

OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

England & Wales · Charity number 1165905

Details

Other names ORP

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2016-03-07

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

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Activities

Objects: 3. ObjectsThe objects of the CIO are:1.To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of sea turtles and their habitats, in particular, but not exclusively by:(a) promoting humane behaviour towards sea turtles by providing appropriate care, protection, treatment and security for animals which need care and attention by reason of sickness, maltreatment, poor circumstances or ill usage and to educate the public and veterinarian community in matters pertaining to sea turtle welfare in general and the prevention of cruelty and suffering to sea turtles.(b) advancing the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of sea turtles, by provision of talks, workshops, online courses and training; and(c) advancing the education of the scientific community by filling scientific data gaps in sea turtle research. Nothing in this constitution shall authorise an application of the property of the CIO for the purposes which are not charitable in accordance with section 7 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and section 2 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

Activities: ORP is on a mission to protect sea turtles and their habitats. We do this through rescue and rehabilitation of injured sea turtles, scientific research, and education and community outreach. Our rescue and rehabilitation facilities include a fully-equipped, veterinary run marine turtle rescue centre with laboratory and surgical facilities, and a sea turtle rehabilitation centre in the Maldives .

Classification

- **How:** Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research
- **What:** Education/training, Animals, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Germany
- India
- Kenya
- Maldives
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Seychelles
- United States
- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£574,350	£671,033	£487,635	2
2023-12-31	£694,038	£617,357	£583,463	1
2022-12-31	£559,797	£383,117	£506,264	1
2021-12-31	£365,884	£128,201	-	-
2020-12-31	£51,847	£63,876	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Amanda Costain		2021-07-19
Gordon Robert Fergus		2025-05-23
Lauren Woodley		2025-05-23
Lee Cannan		2022-03-21
Mary Anderson		2025-05-23

OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

England & Wales - Charity number 1165905

Accounts



OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

The Olive Ridley Project

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year: 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024

Registered Charity Number: 1165905

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Reference and administrative details

Charity name	Olive Ridley Project
Registered charity number	1165905
Trustees	Dr Mike Sweet Lee Cannan Cliona Kirby (until 8th October 2024) Amanda Costain Mary Anderson (from 23rd May 2025) Gordon Fergus (from 23rd May 2025) Lauren Woodley (from 23rd May 2025)
Chief Executive Officer / Founder	Dr Martin Stelfox
Chief Operating Officer	Jannicke C Hallum
Senior Project Scientist	Dr Stephanie Köhnik
Lead Veterinary Surgeon	Dr Max Polyak
Fundraiser	Junho Yu
Education and Outreach Officer	Risha Ali Rasheed
Database Administrator	Jane Lloyd
Individual Giving Administrator	Emily Mundy
Charity Administrator	Adam Costello
Communications Officer	Anadya Singh
Programme Manager - Pakistan	Usman Iqbal
Project Manager - Kenya	Jenni Choma
Registered Office	91 Padiham Road Sabden Clitheroe BB7 9EX
Bank	Lloyds Bank 8 Royal Parade Plymouth, PL1 1HB
Independent Examiner	Gary Butt FMAAT BYB Accountancy Ltd 39 Cardiff Road Llandaff Cardiff South Glamorgan CF5 2DP
German Legal Adviser	Littler Germany PartG mbB Neuer Wall 43 20354 20354 Hamburg
Branch	Olive Ridley Project - Kenya
Trustees	Leah Mainye Sahya Haria Daniel Onsembe Lee Cannan Amanda Costain
Project Coordinator	Leah Mainye

Registered Office

Diani Bazaar
PO Box 60693
Beach Road
Diani
Kwale
00200

Bank

I&M Bank Limited
Diani Beach Shopping Centre
Diani Beach Road
Diani

Financial Adviser

Maureen Charana
Precise Tax Solutions Limited
5th Floor, Imaara-Dedan Kimathi Avenue
Mombasa, P.O. Box 41670-00100

Legal Advisers

Lawrence Obonyo, Chelsea Owino, Duncan Otieno Odundo
Lawrence Obonyo Legal Advocates
Diani Beach Shopping Centre, Ground Floor,
Diani Beach Road,
Kwale County

Olive Ridley Project

Trustees' report

For the year ending 31st December 2024

Objectives and activities

Our vision is a world where sea turtles can roam free from human induced threats.

Among the seven globally recognised species of sea turtles, all but one, which lacks sufficient data for assessment, are currently classified as either vulnerable or endangered. Two species are specifically categorised as critically endangered, indicating an imminent risk of extinction in the wild. To avert the potential extinction of further endangerment of these species, it is imperative that concerted efforts be taken promptly to enhance the protection of sea turtles and their vital habitats.

The absence of sea turtles in the ocean would lead to a weakened marine and coastal ecosystem. Given humanity's substantial reliance on the ocean for regulating our climate and weather patterns and the resources it provides, being it for the food we eat, the oxygen we breathe, or the jobs we have, the extinction of sea turtles would yield severe ramifications for our overall well-being. Additionally, thriving oceanic ecosystems are contingent upon the presence of sea turtles, recognised as 'keystone species' for their substantial influence on their environment, which in turn affects other species. The removal of sea turtles can disrupt the natural equilibrium, impacting various forms of wildlife and plant life.

Over the past two centuries, human activities have exerted a profound and deleterious influence on the continued existence of these ancient creatures. Sea turtles face multiple threats, including hunting for their eggs, meat, skin, and shells, as well as habitat loss and inadvertent entanglement in fishing equipment, commonly referred to as bycatch. Climate change exacerbates these challenges by altering the temperatures of nesting sites, consequently influencing the genders of hatchlings.

Urgent action is imperative to safeguard sea turtles and their habitats, as their current vulnerable status and the critical endangerment of two species signal a potential risk of extinction. The preservation of sea turtles is integral not only for the stability of marine ecosystems but also for the well-being and sustenance of humanity, underscoring the vital importance of their conservation.

ORP takes a multidimensional approach to protecting sea turtles and their habitat.

ORPs charitable objects

ORP is dedicated to fulfilling the objects of the charity which are:

To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of sea turtles and their habitats, in particular, but not exclusively by:

- (a) promoting humane behaviour towards sea turtles by providing appropriate care, protection, treatment and security for animals which need care and attention by reason of sickness, maltreatment, poor circumstances or ill usage and to educate the public and veterinarian community in matters pertaining to sea turtle welfare in general and the prevention of cruelty and suffering to sea turtles.
- (b) advancing the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of sea turtles, by provision of talks, workshops, online courses and training; and
- (c) advancing the education of the scientific community by filling scientific data gaps in sea turtle research.

This is achieved through:

1. **Scientific and clinical research:** Advancing our understanding of sea turtle ecology, biology and health through scientific and clinical research.
2. **Rescue and conservation medicine:** Providing assistance and care and, where possible, preventing injuries and disease in sea turtles by advancing clinical care through the practice of rescue and conservation medicine.
3. **Educational outreach:** Engaging with communities, NGOs, private sector and policy makers through education and outreach.

ORP acknowledges that these three disciplines are not mutually exclusive. It believes that by recognising the interplay between them, we can promote a healthier overall ecosystem, indirectly benefiting the prospects for sea turtles, their habitats and humans.

Our key activities include:

Scientific research & knowledge sharing:

- Conduct research on sea turtle populations, distribution, health, and threats to strengthen scientific knowledge, inform conservation policy, and guide veterinary treatment.
- Publish findings in peer-reviewed journals to advance understanding of sea turtles and the challenges they face.
- Collaborate with research institutes to enhance our research capacity and expand knowledge within the sea turtle scientific community.
- Undertake sea turtle health studies to improve clinical practice for sea turtle care.
- Maintain citizen science projects that enable people from all backgrounds to contribute to research while developing personal skills.

Rescue, conservation medicine & veterinary training:

- Operate a Marine Turtle Rescue Centre and three sea turtle rehabilitation centres, providing veterinary care for injured and sick turtles rescued across the Maldives.
- Offer sea turtle volunteer opportunities at the Rescue Centre where volunteers get hands-on experience working with sea turtles and gain unique insights into sea turtle conservation medicine. They learn about sea turtle biology and anatomy, the causes and treatment of injuries, the threats these animals face in the wild, and ways to support their conservation.
- Run a Veterinary Training Programme for clinicians from countries where sea turtle medicine is a critical need, particularly in regions with fewer training opportunities. We sponsor participants from these regions, partly funded by contributions from peers with greater access to resources.
- Provide opportunities for local schools and organisations to visit our centres and for Maldivian nationals to work alongside our veterinary team, fostering skills development and awareness.

Community engagement & capacity development

- Offer paid internships to Maldivian and Kenyan nationals to develop in-country capacity for sea turtle conservation, research, and sea turtle husbandry.
- Work with fishing communities to reduce threats such as marine debris and bycatch, while promoting safe release practices.
- Run circular economy projects that recover and repurpose ghost gear, generating alternative income streams for local communities.
- Conduct workshops, seminars, and informal meetings with local communities, governments, schools, and the wider public to promote sea turtle conservation.

- Offer student attachment programmes with partner universities in Kenya.
- Organise educational festivals and community events.
- Employ in-field project coordinators who share research findings and raise awareness among communities.
- Provide open-access resources such as educational videos, podcasts, blogs, and an e-learning platform.
- Publish multi-lingual practical protocols and infographics aiming to reduce human disturbance to sea turtles across all habitats while enabling positive wildlife encounters, and increase survival chances for entangled turtles.
- Engage a wide audience through active social media channels and direct messaging platforms.

ORPs core values

Grounded in science - We are guided by a strong belief in the power of science. By relying on research and observation evidence, we ensure our knowledge is accurate and reliable. This commitment helps us make thoughtful decisions that drive meaningful and lasting change.

