAhead, and Courtney Boyd Myers of AKUA.

Sitka Salmon Shares uses a membership model that directly connects subscribers to small fishers in Alaska. They aim to combat overfishing and provide better fish quality for the subscribers.

Oyster Tracker is an aquaculture management system that helps farmers track their activities and analyze their outcomes in order to optimize their crop output. Chip Terry explains that ocean farmers often lose at least 40% of their crop, but with Oyster Tracker’s system, this loss is mitigated.

Courtney Boyd Myers, CEO and founder of AKUA, has made strides in creating sustainable opportunities for ocean farmers. Her company focuses on regenerative, ocean-farmed kelp. The kelp is used to create a snack that is both healthy for people and the environment. AKUA’s main crop, sugar kelp, is farmed in 100 acre open-ocean plots, and is never harvested from the wild or sourced outside of the US. These aquaculture farms absorb five times the amount of carbon and argon absorbed from land-based farms, and thus effectively mitigates ocean acidification. Peace Boat is proud to partner with innovative leaders like Courtney who are working towards solution-based ideas for our oceans. For more information you can visit www.akua.co
On June 3rd, in partnership with the March for Science and Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA), Peace Boat US spoke about the role of youth in ocean and climate action.

The first speaker was Mark Haver from the SOA Florida Chapter. He presented his own journey with SOA and explained how it offered him opportunities for networking, and gave him a foot in the door for policy changes. More specifically, SOA offers many opportunities for youth to create change. He explains that SOA has helped him understand how we can develop a youth focus, engage in 21st century policy, and the importance of global engagement and inclusiveness.

Second, Emilie McGlone spoke about Peace Boat’s Global Voyages and its newest project, the Ecoship. She then introduced Khadija Stewart, an Ocean and Climate Youth Ambassador from Trinidad and Tobago. Khadija Stewart emphasized the necessity of young adults in movements. She explained how Peace Boat provided young adults from small islands nations with a platform where they could share their stories in order to “wake up the world.” She then went on to talk about her own company, Equalise Environmental Creatives, that leads several outreach activities to create awareness and support the young voices of island communities.

Chet Monday, the Director of Youth Programs for March for Science, was the event’s last speaker. March for Science is an organization that represents the “world’s largest grassroots community of science advocates, organizing for a more sustainable and just future.” He explains that his role is to “amplify youth voices within the movement” by promoting them either through the March for Science platform or through other social media platforms in hopes of directing traffic to initiatives happening globally.

**YOUTH FOR OCEAN AND CLIMATE ACTION**

**June 3**

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**VOICES FROM YOUTH LEADERS**

“As youth we are the greatest stakeholders in the future of our environment, in the future of our planet, and if we are unable to rise up, unify and promote solutions that are going to promote a better tomorrow then we need to try harder!” - Mark Haver

“The only way we are going to create change and move four is if we equip ourselves with knowledge!” - Khadija Stewart

“My personal mission is to amplify youth voices within the movement!” - Chet Monday
“Decarbonizing Maritime transportation and Shipping”, organized by SeaAhead. The leaders that took part in the discussion addressed the efforts to decarbonize the shipping industry in their various sectors. Marc Huang spoke about SeaAhead and its efforts of decarbonization. He explained that SeaAhead helps more startups make more of a commitment to the ocean through funding and in this case SeaAhead’s effort to fund innovative ideas for decarbonization. He explains that the global economy is currently dependent on shipping since, because of the scale, it is the most effective way of moving cargo. However, due to bunker fuel (basically liquid coal) the effects on the ocean are devastating. The need for innovation is urgent! Hence he puts forward three leaders who hope to put forward new cleaner, and greener technology forward.

First, Nikos Petrakakos spoke from Ursus Maritime Capital, a ship finance firm focused on “energy efficiency and environmental solutions”. Nikos explained that “one cargo ship is the equivalent of 1050 cars” meaning the carbon emissions need to be reduced. Although currently the most efficient mode of transport, cargo ships’ impact on the environment is devastating. He explains that Ursus Maritime Capital aspires to give funds to ship owners in the hopes that they will take the necessary measures in order to reverse the environmental damage the ships create. Nikos explained that the key to innovation is to be more flexible, to upgrade existing ships, and to not wait for the perfect result in order to innovate.