Collaboration - We believe in the power of collaboration, where diverse strengths come together to spark creativity, boost productivity, and achieve greater impact. Through working together, we foster learning, build strong relationships, and enhance our collective effectiveness

Passion - We are driven by passion, which energises our efforts, pushes boundaries, and inspires us to excel. This enthusiasm fosters a positive feedback loop, enhancing productivity and ensuring we thrive in the work we love.

Accountability - We are committed to being accountable to our donors, beneficiaries, and stakeholders, which helps us build trust, maintain credibility, and stay focused on achieving our mission while continuously improving our impact.

Respect - We respect the interconnectedness of the natural world and promote harmony and inclusiveness to sustain a balanced and thriving coexistence among people, the environment, and society.

Public benefit

All trustees follow the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. By closely following this guideline we ensure the charity stays true to its purposes and focuses resources in direct relation to the charitable purposes.

Grant making

The trustees consider grant making an effective way to support local partners. Local partners understand the local customs, law and communities, which means they can support our mission more effectively.

Applications for grants are not invited. The management team agree the programme of activities for the year with the trustees and whether those activities are best supported by local partners. Conditional grants for specific activities will then be awarded to local partners that share our mission and values. Regular reports on the progress of these activities are provided at the Trustee meetings. During 2024 grants were only provided to our sister organisation in the Maldives, Olive Ridley Project - Maldives, that shares our mission and values.

Achievements and performance 2024

This reporting period is running from January to December 2024 and captures our charitable activities across Kenya, Maldives, Oman, Pakistan, and the Seychelles.

In 2024, we strengthened our conservation efforts across Kenya, the Maldives, Oman, Pakistan, and Seychelles through community-led programmes, cutting-edge technology, and strategic partnerships. The official registration of ORP Kenya as an NGO reinforced our long-term commitment to conservation in the region. We also developed a comprehensive five-year strategy to ensure sustainability and growth.

Long-term sea turtle population monitoring using Photo-Identification (Photo-ID) remains an essential tool for assessing abundance and population trends to guide effective conservation management. In 2024, ORP's Photo-ID database grew to over 8,000 identified sea turtles and 50,000 encounters, making it one of the world's largest. This data is integrated into the Internet of Turtles (IoT), enhancing global conservation efforts. This milestone reflects our commitment to collaboration and data-driven conservation. We thank our citizen scientists for their contributions.

In Kenya, drone surveys and Photo-ID provided critical data on habitat use, threats, and disease prevalence. In the Maldives, we have identified over 5,000 hawksbills, and drone monitoring of nesting beaches in Laamu Atoll helps deter illegal take. In Oman, our research has confirmed Zighy Bay as a key developmental habitat for juvenile green turtles, although threats from ghost gear and bycatch persist.

Our nest monitoring project in the Maldives is also contributing data to a nationwide genetic study and a collaborative study with MEDASSET on microplastic contamination in nesting sands. Running Out of Sand: Sea Turtle Nesting Activity on Félicité Island, Seychelles, our study examining nest activity and challenges like beach erosion and human-related threats, was published in the Marine Turtle Newsletter (2024).

In 2024, two expeditions helped strengthen the foundation for sea turtle research in the Maldives, including our Sea Turtle Health Database – the region's first comprehensive repository of clinical indices – designed to inform future therapeutic approaches. These expeditions also provide valuable capacity-building opportunities for students and citizen scientists participating, and they promote environmental stewardship and community engagement.

Over the past two years, we have transitioned from a traditional rescue and release approach to a more advanced conservation medicine model in our veterinary practices, incorporating new therapies, cutting-edge technologies, and research-driven treatment protocols. These advancements have improved diagnostic accuracy, treatment outcomes, and patient recovery. We also expanded our rescue and rehabilitation network to increase capacity for injured sea turtles. Since we opened our first Sea Turtle Rescue Centre in the Maldives, we have maintained a 61% release success rate – a significant achievement in wildlife conservation.

But conservation isn't just about data and technology. It's about people. Our community-led initiatives are empowering local communities to become stewards of their marine environments. From fisher outreach programmes in Kenya to beach guardian initiatives in the Maldives, we are fostering a sense of community ownership and responsibility. In Pakistan, we're building bridges between conservation and economic empowerment, ensuring that protecting sea turtles benefits both wildlife and local communities.

Education is paramount. We've reached thousands of people through workshops, site visits, educational festivals, online courses, social media channels and our podcast, inspiring the next generation of conservationists. Our veterinary training, internships, and volunteer programmes build capacity, extending our impact beyond our direct interventions.

The year in numbers

Scientific research, rescue and conservation medicine:

- Over 4,500 turtle sightings recorded in the Indian Ocean
- 622 new sea turtles identified in the Indian Ocean
- 652 turtle nests recorded in the Indian Ocean
- Over 15,000 hatchlings counted in the Indian Ocean
- 28 turtle patients treated, including 18 new admissions with 15 turtle patients rehabilitated and successfully released.

- 1 turtle patient was released with a satellite tag, we tracked them for over 3,200 km from July to October 2024, typically swimming at an average depth of 22.5m but also reached the tag's maximum detection limit of 275 to 300m.

Environmental education, collaboration and community outreach:

- 140kgs of ghost gear removed in the Indian Ocean
- 44 square metres of ghost net repurposed in the Indian Ocean
- 7 veterinary surgeons from 7 different countries were welcomed at the rescue centre as part of our Veterinary Training Programme.
- 11 interns in the Maldives and 2 in Kenya
- 58 volunteers from 18 countries helped at the rescue centre in the Maldives
- 12 new Sea Turtle Guardian Programme Graduates
- 3,300 people educated
- 100,000 YouTube views
- 2 impactful scientific manuscripts published, 5 technical reports and 3 conference presentations.
- 2,100 podcast downloads

For a more detailed overview of ORP activities in each territory, please refer to our 2024 [Annual Review](#) on our website.

Plans for future periods

Looking ahead, ORP enters 2025 in a strong financial position. With a focus on long-term sustainability, we will continue diversifying income and advancing our five-year fundraising strategy to support our mission well into the future. Securing resources to sustain and grow our impact in sea turtle conservation remains a top priority, ensuring our work stays resilient, effective, and adaptable.

Building upon our 2024–2028 strategy, we are dedicated to a future where sea turtles can roam free from human-induced threats. In the coming year, our focus will be on:

1. Enhancing impact measurement and accountability

- Implementing a robust impact measurement framework, guided by consultation and data collection, to track key metrics and ensure our programmes deliver meaningful, measurable outcomes.
- Publishing our five-year strategy and Theory of Change in 2025 to promote transparency, accountability, and collaboration.

2. Strengthening organisational structure

- Transitioning to a dynamic, matrix-style organisational model, empowering country offices to respond effectively to regional needs and strengthen local ownership.
- Building a global network of advocates and local leaders committed to sea turtle conservation through ambassadorships.
- Strengthening our fundraising strategy by diversifying income streams to ensure long-term financial sustainability.
- Investing in fundraising activities to support growing operations and regional offices, ensuring responsiveness and innovation in sea turtle conservation.

3. Leveraging technology and advancing scientific research

- Expanding the use of innovative technologies such as drones and AI for enhanced habitat assessment and strategic surveys.
- Advancing Project SEUSS in collaboration with Purple Transform, integrating AI for real-time nest disturbance detection and hatching prediction, with future enhancements for predator and inundation detection.
- Collaborating with Purple AI to develop an AI-powered tool for complete blood counts (CBC) in sea turtles, streamlining diagnostics and improving patient care.
- Conducting in-depth analysis of existing data and samples related to sea turtle health and genetics.
- Continuing data collection through long-term Capture-Mark-Recapture (CMR) studies using Photo-ID, satellite tagging (ORPTrack), nest monitoring, threat assessments, sea turtle health observations, and socio-historical surveys to inform conservation strategies.
- Publishing key research findings, including a socio-economic study on the value of sea turtles in the Maldives and the first analysis of ORPTrack satellite tagging data—representing a landmark study in the Northern Indian Ocean.
- Presenting research findings and conservation programme successes at the 43rd International Sea Turtle Symposium in Ghana, sharing insights from Photo-ID studies, work with fishing communities, and sea turtle health research.

4. Expanding conservation efforts and community engagement

- Empowering communities, stakeholders, and individuals with the knowledge and resources to actively contribute to sea turtle conservation through knowledge-sharing initiatives and educational programmes, including internships, student attachments, veterinary training, and citizen science and volunteer opportunities.
- Expanding the Nesting Beach Guardian and Ranger Programme in the Maldives to a national scale, furthering research on nesting and illegal take frequencies.
- Continuing to expand our fisher outreach programme in Kenya, initiating sea turtle bycatch data collection.
- Implementing LED light testing as a bycatch mitigation measure in collaboration with local fishers, supported by grants from Animal Saviours and the SWOT programme.
- Opening a second full clinical facility for sea turtles at Jawakara Maldives in Lhaviyani Atoll.

By focusing on these key areas, we will strengthen our conservation impact, advance scientific research, and build a more sustainable future for sea turtles and their habitats.

Structure, governance and management

This Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), the Olive Ridley Project (ORP), is regulated by its constitution whose only voting members are its trustees. The CIO was established by Dr. Martin Stelfox (CEO and founder) in 2013 and then became the CIO on the 7th March 2016.

Trustees and organisational structure

The constitution provides for a minimum of 3 trustees, to a maximum of 7 trustees. Trustees serve for a term of three years after which they may put themselves forward for re-appointment, up to a maximum of three terms.

All trustees give their time freely and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year.

Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests in accordance with the charity policy.

Appointment of trustees

New trustees are appointed by the existing trustees. The trustees formally approved arrangements complying with the CC30 guide 'The recruitment, appointment and induction process for new charity trustees and how to set a framework for recruitment.' and recruit new trustee(s) for their experience, empathy and knowledge of the charity and to keep the skills and composition of the trustee body and succession planning under review. The trustees have also developed a code of conduct for trustees including formal statements of role and responsibilities and provision for trustee training. New trustees may be sought by open advertisement or through peer to peer dialogue.

Trustee Induction

On appointment, new trustees sign a constitution committing them to giving of their time and expertise. The induction process includes an initial meeting with the trustees, followed by a series of short meetings with the Chief Executive Officer on day to day activities within the charity, current projects, grant making process and powers and responsibilities of the trustee board. The welcome pack includes a brief history of the charity, a copy of the trustee board minutes, a copy of the constitution, 5-year plan and a copy of the Charity Commission's guidance 'The Essential Trustee: What You Need to Know' and 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

Organisation

At the quarterly trustee meetings, the trustees review the broad strategy and performance and approve operating plans and budgets. They consider areas of activity for the charity, including consideration for grant making, investment, reserves and risk management policies. To facilitate effective operations the trustees have delegated operational matters to the Chief Executive and senior management. This includes the day to day administration, employment and policy activities. The trustees approve such strategies and monitor and evaluate their implementation on a regular basis. All policies are reviewed on an annual basis.

Related parties

Olive Ridley Project - Kenya, was established in 2024 as a branch of ORP. Olive Ridley Project - Kenya is a charitable NGO set up under Kenyan law, to allow us to continue to operate effectively in Kenya. It shares the same charitable objects as the UK Charity. It has its own board that reports into the UK Trustee Board. Two of the UK Trustees currently also sit on the Kenyan board.

The charity also financially supports the connected NGO Olive Ridley Project - Maldives, which was established in 2023. This NGO has similar aims and objectives to the UK based charity. As well as funding this NGO during its initial years the ORP provides management advice.

ORP has an agreement in place with Chapel & York in the USA. This allows US citizens to make tax effective donations to ORP through Chapel & York, who charge a fee for their service.

Other collaborations

Kenya

Bahari Hai aim to help create and support a community conscious of the marine environment and actively involved in protecting & establishing healthy ecosystems. Our partnership aims to improve sea turtle research and conservation along the Kenyan coastline.

The Conservation Education Society (CES) believes that, through education, empowerment and collaboration, everyone, big or small, can play a role in preserving our natural world. CES was officially established in March 2019

and operates out of the Marine Education Centre in Diani, Kenya. CES regularly organises educational events which ORP participates in and contributes to, as well as providing administrative and logistical support.

Diani Turtle Watch (DTW), a turtle conservation monitoring group, surveys the beach to spot any turtle nesting activities, mortality and turtle stranding cases throughout the day. DTW collaborates with ORP by sharing photos of by-caught turtles and stranded turtles for ID purposes, enriching our database and assisting with information about the threats that affect the turtles feeding off Diani's reef.

Diving The Crab (DTC) is widely recognised as the best dive centre in both Diani and in Kenya, DTC is one of the main sponsors of the Marine Education Centre. DTC is also very supportive of marine biodiversity related activities in Diani, including ORP's in-water work. Since ORP first arrived in Kenya, DTC has been instrumental in providing logistical support allowing ORP to conduct in-water surveys and explore Diani's reefs, as well as actively participating in guest education, in-water surveys, ghost net reporting and removal, and staff training.

The collaboration with Kenyatta University focuses on conducting studies on the use of Diani-Chale National Marine Reserve (DCNMR) seagrass lagoon by sea turtles, using a combination of monitoring techniques. In addition we explore the impact of plastic pollution on DCNMR and its potential threat to sea turtles.

Msambweni Beach House and ORP are working together to advance the research of sea turtles and their environment in the country and provide educational outreach to international guests. ORP guides tourists to collect citizen scientist data to help understand sea turtle distribution and abundance and provides educational presentations to local staff and guests on sea turtle conservation and their challenges in general.

The partnership between ORP and Pwani University encompasses several key initiatives: conducting population assessments through photo-ID and genetic markers, investigating population connectivity along Kenya's coast and the western Indian Ocean, and analysing the health of juvenile green turtles, particularly the incidence of fibropapillomatosis and its correlation with environmental stressors. Additionally, the collaboration emphasises higher education by offering formal training for undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate students, alongside technical supervision in sea turtle research. It also focuses on outreach to build local community capacity in conservation efforts and mobilising resources for research and student support.

The collaboration between Shimoni Turtle Watch and ORP focuses on the implementation of activities and data sharing to study the sea turtle populations within Kisite-Mpunguti National Park and Marine Reserve through photo identification methods. This joint project leverages the strengths of both organisations, with ORP providing strategic oversight and expertise, while STW takes the lead on field data collection and assistance. STW will organise and conduct field trips to gather critical data on sea turtle behaviour and populations, utilising photo ID techniques to monitor individual turtles over time. The collaboration emphasises effective communication and data sharing between the two organisations, ensuring that insights gained from the field are systematically analysed and utilised for conservation efforts. Together, STW and ORP aim to enhance the understanding and protection of the sea turtle populations in this vital marine ecosystem.

Maldives

In 2024, ORP and the Environmental Protection Agency continued to work with Laamu Atoll Council, L. Fonadhoo Council, and AgroNat (AgroNational Corporation) to protect the sea turtle nesting beach on L. Gaadhoo, Maldives. In 2024, the programme expanded to L. Maavah, anecdotally known as a hotspot for illegal take and consumption. The second phase of the programme introduced drone monitoring to our tool kit, providing real-time insights into nesting activity and potential threats on L. Gaadhoo's critical nesting beaches.

Our long standing partnership with Coco Collection Resorts continues. Our Marine Turtle Rescue Centre is located on

Coco Dhuni Kolhu in Baa Atoll. We would like to thank Coco Collection for all their support and for hosting the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre, our staff, volunteers and interns.

Our partnership with Sirru Fen Fushi Resort (previously Fairmont), in Shaviyani Atoll, established in 2021, aims to provide a central hub for data collection in the region along with community engagement. Moreover ORP plans to identify local stakeholders in Shaviyani to extend its data collection activities on sea turtle populations in the region.

International Pole and Line Foundation - Maldives, registered NGO in Maldives in October 2020 (CR/62/2020), is the local chapter of International Pole and Line Foundation founded in 2012, with the aim of promoting sustainable management of the world's responsible pole and line, handline and troll (collectively known as 'one-by-one' tuna fisheries while also recognizing the importance of safeguarding the livelihoods they support. IPNLF and ORP partnered together alongside N.Lhohi Council AND Zero Waste Maldives to establish a makerspace recycling facility on Lhohi Island complemented by organising a waste upcycling competition and creating a circular economy project focused on ghost gear recycling. Additionally, there will be training and capacity building for upcycling, along with offering basic jewellery-making training.

In 2022, we partnered with JOALI BEING Resort in Raa Atoll. This partnership has allowed ORP to have a presence in the atoll through education and outreach initiatives in the local community as well as collecting data on sea turtles residing and nesting here. We opened a second rehabilitation facility here in 2024 to expand our capacity to care for injured and sick sea turtles rescued in the Maldives.

WAMCO, in collaboration with the Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy (MoECCT), are working with the ORP to oversee sea turtle nesting on the beaches of R. Vandhoo, Maldives and to protect sea turtles and their eggs on the island. The staff at MoECCT and WAMCO received training and co-supervision from ORP. Key responsibilities include conducting training and awareness sessions for WAMCO staff about sea turtles, as well as reporting any illegal take incidents to the Environmental Protection Agency of Maldives (EPA). The overall goal of the project is to enhance monitoring efforts and gather comprehensive data on nesting patterns at R. Vandhoo, allowing for comparisons with historical records to better understand the current situation on the island.

Ocean & Reefs (previously named Marine Life Protectors) continues to financially support ORP for rescue and rehabilitation efforts in the Maldives along with our education and outreach efforts in Kenya.

Our partnership with One&Only Reethi Rah focuses on advancing research of sea turtles in North Malé Atoll. In addition, we opened a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre here in 2019 for turtle patients in need of long-term rehabilitation without veterinary care. This frees up tank space at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre to allow admittance of more injured sea turtles that require urgent veterinary attention. Additionally, neighbouring resorts, in a resort-dense atoll, have a local point to send injured sea turtles.

We continue our partnership with Six Senses Laamu, a resort in Laamu Atoll to work together to advance the research of sea turtles in Laamu and provide educational outreach to international guests and Maldivian nationals. Here we work closely with two other not-for-profit organisations and resort staff under the umbrella Maldives Underwater Initiative (MUI), with the ultimate goal of creating a network of locally managed marine protected areas, in consultation with the community. MUI (Maldives Underwater Initiative) is a marine conservation initiative from Six Senses Laamu, Maldives, which unites the resort and its three NGO partners under one umbrella, with the aim to consolidate shared research, science communication, community education and outreach goals. The NGO's are Olive Ridley Project, Manta Trust and Blue Marine Foundation.

The partnership with Six Senses Kanuhura in collaboration with Atol Marine Centre, helps continue collecting long term data sets of sea turtle population and habitat use in Lhaviyani Atoll, along with education and outreach efforts amongst the local community and resort stakeholders. This partnership ended in April 2024.

The partnership with Soneva Jani, Noonu Atoll, allows our team to collect data on sea turtle populations, sea turtle health, and nesting in the region. In September 2024, we opened a third sea turtle rehabilitation centre here – Noonu Atoll Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre.

Oman

The aim of the partnership with Six Senses Zighy Bay, established in 2018, is to use non-invasive research techniques to better understand sea turtle population health in the region. Additionally, we work with local fishers to reduce the impact of bycatch on sea turtles and conduct educational outreach in the Musandam region. We hope to work with existing sea turtle conservation groups to assist with ongoing research and conservation in the country.

Seyshelles

The aim of this partnership with Six Senses Zil Pasyon, established in 2021, is to use non-invasive research techniques to better understand sea turtle population health in the region. Additionally, we hope to work with existing sea turtle conservation groups to assist with ongoing research and conservation in the country.