Second, spoke Steffen Knodt from Stena Germanica, a company that focuses on delivering solutions. Stena Germanica’s goal is getting to zero coalition, and thus is “leading the push for maritime shipping decarbonation”. Much like Nikos discussed in his talk, he explains that funds must be put into more pilot projects so that they can develop and not only finalized work.

Introducing real solutions for the shipping industry, Maho Takahashi spoke about Peace Boat’s contribution to ocean decarbonization. She presented Peace Boat’s Ecoship project, which will use solar and wind power to achieve zero emissions at sea and reduce its CO2 by 40% overall. Although the technologies already exist, the challenge lies in assembling the project together. Maho explains that the “Ecoship is a step towards a decarbonized future”. The speakers concluded the meeting by discussing the impact of the current global challenges on the maritime industry, and agreed that “Despite the pandemic, the future is bright”. 
YOUTH SAILING THE HIGH SEAS

June 9

During an event organized in partnership with Global Kids and Sea Rangers Service, Emilie McGlone from Peace Boat US presented Peace Boat's efforts to create awareness for the SDGs, the Ecoship project, and introduced the youth that traveled on the boat so they could share their efforts to combat climate change in order to protect their community's island. The event included screening of ‘Against the Tide: A Journey for Climate Hope’ which is a documentary made during the first edition of Peace Boat's Ocean and Climate Youth Ambassador Programme. Wietse Van Der Werf, Director of Sea Rangers Service introduced his organization that involves training young adults to sail and protect the oceans. Additionally, Sara Van Eerde, a leader from Global Kids and Peace Boat's Youth for the SDGs Scholar shared her experience aboard the Peace Boat. Zana Wade, an Ocean and Climate Youth Ambassador from Belize also shared her experience and how Peace Boat’s journey benefited her personal projects. Today, she is using her professional background to help communities in her country work towards the implementation of the UN SDGs. Her life mission is to create change through her professional and personal projects for sustainable development.
On June 9, 2020, Elena Ashburn, a youth reporting for EarthXFilm, kicked off the EarthXOcean event in honor of World Oceans Week with an interview of Peace Boat US Director Emilie McGlone and Peace Boat’s youth ambassadors, Ashneil Jeffers, Sara Van Eerde, Griselda Solis, and Silvia Cantu. Peace Boat’s youth ambassadors were asked to reflect and share moments from their experience traveling aboard the Peace Boat and their own personal advice on getting involved in the protection of our oceans.

Silvia brought up her experience in the Patagonia region. After only seeing Patagonia from a distance, she was struck immediately by the similarities between challenges that the communities in Patagonia faced and those that her own community faced, in terms of environmental degradation due to climate change. Upon reflection, she noted that her journey as an ambassador is actually a life-long one, just as solving climate change is indeed a life-long mission. She explains “to protect the ocean ecosystem is to protect all ecosystems... everything is so interconnected, sometimes in ways that we don't even understand or visualize.”

Griselda commented on her experience with indigenous communities. Often, indigenous communities rely on tourism to sustain their ways of life. With rising ocean levels, however, both their homes and livelihoods are at stake. After her Peace Boat voyage, Griselda understood that all actions taken to mitigate climate change effects would in some way end up connecting back to the ocean. In agreement with Silvia, she noted the ocean affects all of our lives in ways that we cannot begin to understand. As an individual acutely facing the effects of climate change in his home community, Ashneil shared his appreciation for the opportunities to give voice to the struggles around climate change within his community. Given the small population size of 4500, very few people are familiar with the challenges that climate change poses to his community.