World

The NGO Tuna Forum brings together NGOs and other individuals and organisations that work comprehensively on global tuna sustainability issues. ORP currently sits on three working groups: Bycatch Mitigation, Data and Transparency and Well-Managed FAD Guidance. The aim of this involvement is to ensure ghost gear and ghost fishing are brought into the conversation of global tuna fisheries at the policy level. We hope our experience and expertise will help guide stakeholders to make informed decisions on the issue and ensure it remains firmly on the agenda.

OceanCare has been raising its voice on behalf of marine life since 1989. The international marine conservation organisation, based in Switzerland, holds Special Consultative Status with UN ECOSOC and contributes to Agenda 2030 and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. ORP and Ocean Care continue their long standing partnership to help rescue and rehabilitate injured and sick sea turtles in the Maldives.

Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance (STRA), registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation #1197327 in England & Wales, is a global network for sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation centres to share clinical knowledge and data to enhance medical practices at facilities worldwide, supporting the global conservation effort for these endangered species.

The University of Derby in the UK is collaborating with the ORP and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to enhance our understanding of the genetic makeup of sea turtles in the Maldives. This partnership aims to conduct comprehensive genetic studies that will provide valuable insights into the population structure, diversity, and health of sea turtle species in the region. By analysing genetic data, the partnership hopes to identify distinct populations, assess their resilience to environmental changes, and inform conservation strategies.

Risk management

The Trustees have reviewed the risks identified applicable to the charity and believe that appropriate action has been taken to manage and mitigate against these risks, where possible. Furthermore, the Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the operations, reputation and finance of ORP.

The CEO assesses and updates the likelihood and impact of material risks and ensures controls are in place, such as special risk assessments for general fieldwork and working at the rescue centre. The CEO updates the Trustees on any new risks at the quarterly meetings. The trustees review the risks on an ongoing basis.

The trustees accept that to achieve our objectives some areas of our work require the acceptance and management of risks.

Financial review

In 2024, ORP maintained a strong financial position. While income was lower than in 2023, it remained aligned with internal plans and reflected a focus on long-term sustainability through diverse funding streams, including donations, grants, partnerships, and investments.

Key investments included a new CRM system, improving donor management and financial planning, and the introduction of updated governance frameworks, such as an Ethical Fundraising Policy and a Due Diligence Procedure. Capacity building was prioritised in Kenya and the Maldives, with enhanced fundraising, grant development, and donor stewardship, strengthening ORP's ability to deliver on its strategic goals.

ORP's 2024 financial performance reflects successful fundraising and prudent management.

The Trustees are confident these developments have strengthened the charity's ability to achieve its objectives and secure long-term financial sustainability.

Income

In 2024, ORP achieved a total income of £574,350. The breakdown of income sources is as follows:

Donations and Legacies: £351,972, with unrestricted funds contributing £254,070 and restricted funds adding £97,902.

Charitable Activities: £210,004, an increase from £199,805 in 2023.

Investment Income: £12,374

Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year amounted to £671,033, up from £617,357 in 2023. The major areas of expenditure were:

Raising Funds: £76,643 which covered costs associated with fundraising activities, compared to £50,554 in 2023, facilitating the generation of £574,350 in income. This represents a return on fundraising investment (ROI) of approximately 7.49, meaning that for every £1 spent on fundraising, ORP generated approximately £7.49 in income.

Charitable Activities: £594,390, a substantial increase from £566,803 in 2023. This expenditure includes staff and consultant costs, equipment and medical supplies, other charitable activities, and donated services and facilities.

Net income and fund balances

ORP reported a net income of £(95,828) for 2024, a decrease from £77,200 in 2023. This was after accounting for net gains on investments of £855. The net movement in funds was £(95,828), leading to a closing fund balance of £487,635, down from £588,463 at the start of the year.

Unrestricted Funds: Decreased to £388,356 from £462,533 last year.

Restricted Funds: Decreased to £99,279 from £120,930 last year.

Financial position

As of 31 December 2024, ORP's total net assets stood at £487,635. The balance sheet highlights include:

Fixed Assets: £69,498, including tangible fixed assets and investments.

Current Assets: £484,667, comprising cash at bank and in hand, and debtors.

Creditors: £(66,530), representing amounts falling due within one year.

The charity remains in a strong financial position with adequate resources to continue its operations and support its mission of protecting sea turtles and their habitats through rescue, clinical research and conservation medicine, scientific research, and education and outreach.

Performance of Kenyan branch

The Kenyan branch had a net surplus in the year of £0 and net assets of £6,151.

Fundraising

ORP is currently funded entirely through donations and grants, with the vast majority of our income being from private donations from our adoption and rescue centre volunteering programmes, as well as generous contributions from our corporate partnerships. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters, partners and donors for their invaluable support in furthering our mission.

In 2024 ORP focussed on securing the financial resources to sustain its mission and drive long-term growth. A key priority was strengthening our fundraising strategy to build a resilient financial foundation by diversifying income streams and reducing reliance on any single source. This included identifying new funding opportunities and exploring alternative revenue models to support the charity's expanding operations and impact. Investing in fundraising is essential not only for sustaining ORP's ongoing programmes but also for ensuring the necessary infrastructure is in place to support local offices and teams effectively.

ORP has a full-time fundraiser, which has already resulted in increased donor engagement and expanded fundraising activities. Moving forward, we plan to further diversify our funding streams, enhance our digital and public fundraising activities, build local fundraising capacity, and cultivate new long-term relationships with corporate partners and major donors.

ORP's cost-to-income ratio for fundraising remained low, with a return on fundraising investment (ROI) of approximately 7.49%, underscoring our ability to manage resources effectively and ensuring that more funds go directly to our sea turtle conservation projects.

ORP is signed up to the Fundraising Regulator, which oversees fundraising activity in the UK and ORP is fully compliant with its regulations. This highlights our dedication to transparency, ethical fundraising practices, and maintaining the trust of our donors.

Commercial partners

In order to diversify our fundraising income, the charity has formed partnerships with carefully selected Commercial Partners. We would like to thank all our long term commercial partners for their support:

10 International (Sea Change Wine), All Scrubbed Up, Dhiraagu, Follow Your Legend, Fourth Element, Oevaali Art Shop, and Reolink. We would also like to thank Manta Reisen for raising funds for us.

Reserves policy

The appropriate level of financial reserves held by ORP is considered each year by the Trustees. In order to operate effectively in the event of unforeseen circumstances, the Trustees have agreed that financial reserves should be maintained to cover a minimum of 6 months of essential operating costs. Essential operating costs are defined as the costs of key personnel within the organisation (CEO, COO, Lead Scientist, Veterinary Team and Project Leads), essential medical supplies, IT costs and governance costs. This amounts to £100,000 at the end of 2024.

Given the growth in income received over the past 2 years, current funds within ORP are in excess of the minimum reserve requirements. However, with the acceleration of key initiatives and expansion plans, our total fund position is forecast to reduce to levels more aligned with our reserving policy within the next 3 years.

Investment policy

The trustees have general power of investments and have freedom to invest in assets as they see fit. The trustees aim to diversify any investments including low risk investments where capital is not put at risk and lower risk listed securities. The social, environmental and ethical impacts of investments are taken into consideration by the trustees.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable Law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statement; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the trustees are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware; and
- the trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included

on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of the financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the trustees on and signed on their behalf by:



Amanda Costain
Trustee



Lee Cannan
Trustee/Treasurer

Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

for

Olive Ridley Project

BYB Accountancy Ltd
Incorporated Financial Accountants
39 Cardiff Road
Llandaff
Cardiff
South Glamorgan
CF5 2DP

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Olive Ridley Project

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Olive Ridley Project

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Olive Ridley Project (the Trust) for the year ended 31 December 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since your charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a listed body. I can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Association of Accounting Technicians, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by Section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Gary Butt FMAAT
The Association of Accounting Technicians

BYB Accountancy Ltd
Incorporated Financial Accountants
39 Cardiff Road
Llandaff
Cardiff
South Glamorgan
CF5 2DP

10 October 2025

Olive Ridley Project

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024			2023
		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
Income and endowments from					
Donations and legacies	2	254,070	97,902	351,972	490,091
Charitable activities					
Charitable grants	5	54	20,158	20,212	35,767
Volunteer contributions		117,473	3,400	120,873	106,271
Corporate income		-	68,711	68,711	57,767
Other trading activities	3	208	-	208	-
Investment income	4	12,374	-	12,374	4,142
Total		384,179	190,171	574,350	694,038
Expenditure on					
Raising funds	6	76,643	-	76,643	50,554
Charitable activities					
Rescue and conservation	7	49,812	18,257	68,069	85,673
Scientific research		85,666	64,957	150,623	196,595
Education and outreach		59,569	12,702	72,271	79,122
Other charitable activity		149,277	-	149,277	105,939
Governance costs		6,579	-	6,579	1,067
Support to partner charities		36,951	18,644	55,595	-
Donated services & facilities		-	91,976	91,976	98,406
Total		464,497	206,536	671,033	617,356
Net gains/(losses) on investments		855	-	855	518
Net Income / (Expenditure)		(79,463)	(16,365)	(95,828)	77,200
Transfer between funds	18	5,286	(5,286)	-	-
Net movement in funds		(74,177)	(21,651)	(95,828)	77,200
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		462,533	120,930	583,463	506,263
Total funds carried forward		388,356	99,279	487,635	583,463

The notes form part of these financial statements

Olive Ridley Project

Balance Sheet 31 December 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	13	61,625	-	61,625	71,580
Investments	14	7,873	-	7,873	7,018
		69,498	-	69,498	78,598
Current assets					
Debtors	15	6,631	908	7,539	6,445
Investments	16	85,000	-	85,000	-
Cash at bank and in hand		280,500	111,628	392,128	559,331
		372,131	112,536	484,667	565,776
Creditors					
Amounts falling due within one year	17	(53,273)	(13,257)	(66,530)	(60,911)
Net current assets		318,858	99,279	418,137	504,865
Total assets less current liabilities		388,356	99,279	487,635	583,463
NET ASSETS		388,356	99,279	487,635	583,463
Funds					
	18				
Unrestricted funds				388,356	462,533
Restricted funds				99,279	120,930
Total funds				487,635	583,463

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 25th October 2025 and were signed on its behalf by:



.....
Lee Cannan – Trustee / Treasurer



.....
Amanda Costain - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

Olive Ridley Project

Cash Flow Statement for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	(91,374)	98,993
Bank charges		(3,203)	(3,957)
		<u>(94,577)</u>	<u>95,036</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		-	(52,786)
1 year fixed term bond		(85,000)	-
Interest received		12,374	4,142
Net cash used in investing activities		<u>(72,626)</u>	<u>(48,644)</u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(167,203)	46,392
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		559,331	512,939
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u>392,128</u>	<u>559,331</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Olive Ridley Project

Notes to the Cash Flow Statement
for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET (EXPENDITURE)/INCOME TO NEW CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2024 £	2023 £
Net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(95,828)	77,200
Adjustments for:		
Depreciation charges	9,955	9,122
Gains on investments	(855)	(518)
Interest received	(12,374)	(4,142)
Bank charges	3,203	3,957
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(1,094)	6,900
Increase in creditors	5,619	6,474
Net cash (used by)/provided by operations	<u>(91,374)</u>	<u>98,993</u>

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1.1.24 £	Cash flow £	At 31.12.24 £
Net cash			
Cash at bank and in hand	559,331	(167,203)	392,128
	<u>559,331</u>	<u>(167,203)</u>	<u>392,128</u>
Liquid resources			
Deposits included in cash	-	-	-
Current asset investments	-	85,000	85,000
	<u>-</u>	<u>85,000</u>	<u>85,000</u>
Net cash (used by)/provided by operations	<u>559,331</u>	<u>(82,203)</u>	<u>477,128</u>

**Notes to the Financial Statement
for the Year Ended 31 December 2024**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, with the exception of investments which are included at market value.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Grants offered subject to conditions which have not been met at the year end date are noted as a commitment but not accrued as expenditure.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Plant and machinery	10% on cost
---------------------	-------------

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Olive Ridley Project

Notes to the Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Hire purchase and leasing commitments

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight-line basis over the period of the lease.

Pension costs and other post-retirement benefits

The charity offers its staff membership of the NEST pension scheme, a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions payable to the pension scheme, by the charity, are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in the period to which they relate.

2. DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Donations	257,048	389,453
Gift aid	2,948	2,232
Donated services and facilities	91,976	98,406
	<u>351,972</u>	<u>490,091</u>

3. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	2024	2023
	£	£
Retail income	208	-
	<u>208</u>	<u>-</u>

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2024	2023
	£	£
Deposit account interest	12,374	4,142
	<u>12,374</u>	<u>4,142</u>

5. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Activity	2024	2023
		£	£
Grants	Charitable grants	20,212	35,767
Charitable income	Volunteer contributions	120,873	106,271
Partner resorts	Corporate income	68,711	57,767
		<u>209,796</u>	<u>199,805</u>

Olive Ridley Project

Notes to the Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

6. RAISING FUNDS

Raising donations and legacies

	2024	2023
	£	£
General operating costs	<u>76,643</u>	<u>50,554</u>

7. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Grant funding of activities (see note 8) £	Support costs (see note 9) £	Totals £
Rescue and conservation	68,069	-	-	68,069
Scientific research	150,623	-	-	150,623
Education and outreach	72,271	-	-	72,271
Other charitable activity	149,026	-	251	149,277
Governance costs	4,529	-	2,050	6,579
Support to partner charities	-	55,595	-	55,595
Donated services and facilities	91,976	-	-	91,976
	<u>536,494</u>	<u>55,595</u>	<u>2,301</u>	<u>594,390</u>

8. GRANTS PAYABLE

	2024	2023
	£	£
Scientific research	-	445
Support to partner charities	<u>55,595</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>55,595</u>	<u>445</u>

9. SUPPORT COSTS

	Governance costs £
Other charitable activity	251
Governance costs	<u>2,050</u>
	<u>2,301</u>

Olive Ridley Project

Notes to the Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

10. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 December 2024 nor for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Trustees' expenses

There were no trustees' expenses paid for the year ended 31 December 2024 nor for the year ended 31 December 2023.

11. STAFF COSTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	46,409	40,000
Social security costs	258	-
Other pension costs	1,013	1,013
	<u>47,880</u>	<u>41,013</u>

The average number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
Employees	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

Olive Ridley Project

Notes to the Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

12. COMPARATIVES FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Income and endowments from			
Donations and legacies	268,584	221,507	490,091
Charitable activities			
Charitable grants	-	35,767	35,767
Volunteer contributions	105,780	491	106,271
Corporate income	-	57,767	57,767
Investment income	4,142	-	4,142
Total	<u>378,506</u>	<u>315,532</u>	<u>694,038</u>
Expenditure on			
Raising funds	50,554	-	50,554
Charitable activities			
Rescue and conservation	57,754	27,919	85,673
Scientific research	152,293	44,302	196,595
Education and outreach	66,062	13,060	79,122
Other charitable activity	75,076	30,863	105,939
Governance costs	1,067	-	1,067
Donated services and facilities	-	98,406	98,406
Total	<u>402,806</u>	<u>214,550</u>	<u>617,356</u>
Net gains in investments	518	-	518
NET INCOME / (EXPENDITURE)	(23,782)	100,982	77,200
Transfer between funds	12,220	(12,220)	-
Net movement in funds	<u>(11,562)</u>	<u>88,762</u>	<u>77,200</u>
Reconciliation of funds			
Total funds brought forward	474,096	32,167	506,263
Total funds carried forward	<u>462,534</u>	<u>120,929</u>	<u>583,463</u>

Olive Ridley Project

Notes to the Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

13. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Plant and machinery
Cost	£
At 1 January 2024 and 31 December 2024	<u>99,348</u>
Depreciation	
At 1 January 2024	27,768
Charge for the year	<u>9,955</u>
At 31 December 2024	<u>37,723</u>
Net book value	
At 31 December 2024	<u>61,625</u>
At 31 December 2023	<u>71,580</u>

14. FIXED ASSET INVESTMENTS

	Unlisted investments
Market value	£
At 1 January 2024	7,018
Reversal of impairments	<u>855</u>
At 31 December 2024	<u>7,873</u>
Net book value	
At 31 December 2024	<u>7,873</u>
At 31 December 2023	<u>7,018</u>

There were no investment assets outside the UK.

Cost or valuation at 31 December 2024 is represented by:

	Unlisted investments
	£
Valuation in 2024	<u>7,873</u>

Olive Ridley Project

**Notes to the Financial Statement
for the Year Ended 31 December 2024**

15. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade debtors	<u>7,539</u>	<u>6,445</u>

16. CURRENT ASSET INVESTMENTS

	2024	2023
	£	£
1 year fixed term bond	<u>85,000</u>	<u>-</u>

17. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2024	2023
	£	£
Trade creditors	-	23,650
Other creditors	<u>66,530</u>	<u>37,261</u>
	<u>66,530</u>	<u>60,911</u>

Olive Ridley Project

Notes to the Financial Statement
for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.1.24 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.12.24 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	462,533	(79,463)	5,286	388,356
Restricted funds				
Designated fund	120,930	(16,365)	(5,286)	99,279
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>583,463</u>	<u>(95,828)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>487,635</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	384,179	(464,497)	855	(79,463)
Restricted funds				
Designated fund	190,171	(206,536)	-	(16,365)
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>574,350</u>	<u>(671,033)</u>	<u>855</u>	<u>(95,828)</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.1.23 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.12.23 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	474,096	(23,783)	12,220	462,533
Restricted funds				
Designated fund	32,167	100,983	(12,220)	120,930
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>506,263</u>	<u>77,200</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>583,463</u>

Olive Ridley Project

Notes to the Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

18. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	378,506	(402,807)	518	(23,783)
Restricted funds				
Designated fund	315,532	(214,549)	-	100,983
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>694,038</u>	<u>(617,356)</u>	<u>518</u>	<u>77,200</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.1.23 £	Net movement in funds £	Transfers between funds £	At 31.12.24 £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	474,096	(103,246)	17,506	388,356
Restricted funds				
Designated fund	32,167	84,618	(17,506)	99,279
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>506,263</u>	<u>(18,628)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>487,635</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Gains and losses £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds				
General fund	762,685	(867,304)	1,373	(103,246)
Restricted funds				
Designated fund	505,703	(421,085)	-	84,618
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,268,388</u>	<u>(1,288,389)</u>	<u>1,373</u>	<u>(18,628)</u>

Olive Ridley Project

Notes to the Financial Statement for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

19. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 December 2024.

20. KENYA BRANCH

The Olive Ridley Project has supported operations in Kenya and this has been recognised as a branch as of 1st September 2024. The transactions relating to the operation in Kenya are included within the SOFA and balance sheet of the Olive Ridley Project.