As a group, the youth shared similar pieces of advice on how to combat climate change. First and foremost, Sara Van Eerde urged youth to seek education. She emphasized the endless opportunities and organizations available that all look to youth in order to meet the climate change crisis head on. Griselda suggested that youth should get involved in their own communities. All four of the youth ambassadors emphasized that one of the biggest barriers to climate activism is not trusting your own voice. Ashneil urged youth to take it one step at a time, because every little step is indeed worth it.
On June 11th Peace Boat participated in a webinar organized by the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification (OA Alliance): ‘Advancing Knowledge into Action: Innovative Solutions to Address Impacts of Ocean Acidification’. As Jessie Turner from OA Alliance explained, “a better resilience” and adapt to ocean acidification. To demonstrate current examples of innovation, six different speakers shared their current strategies. First, Dr. Cliff Law from NIWA outlined his company’s effort in New Zealand’s fisheries. He explained that key species are impacted by ocean acidification. The solutions that he proposes involve implementing new models that manage drivers of coastal acidification. Second, Nichole Price from Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences explained the “potential for marine vegetation to mitigate coastal ocean acidification.” Her research was conducted in Portland, Maine, which is home to 2200 shellfish lease sites and a Sugar Kelp Farm. When collecting results, Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences found that mussels that were grown close to the kelp farm consistently had harder shells. This is especially significant to mussel farming since farmers lose crops to shell cracking!

Jacqueline Ramsay also presented her work with Alutiiq Pride Shellfish Hatchery, a hatchery that processes many different shellfish in Alaska. In 2013, the Hatchery was asked to record findings of ocean acidification effects on shellfish with a “Burk-O-Later”. Since then, they have been trying to expand their monitoring efforts through community involvement with the use of small kits and the creation of more sampling sites. The event’s fourth speaker was Alexis Valauri-Orton from the Ocean Foundation. The Ocean Foundation strives to create a global data set by distributing affordable and easily maintained kits in order to collect more data from different locations around the globe that otherwise would not be researched. As of today, they have shipped 17 kits to 16 different countries. Fifth, Dr. Wiley Evans introduced the International OA Alliance which strives for “private and public collaboration engaging passengers ferries and other cruise vessels to monitor for changing ocean conditions.” The International OA Alliance helps to fill “the gaps between the time series” in order to paint an accurate picture of “ocean acidification variability in space.” In closing, Emilie McGlone from Peace Boat US presented the Ecoship, a more sustainable cruise ship that will use renewable energy including 10 retractable solar sails and wind turbines and even a kinetic dance floor. The Ecoship will feature an onboard laboratory in order to collaborate with researchers to collect data on the ocean and climate including ocean acidification.
On June 11, Peace Boat organized the “Innovative Ocean Habitats” event alongside partners from PangeaSeed Foundation, Fabien Cousteau Ocean Learning Center, Blue Planet Foundation, and Coral Vita. Tre Packard and Akira Biondo from PangeaSeed Foundation kicked off the event by talking about their biggest project yet: “Sea Walls for Artists.” This project is a collaboration with contemporary artists that strive to create murals that address environmental ocean issues. They have accomplished this by creating over 400 murals in 17 countries, effectively building educational spaces for communities to come together and protect the oceans. They hope that over time, these murals can not only be communal spaces, but also tourist attractions, educational touchstones, and a source of community revenue.

The second presenter was Fabien Cousteau, of the Fabien Cousteau Ocean Learning Center. He spoke about his time during ‘Mission 31,’ where he visited the world’s first undersea laboratory. Afterwards, he presented his upcoming project PROTEUS and how it has been influenced by ‘Mission 31.’ When he visited the undersea laboratory for the first time, he realized the potential immediately. The laboratory allowed researchers significantly more time diving and studying by having an accessible base underwater. Cousteau hopes to replicate the effectiveness of this laboratory in his project, PROTEUS, Cousteau’s plan to build the largest underwater laboratory ever and have aquanauts work therefor extended periods of time. Next spoke Emilie McGlone from Peace Boat US, who presented the Ecoship and its sustainable energy usage.