Olive Ridley Project

Detailed Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2024

	2024	2023
	£	£
Income and endowments		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	257,048	389,453
Gift aid	2,948	2,232
Donated services and facilities	91,976	98,406
	<u>351,972</u>	<u>490,091</u>
Other trading activities		
Retail income	208	-
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	12,374	4,142
Charitable activities		
Grants	20,212	35,767
Charitable income	120,873	106,271
Partner resorts	68,711	57,767
	<u>209,796</u>	<u>199,805</u>
Total incoming resources	574,350	694,038
Expenditure		
Raising donations and legacies		
General operating costs	76,643	50,554
Charitable activities		
Wages	46,609	40,000
Social security	258	-
Pensions	1,013	1,013
Hire of plant and machinery	135	171
Other operating leases	993	861
Insurance	1,575	1,688
Telephone	1,608	1,983
Postage and stationery	689	2,724
Advertising	3,998	4,568
General operating costs	183,121	285,317
Consultancy fees	283,281	211,662
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	9,955	9,122
Bank, card and similar charges	3,203	3,957
Exceptional items	56	6
Grants to institutions	55,595	445
	<u>592,089</u>	<u>563,517</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

**Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 December 2024**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Support costs		
Governance costs		
Accountancy and legal fees	<u>2,301</u>	<u>3,285</u>
Total resources expended	<u>671,033</u>	<u>617,356</u>
Net (expenditure)/income before gains and losses	(96,683)	76,682
Realised recognised gains and losses		
Realised gains/(losses) on programme related investments	<u>855</u>	<u>518</u>
Net (expenditure)/income	<u>(95,828)</u>	<u>77,200</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

England & Wales - Charity number 1165905

Accounts



OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

The Olive Ridley Project

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year ending: 31st December 2023

Charity no: 1165905

Reference and Administrative Details

Trustees	Dr Mike Sweet Lee Cannan Cliona Kirby Amanda Costain Zacari Edwards (until 11 February 2023)
Chief Executive Officer / Founder	Dr Martin Stelfox
Chief Operating Officer	Jannicke C Hallum
Senior Project Scientist	Dr Stephanie Köhnik
Lead Veterinary Surgeon	Dr Max Polyak
Fundraiser	Junho Yu
Charity Administrator	Lauren King Adam Costello
Communications Officer	Anadya Singh
Volunteer & Educational Outreach Officer	Risha Ali Rasheed
Database Administrator	Jane Lloyd
Individual Giving Administrator	Emily Mundy Lauren Valentine
Scientific Advisors	Dr Jillian Hudgins Dr Claire Petros
Kenya:	
Project Manager	Dr Joana Hancock
Infield Supervisor	Jenni Choma
Project Coordinator	Leah Mainye
Community Education & Outreach Officer	Juma Gwerenya
Sea Turtle Monitoring Assistant	Diana Kerubo Nyakuni
Intern	Valarie Nangila Silali
Maldives:	
Veterinary Surgeon	Dr Mariana Fragoso
Veterinary Nurse	Lauren Valentine Tristan Neto
Sea Turtle Biologists	Julian Gervolino Afrah Abdul Sathaar Maria Antonia Izurieta Sarah Patman Rosie Brown Philippa Darbyshire-Jenkins Mariyam Niema Mohamed Shah Rasheed Neus Segura Olivia Forster
Project Manager	Isha Afeef
Project Assistant	Dan Nasheed
Education & Outreach Assistant	Abdulla Hameedh
Sea Turtle Ranger	Ibrahim Inaan
Interns	Mohamed Athif Adam Mohmed Ziyen Sarah Ibrahim Asha Ahmed Ali Nishan
Master Student	Amy Feakes

Oman:
Sea Turtle Biologist

Tom Osborne
Davide Panarese

Pakistan:
Project Manager
Sea Turtle Biologist
Community Leader
Field Coordinator

Usman Iqbal
Kashif Ayoub
Muhammad Waqar
Asif Baloch
Muhammed Hanif

Seychelles:
Sea Turtle Biologist

Lara Kalisch
Olivia Forster

Volunteers:
Spacial Ecologist
Educator & Ambassador
Communications Assistant
Researcher
Researcher
Researcher
IT Specialist

Rushan Bin Abdul Rahman
Dr Minnie Liddell
Unma Afeef
Joe Rigby
Rosie Brown
Lara Kalisch
Bert Lang

Ambassadors

Matt Sorum
Andy Torbet

Registered Office

91 Padiham Road, Sabden, Clitheroe, BB7 9EX

Bank

Lloyds Bank
8 Royal Parade
Plymouth, PL1 1HB

Independent Examiner

Carly Exeter FCCA
Segrave & Partners LLP
Turnpike House
1208/1210 London Road
Leigh on Sea
Essex
SS9 2UA

The Olive Ridley Project

Trustees' Report

For the year ending 31st December 2023

Structure, governance and management

This Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), the Olive Ridley Project (ORP), is regulated by its constitution whose only voting members are its trustees. The CIO was established by Dr. Martin Stelfox (CEO and founder) in 2013 and then became the CIO on the 7th March 2016.

New trustees are appointed by the existing trustees and serve for three years after which they may put themselves forward for re-appointment. The Charity provides for a minimum of 3 trustees, to a maximum of 7 trustees.

At the quarterly trustee meetings, the trustees agree on the broad strategy and areas of activity for the charity, including consideration of grant making, investment, reserves and risk management policies and performance. The day to day administration of grants and the processing and handling of applications prior to consideration by the trustee is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

The trustees formally approved arrangements complying with the CC30 guide 'The recruitment, appointment and induction process for new charity trustees and how to set a framework for recruitment.' and recruit new trustee(s) for their experience, empathy and knowledge of the charity and to keep the skills and composition of the trustee body and succession planning under review. The trustees have also developed a code of conduct for trustees including formal statements of role and responsibilities and provision for trustee training. New trustees may be sought by open advertisement or through peer to peer dialogue. The ultimate decision on selection is a matter for the trustees.

On appointment, new trustees sign a constitution committing them to giving of their time and expertise. The induction process includes an initial meeting with the trustees, followed by a series of short meetings with the Chief Executive Officer on day to day activities within the charity, current projects, grant making process and powers and responsibilities of the trustee board. The welcome pack includes a brief history of the charity, a copy of the trustee board minutes, a copy of the constitution, 5-year plan and a copy of the Charity Commission's guidance 'The Essential Trustee: What You Need to Know' and 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

All trustees give their time freely and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests in accordance with the charity policy and update all policies including, 'Bullying and Harassment', 'Code of Conduct', 'Conflicts of Interest', 'Equal Opportunities', 'Financial Management', 'Health & Safety' and 'Safeguarding Children and Young people'.

Objectives and Activities

ORP takes a multidimensional approach to protecting sea turtles and their habitat. The charity's objects are:

To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of sea turtles and their habitats, in particular, but not exclusively by:

- (a) promoting humane behaviour towards sea turtles by providing appropriate care, protection, treatment and

security for animals which need care and attention by reason of sickness, maltreatment, poor circumstances or ill usage and to educate the public and veterinarian community in matters pertaining to sea turtle welfare in general and the prevention of cruelty and suffering to sea turtles.

- (b) advancing the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of sea turtles, by provision of talks, workshops, online courses and training; and
- (c) advancing the education of the scientific community by filling scientific data gaps in sea turtle research.

Public Benefit

All trustees follow the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. By closely following this guideline we ensure the charity stays true to its purposes and focuses resources in direct relation to the charitable purposes.

We focus on protecting sea turtles and their habitats through rescue and rehabilitation, education and outreach and scientific research worldwide. We achieve this in the following ways:

1. Conducting workshops, informal meetings and seminars with local communities, governments, schools and the public to promote sea turtle conservation;
2. Hiring infield project coordinators that can disseminate our research findings and promote awareness to local communities;
3. Working with local fishing communities to mitigate threats to sea turtles including marine plastics, bycatch and safe release education;
4. Operating a Marine Turtle Rescue Centre and a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre that allow Maldivian nationals, local schools and veterinarian surgeons from under resourced regions to work alongside qualified professionals to increase personal development and awareness;
5. Establishing relationships with research institutes to advance our research capacity and subsequently increase knowledge within the sea turtle scientific community;
6. Continue to maintain a citizen science projects, specific to sea turtles, that allows people from all backgrounds to contribute to scientific research and develop personal skills;
7. Offering paid internships to Maldivian and Kenyan nationals to develop in-country capacity;
8. Providing open access resources such as educational videos and an e-learning platform on our [website](#), with the addition of a Frequently Asked Turtle Questions page and educational blogs. This resource provides information on everything you need to know about sea turtles, including free publications such as our Sea Turtle and Nesting Beach Code of Conducts and Finding An Entangled Turtle Protocol. Our protocols explain how to behave around foraging, nesting, and hatchling turtles, and what to do when finding an entangled sea turtle and are published in several languages. The aim of the publications is a) to reduce human disturbance, whether it be intentional or accidental, to sea turtles in all of their habitats while still allowing people to have an enjoyable wildlife encounter, and b) to increase the chances of survival for entangled sea turtles;
9. Maintaining very active social media channels and engage with our followers through various messaging platforms;
10. Working with a number of journalists from TV channels/programs, newspapers and magazines to further spread our message about sea turtle conservation; and
11. Contributing to scientific journals to advance the scientific community knowledge on sea turtles and the threats they face.

Risk management

The Trustees have identified the major risks applicable to the charity and believe that appropriate action has been taken to manage and mitigate against these risks. Furthermore, the Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the operations, reputation and finance of the Olive Ridley Project. The CEO assesses and updates the likelihood and impact of material risks and ensures controls are in place, such as special risk assessments for general fieldwork and working at the rescue centre.

The trustees accept that to achieve our objectives some areas of our work require the acceptance and management of risks.

Achievements and Performance 2023

This reporting period is running from January to December 2023 and captures our charitable activities across Kenya, Maldives, Oman, Pakistan, and the Seychelles.

2023 marked a significant year for ORP as our sea turtle conservation efforts achieved major breakthroughs across Kenya, Maldives, Oman, Pakistan and the Seychelles. Our success lies in a multifaceted approach, combining rigorous research, community engagement, capacity development, and innovative projects. This approach underscores our dedication to safeguarding sea turtle populations and their habitats for future generations.

Launched in 2018, ORP Kenya has grown significantly over the past five years. Initially a one-person operation, the project now boasts a five-member team and a robust research and education programme. The expansion has allowed us to grow our Photo-ID database to include over 700 individual sea turtles and identify health issues like fibropapilloma prevalence in our monitored population to assess occurrence and recovery rates.

Beyond research, we have prioritised community engagement and outreach as a cornerstone of our conservation efforts in Kenya. In 2023 we made exciting progress through programmes fostering future conservation leaders and empowering local communities. We launched paid internships with Diving the Crab and a student attachment programme with Kenyatta University, nurturing young professionals dedicated to protecting sea turtles. Additionally, our Beach Management Unit (BMU) Programme educates local communities to become guardians of their coastal ecosystems. Through interactive workshops we equipped 57 individuals to champion sea turtle conservation, driving grassroots change from within.