Afterwards, Henk Rogers from Blue Planet Foundation shared a moving video featuring a young Hawaiian girl that depicted the younger generations’ fear of a future severely impacted by climate change. Over the past ten years, Blue Planet has been leading the way for a clean energy future, and wants to establish a 100% renewable energy plan in all 50 states. Finally, Sam Teicher and Gator Halpem, co-founders of Coral Vita, showcased the work they have been doing at their coral farm in the Bahamas. While they already grow over 100,000 corals at their farm, they plan to expand it and implement farms like theirs around the world. Sam and Gator boldly plan on selling the “service of reef restoration so that we can inject capital needed to really take restoration from where it’s been for the past few decades - small scale projects - to doing ecosystem scale restorations.”
INNOVATION FOR THE OCEAN: A LATIN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

June 12

On June 12, Peace Boat helped to plan and lead a discussion in Spanish about innovation for the ocean, centering on the perspectives of Latin American folks and organizations. In collaboration with Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA) and Restore Coral, the panelists and participants had an engaging conversation about innovative interventions to help our oceans.

SOA works on empowering young people by providing accelerated programs to connect youth with opportunities, resources and experts in the field. They are working to provide more innovative solutions while centering and empowering youth in their local communities to take action. Daniel Cáceres Bartra, a Latin America regional representative of SOA, strives to recruit and involve youth in ocean conservation, especially in Peru, where there is a growing illegal market of shark finning, seahorses, hammer sharks and sea turtle hunting. SOA hosted a press conference to have youth demand environmental action that includes marine action, climate action, and improving marine protected areas in Peru. Now, they are expanding throughout Latin America by opening local chapters. SOA chapters are found throughout the world, but in Latin America there’s a chapter in Honduras, Mexico, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Colombia. Additional SOA sites are coming soon!

The next presenter, Emilie McGlone, explained how Peace Boat invites youth who have already taken action in their communities to continue to learn more about the SDGs in Latin America. Griselda Solis, a “Youth for the SDGs” scholar and current Peace Boat US intern, highlighted her experience traveling from Panama to Costa Rica to Mexico. On that voyage, she learned about indigenous communities and their practices while getting involved with local organizations working towards sustainability.

Lastly, we spoke to Roberto Cerda, the founder of Restore Coral. Roberto worked with local community members in Mexico to provide socially innovative solutions surrounding ocean health and coral reefs. He explains that the majority of the people in Mexico do not really know how important the ocean is and its impact on our ecosystems. He states that around one billion people depend on coral reefs in one way or another. Through restoring coral, he aims to activate current infrastructure already installed by the state to continue to aid in coral reef restoration. In order to accomplish this goal, Restore Coral innovatively collaborated with politicians in a coral matching program: for every one vote the politician received, a coral was planted.
On June 12th, Reach the World and The Explorers Club collaborated with Peace Boat to share the experiences of young activists working towards marine conservation and sustainability around the world. The event was aimed at young students and their families, so they could have a moment to learn and reflect on what youth activism looks like and how they can get involved in their own communities. Speakers were encouraged to share child-friendly stories on ocean exploration, conservation, and wonder. Various classrooms in the United States tuned in and sent their questions to youth leaders Sara Van Eerde, Khadija Stewart, Silvia Cantu, and Ashneil Jeffers.

Sara Van Eerde works with Global Kids and was part of Youth for the SDGs Latin America Program in 2019. Silvia Cantu, a photographer and scuba diver from Mexico, also joined the Youth for the SDGs Program in 2019. Ashneil Jeffers from Montserrat and Khadija Stewart from Trinidad and Tobago were both part of the Peace Boat program for Ocean and Climate Youth Ambassadors. The participants talked about their experiences on board Peace Boat and what inspired them to take action in their own communities. They shared messages of hope to the younger generations interested in environmental conservation and peace.

“Conservation should be for everyone; there’s so many paths to achieve it. If you don’t know what you want to be in a few years, that’s fine, as long as you remember that what you love is to conserve our oceans, you’ll find a way to help” - Silvia Cantu

“Kids understand many concepts and have very fresh and innovative ideas. It’s important to tap into all generations to tackle climate change. We all have our tools and capabilities to go out there and fight the climate crisis.” Khadija Stewart

“No matter what happens, you shouldn’t give up on what you are trying to do. And even when the worst happens, in the environment or in your personal life, just keep on pushing as much as you can.”
- Ashneil Jeffers
The full-day experience with over 300 participants included discussions, films, music and photography exhibitions about the world’s oceans with more than 20 organizations and ocean advocates, including The OECD, Underwater Earth, PangeaSeed Foundation, Conscious Fashion Campaign, EarthX, Fabien Cousteau Ocean Learning Center, StoriesxFuture, Peace Boat US, Create 2030, Global Coral Reef Alliance, Blue Planet Foundation and more. On the main stage, OECD, CICESE, and the Global Coral Reef Alliance gave their presentation on a ‘Sustainable Blue Economy,’ detailing the reactivation of and opportunities for a post-pandemic economy. They were followed by Plan a Million Corals, Sea Shepherd México and Restore Coral who presented initiatives to support and protect the Mesoamerican Reefs. Emilie McGlone from Peace Boat US introduced the Ecoship, Peace Boat’s ongoing project to create the first environmentally friendly cruise ship. The event was marked by its innovative design as it allowed participants to engage in real time with the panelists and artists through the virtual reality tools of Laval Virtual. Participants could ask questions, navigate the rooms, and even clap and dance. Many others around the world were able to attend the live conferences via Youtube livestream. The highly interdisciplinary nature of the Hub also allowed participants to think deeply about the many different approaches to sustainability and ocean conservation, and how everyone can contribute their skills and ideas to the innovation movement.
WITH HENK ROGERS

June 9

Peace Boat US Director Emilie McGlone joined in a conversation with Henk Rogers of the Blue Ocean Project hosted by Susi Mai and Jeremy McKane, the creators of UltraMarine Ocean Summit. Together, the four covered a lot of ground, but collectively emphasized the power of both collaboration and gamifying the conservation movement. With a long history in game development, Henk Rogers explained that games are one of the original forms of human entertainment. He explained that games are one of the original forms of human entertainment and generate interest in various topics around the world. The four panelists also touched on the importance of connection. Emilie McGlone related this to individuals’ experiences on the Peace Boat. Often referred to as a “floating village,” Peace Boat creates a powerful shared experience and physical space through which individuals have the power to connect. As a whole, the four agreed that the more individuals collaborate, the more the group is collectively able to accomplish. As their conversation wrapped up, the speakers agreed that “We don’t have time to waste,” and that now is the time that we collectively should move on tackling problems around climate change. Gamifying conservation efforts through collective collaboration has the potential to yield outstanding results, thus creating innovative solutions for our planet.

WITH FABIEN COUSTEAU

June 9

On Tuesday, June 9, Emilie McGlone curated a conversation with Fabien Cousteau of the Ocean Learning Center facilitated by the co-founders of the UltraMarine Ocean Summit Jeremy McKane and Susi Mai. The focus of the conversation was around sustainable habitats and innovation within the ocean. During their conservation, the three touched on closed loop systems and how they related to their respective projects. While innovative habitats like Peace Boat’s Ecoship and the Fabien Cousteau Ocean Learning Center’s PROTEUS project are more obvious examples of closed loop systems, the panelists were quick to point out that our earth is actually a larger example of a closed loop system, also with limited resources - we just don’t treat it as such. Emilie and Fabien, proponents of innovative ocean habitats, touched on the various ways that their respective projects looked to both work with and within the ocean’s ecosystems. The Ecoship is based on biomimicry and the design a whale, while PROTEUS draws on coral for its inspiration. As the conversation wrapped up, Fabien Cousteau emphasized, “Whatever we do ends up coming back to us, regardless of what closed loop system we choose.” The panelists closed on an exciting note, looking forward to their respective innovative projects coming to fruition.
Thank you to all of our partners for great cooperation and innovative solutions for our oceans.