ORP Kenya embodies a commitment to science based and collaborative sea turtle conservation. By empowering local communities and fostering inclusive and sustainable practices the project aims to ensure the long-term health and well-being of sea turtle populations along the Kenyan coast.

2023 also marked significant progress for ORP's research team in the Maldives. The Maldives' sea turtle Photo-ID database, launched in 2013, has grown exceptionally thanks to our expanding in-field team (from one to 11 since 2017) and invaluable contributions from citizen scientists. Our Photo-ID data, incorporated in the first Maldives Red List Assessment in 2022, formed the basis for a key April 2023 paper, shedding light on critical aspects of sea turtles ecology and behaviour. Furthermore, in August, we joined forces with the Environmental Protection Agency Maldives (EPA) on a research expedition to delve into uncharted territory; the genetics, health, and habitat preferences of sea turtles in the Maldives. The valuable data collected during the expedition, along with our sea turtle Photo-ID data, will facilitate more precise and targeted conservation strategies.

By expanding our internship programmes to include more comprehensive training, we aim to foster a new

generation of sea turtle conservation leaders. Alongside this we established vital partnerships with local organisations and communities across various atolls. This collaborative approach has yielded enhanced nesting beach monitoring significantly amplifying our impact. This will undoubtedly contribute to the long-term of sea turtle populations in the Maldives.

Last year, our veterinary practice underwent a transformative shift towards a Conservation Medicine Model. Integrating conservation goals into patient care for injured or sick sea turtles, we've achieved significant improvements in treatment outcomes. We further bolstered our capabilities by adopting new therapies, expanding our workspace and acquiring advanced equipment. Fostering international collaboration we hosted workshops and participated in global conferences, promoting best practices in conservation medicine.

In Oman our in-water research efforts have successfully identified 167 green turtles and nine hawksbills since 2019. Educational outreach initiatives, including ocean clean-ups and sea turtle training sessions, were well received by local communities and authorities alike. Through collaborative efforts with local fishers we have achieved reductions in bycatch, ensuring the safe release of unintentionally caught sea turtles and fostering sustainable fishing practices.

Pakistan joined the ranks of regions experiencing significant growth for ORP in 2023. Since 2015, our focus has been tackling ghost gear through a circular economy project, repurposing retrieved materials. This year was a turning point as we welcomed a dedicated sea turtle biologist to the team, allowing us to launch vital research on sea turtle populations in the region. Our initial primary nesting beaches monitoring efforts were promising, yielding over 200 green sea turtle track identifications - a strong indicator of nesting activity and crucial data for ongoing research projects. Proactive measures to mitigate ghost gear threats also saw success, with over 560kg of marine debris removed from local waters and beaches, directly reducing risks to marine wildlife. Further expanding our impact, ORP Pakistan was featured in a documentary series on climate change funded by the US Consulate. Additionally, we engaged with hundreds of individuals through educational events, fostering awareness about marine conservation and inspiring action at the community level.

In Seychelles we recorded 238 new sightings and documented 42 nests, adding to our growing knowledge base. Our successful nest relocation efforts, aimed at countering erosion and predation, showcased our adaptive and proactive approach to conservation challenges. We also expanded educational initiatives to reach more resort guests and local communities, fostering a culture of conservation awareness and community engagement.

Our accomplishments are a testament to our dedicated team, funders, strategic partnerships and generous supporters. Sea turtle conservation is a collaborative endeavour and we are proud of the supportive community we've built.

Kenya

Research

When we began operations in Kenya back in 2018, our objective was to assess sea turtle abundance and distribution in the Diani-Chale Marine National Reserve on the country's southern coast using Photo-ID. We began our research efforts with just one sea turtle biologist and the assistance of Diving the Crab, a dive centre based on Diani Beach. Fast forward five years, our Kenya team has grown to five members, and our activities now encompass extensive education and outreach initiatives aimed at fostering local capacity for sea turtle research and conservation, including an internship programme.

Collaborating with local stakeholders and conservation partners like Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS), Bahari Hai, and

Shimoni Turtle Watch (STW), we have expanded our work along the Kenyan coast in the Watamu Marine National Park and Reserve and Kisite-Mpunguti Marine National Park and Reserve. Our efforts have paid off and we have gained valuable insights into Kisite Marine Park's sea turtle population and developed a comprehensive monitoring plan for the area, paving the way for long-term monitoring of sea turtles in this marine protected area.

Our collaborative efforts aim to establish scientifically sound monitoring protocols for crucial foraging grounds and embody our commitment to inclusive, sustainable conservation. By actively training and engaging local communities in sea turtle monitoring, we empower them to become stewards of their own marine environment.

We now have a robust database of green and hawksbill turtles residing in Diani-Chale Marine National Reserve. In 2023 alone, we conducted 14,922 minutes of underwater surveys, which resulted in 875 sea turtle sightings yielding 84 new individuals. This brings the total number of recorded sea turtle sightings in our database to nearly 4,000 and the number of identified individual sea turtles to over 700.

The expansion of the team allowed us to start analysing the first five years of data collected from Diani-Chale, which led to a surprising discovery: a high prevalence of fibropapillomatosis (FP) in the resident green turtle population. This prompted us to delve deeper, culminating in a scientific publication 'Using Photo-ID to document and monitor the prevalence of fibropapilloma tumours in a foraging aggregation of green turtles'.

FP, a disease caused by the ChHV-5 virus, manifests as wart-like growths on both external and internal soft tissues (see right) that can impair vision, feeding, and movement, ultimately jeopardising the survival of affected turtles. Global research efforts prioritise mapping the distribution and prevalence of FP, identifying factors influencing its occurrence and severity, and developing effective management strategies to mitigate its impact.

Using Photo-ID data, we analysed photos of 515 individual green turtles recorded between July 2018 and December 2022 and confirmed 75 cases of FP (13% prevalence in the population), primarily in juveniles (81%). We were also able to track the progression or regression of tumours on individual sea turtles over time; our preliminary observations suggest that recovery from FP can take over a year.

Although visual inspection for FP identification has limitations such as varied tumour presentation, difficulty in detecting internal cases, and limited data on disease dynamics the method offers advantages like low costs, non-invasiveness, potential for citizen science involvement, and the ability to track individual sea turtles over time. These benefits make it a valuable tool for assessing FP's impact on sea turtle health and guiding future conservation strategies.

Thanks to our generous Giving Tuesday 2022 donors, we acquired a drone in 2023. Project Coordinator Leah Mainye has successfully obtained her remote piloting licence and we are ready to launch drone surveys in 2024. These surveys promise to uncover new sea turtle hotspots in diverse marine habitats like seagrass lagoons and mangrove channels. By analysing sea turtle behaviour and habitat utilisation patterns, we aim to understand how sea turtles use different coastal habitats, and identify threats to sea turtles in the region, to inform targeted conservation efforts.

Kenya Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

To date, ORP in Kenya has recorded 3,973 sea turtle sightings over 25 sites, with 714 unique sea turtles identified. 631 individual green turtles and 83 individual hawksbill turtles. 77 new green turtles and 7 new hawksbill turtles were identified in 2023.

Education & Outreach

In 2023, we celebrated remarkable growth and impact in our community education and outreach efforts in Kenya, focusing on capacity development, outreach and awareness, international collaboration, and knowledge sharing.

We launched an internship programme with Diving the Crab to train Kenyan university graduates in sea turtle monitoring and conservation. The programme equips participants with diving skills, fieldwork training, and participation in educational outreach programmes. Diana Kerubo Nyakundi, our first intern, later joined our team as a sea turtle monitoring assistant, highlighting the success of the programme in fostering skilled professionals.

Collaborating with Kenyatta University, we extended a 2.5- month attachment programme to two students. They gained valuable experience in sea turtle monitoring, education, and conservation, contributing to the building of a network of informed individuals dedicated to marine conservation.

Community-led conservation remains at the core of our programmes, ensuring sustainability in the region and fostering environmental stewardship and community involvement. Engaging with diverse communities, we planted mangroves with the Mwazaro Women's Group, participated in beach clean-ups, and inspired students at local primary schools. Our World Sea Turtle Day and International Coastal Cleanup Day activities mobilised hundreds of volunteers, resulting in the collection of over 678 kg of debris. These events served as educational platforms, enlightening participants about plastic pollution and its detrimental impact on sea turtles.

A significant achievement this year was the initiation of the Beach Management Unit (BMU) Programme. Spearheaded by Juma Gwerenya, Community Education and Outreach Officer, and Leah Mainye, Project Coordinator, this programme empowers local communities to become guardians of our coastal ecosystems through interactive workshops and aims to minimise threats in vital marine habitats. We equipped 57 individuals from four communities with the knowledge and tools to become sea turtle conservation ambassadors and spread awareness and inspiration for sea turtle conservation among their community members, organisations, and officials on Kenya's south coast.

We also collaborated with the Conservation Education Society to host 20 marine workshops for over 300 students from the UAE, USA, and UK. Led by Juma, these sessions covered topics like plastic pollution, sea turtle conservation, and coastal habitat significance. Leah captivated over 250 students at the Oshwal Academy Model UN conference in Mombasa with a talk on conserving sea turtles, showcasing our ability to bridge divides for effective conservation. Leah also virtually presented at the Tropical Marine Biology Conference hosted by Essex University. Her plenary talk reached hundreds of master students, serving as a showcase of our impactful work and an inspiration for the next generation of marine biologists and conservationists in the UK.

These initiatives underscore our commitment to spreading awareness and fostering collaboration for the conservation of sea turtles and marine ecosystems. Through our multifaceted approach, we strive to make a lasting impact on the preservation of our oceans and marine life.

Maldives

Research

The first Red List Assessment for Maldives, published in 2022, incorporated ORP's Photo-ID data, as well as nesting and threat monitoring data. Using this valuable data, we published a scientific paper in April 2023, analysing the abundance, distribution, and population trends for both hawksbill and green turtles on selected reefs in the Maldives. Employing statistical models, we analysed nearly four years' worth of Photo-ID data (predating the Covid-19 pandemic) collected from ten sites spanning four atolls. This pioneering study in the Maldives offers an empirical estimation for sea turtle population trends while considering variations in survey effort and detectability dynamics.

Our findings indicate that many populations of both hawksbill and green turtles have remained stable or exhibited signs of increase throughout the study period. While our analysis offers a glimmer of hope regarding the upward trend of sea turtle populations in the Maldives, we urge caution with this interpretation given that not all populations analysed were stable, and our study period is relatively brief for such long-lived species. Overall, our research highlights the importance and value of long-term data collection, particularly through cost-effective methods such as engaging citizen scientists in data collection, for monitoring of sea turtles populations.

While Photo-ID is an excellent method for investigating certain aspects of sea turtle biology, there are still many unknowns concerning these magnificent creatures in the Maldives. For instance, their genetic diversity, overall health, and their ecological associations with other organisms still puzzle researchers. In a first-of-its-kind expedition in the Maldives, scientists from ORP partnered with personnel from the Environmental Protection Agency of Maldives (EPA) to shed light on some of these mysteries in August 2023.

Under the guidance of ORP's Senior Project Scientist, Dr. Stephanie Köhnik, and EPA's Senior Environmental Analyst, Enas Mohamed Riyaz, the team embarked on a twelve-day journey, visiting key sea turtle habitats identified through our Photo-ID research in North Malé, Lhaviyani, Baa, and North Ari atolls.

The primary objective was to hand-capture sea turtles for sample collection. Each captured sea turtle yielded small tissue samples, earmarked for population genetics studies to answer questions such as "Which nesting population are the foraging sea turtles found in the Maldives related to?" and "How diverse is the genetic makeup of the foraging population?" The team also collected epibionts from each sea turtle to assess the diversity of organisms associated with their hosts. We can already say, there sure were a lot of barnacles!

Each captured sea turtle also underwent a comprehensive health evaluation conducted by Lead Veterinary Surgeon, Dr. Max Polyak, including physical and neurological examinations, as well as blood sample collections. Additionally, we took cloacal and gut samples to analyse the microbiome of wild animals, which we will compare to our Rescue Centre patients. Lastly, we performed ultrasonic studies to assess organ health and identify the sex of each individual sea turtle.

Aiming to discern the characteristics of an optimal sea turtle habitat in the Maldives, we also documented details regarding the seafloor composition and the presence of other marine life at sea turtle hotspots. In the forthcoming

months, we will be very busy with sample processing and analysis for each of the studies. We anticipate numerous groundbreaking discoveries concerning Maldivian sea turtles. This expedition was made feasible through the generous contributions of Friends of Frontiers.

We are planning a second expedition next year to increase our sample collection for more robust research findings.

Maldives Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

We saw record growth in our sea turtle ID database in 2023. We established Maldives' sea turtle Photo-ID database in 2013 with the help of many dedicated citizen scientists and resort marine biologists. Since 2017, ORP's in-field team, which has since grown from one to 11, has consistently collected data to grow our knowledge of sea turtles.

To date ORP have identified 1,549 Green Turtles and 4,824 Hawksbills across 678 sites in the Maldives. In 2023 we identified 210 new Green Turtles and 390 new Hawksbills..

Turtle Nesting

ORP is continuing to collect data on sea turtle nesting. Data for nesting is limited due to the small number of sea turtle biologists collecting nesting information

In 2023 we recorded 223 new nests laid and counted 6,097 hatchings.

Education & Outreach

In 2023, ORP Maldives witnessed significant expansion, fostering partnerships with national and atoll-level stakeholders dedicated to sea turtle conservation. Beyond providing support for the national guidelines on sea turtles gazetted in 2023, our collaborative efforts included projects addressing sea turtle conservation in local communities and establishing a pioneering sea turtle ranger programme in Laamu Atoll.

L.Gaadhoo is home to one of the Maldives most significant green turtle nesting sites. However, the beach is plagued by illegal egg harvest despite being designated a Protected Area in 2021. ORP conducted ad-hoc monitoring on L.Gaadhoo between 2018 and 2021. In 2022 we began regular monitoring with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Maldives and AgroNat (a government-subsidised company leasing L. Gaadhoo for agricultural development), which led to the establishment of a crucial partnership with the support of Laamu Atoll and Laamu Fonadhoo councils in 2023, giving rise to the Laamu Sea Turtle Beach Guardian Programme.

This programme is a pioneering effort where field staff are hired from and based in local communities. Maldives' first Sea Turtle Ranger & Community Officer, Ibrahim Inaan, now conducts regular surveys, addressing the need for consistent monitoring to prevent illegal take, on L.Gaadhoo. He also focuses on education and awareness initiatives in the inhabited islands of L. Gan and L. Fonadhoo. In 2023, the first nest excavations on L.Gaadhoo provided crucial data, revealing a hatching success rate of 94.7%, highlighting the beach's significance.

ORP and EPA conducted stakeholder sessions to address the concerns of the community, and has worked towards integrating other community groups into the project. In July, partnerships were established between ORP, EPA, Fonadhoo Environment and Sustainable Development (FESD), Maldives Heritage Society, and Gan Youth Society to

bolster community engagement and backing for the preservation of Gaadhoo's nesting beach. These NGOs will play an active role in conducting surveys, facilitating educational sessions, organising events, and offering invaluable local insights and advice for the project. The Laamu Sea Turtle Beach Guardian Programme serves as a pilot for community-based conservation efforts everywhere and exemplifies ORP's commitment to innovative and community-driven conservation strategies.

On Vandhoo Island in Raa Atoll, one of 14 sea turtle nesting hotspots identified by the government in 2006, we joined forces with government stakeholders to establish another vital nesting beach monitoring programme. The island is managed by the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, and Energy (MOECCE) and hosts a regional waste facility operated by the Waste Management Corporation (WAMCO). Through this partnership, ORP staff trained and supervised WAMCO personnel, led by Assistant Environment Safeguard Officer Nasih, in conducting regular beach surveys and marking nesting sites. The efforts paid off: 2023 saw a successful nesting season with ten documented nests and seven false crawls. Notably, nesting activity spanned all beaches on the island, underlining the importance of comprehensive protection efforts. However, due to the demand for a boat building yard on an uninhabited island nearby, a slipway for boat-building is presently under development on R. Vandhoo. Consequently, Nasih's responsibilities now extend to monitoring the area to ensure minimal disruption to nesting turtles, in addition to his regular duties.

Furthermore, we completed our first atoll-wide scoping tour for sea turtle conservation in Raa Atoll. This comprehensive study provided valuable insights into community attitudes and identified key areas of focus for effective sea turtle conservation in the atoll. The tour was made possible by funding from JOALI MALDIVES.

These accomplishments reflect our unwavering dedication to sea turtle conservation in the Maldives. Through collaborative projects, community involvement, and strategic expansion of our team, we strive to make a lasting impact on the preservation of sea turtles and their habitats in this ecologically significant region. While much has been achieved in the past year, there is still a long way to go and we will continue working on strengthening our partnerships with various stakeholders in 2024. We are also looking forward to hosting Vaavoshi Festival again next year, as well as completing a cultural study to reveal more about the historical custodianship of Gaadhoo's nesting beach.

Internship Programme

As part of our commitment to provide training and job opportunities in sea turtle conservation for Maldivian youth, we opened up one new paid internship position and launched a comprehensive 9-month sea turtle conservation internship programme in 2023. We successfully trained seven interns through our programmes, with our first 9-month intern set to graduate in April 2024. Notably, two former interns joined the ORP team in 2023.

One of ORP's goals is to build local and national capacity for sea turtle conservation and rehabilitation in all our locations. Our internship programmes, only open to residents of our host country, offer great opportunities to gain hands-on experience in many aspects of sea turtle conservation.

Our first intern joined us in 2017 for a three-month stint at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre. Here interns learn about sea turtle care and husbandry, sea turtle conservation and the running of a rescue centre. They also assist with educational outreach and, if lucky with their timing, with nest monitoring and hatching events. We have since trained 26 interns at the Rescue Centre and at our other locations, some of which have gone on to work full-time for ORP, other conservation NGOs, and even the government.

All ORP interns receive a stipend, as well as meals and accommodation for their duration of stay.

Sea Turtle Rescue & Rehabilitation

Led by Dr. Max Polyak, our Lead Veterinary Surgeon since January 2023, our veterinary practice has matured significantly in the last year. Thanks to the generous support of our donors we have been able to shift our focus towards a Conservation Medicine Model, moving away from traditional rescue and rehabilitation methods. This shift aligns with our role as a training centre and our commitment to providing the most advanced clinical modalities available as part of our mission to conserve protected and endangered sea turtles.

In June, we transitioned to a larger and more functional workspace with separate clinical and surgical areas, along with a combined office and laboratory area, doubling the previous clinic's size. This, along with the addition of cutting-edge equipment to our clinic, have enabled us to introduce novel therapies focusing on limb salvaging protocol to enhance patient care, significantly improving our treatment outcomes.

These therapies include Platelet Rich Plasma (PRP) for wound healing, Photobiomodulation Therapy (PBM), also known as cold laser therapy, for tissue healing and pain management, Aquapuncture for effective pain relief and aiding nerve damage improvement, and Targeted External Weight Therapy (TEWT) for buoyancy syndrome. Furthermore, our new Idexx Catalyst One, the only blood biochemistry machine validated for sea turtle blood and the first within the region, allows analysis of over 17 blood biochemistry parameters in our patients, aiding therapy refinement and improvement. These biochemical parameters are instrumental in developing our #SeaTurtleHealth database, the region's first comprehensive database of clinical indices of sea turtle health. This invaluable data will help provide a crucial baseline for what is considered normal in the sea turtle species found within the Indian Ocean and inform therapeutic and conservation approaches moving forward.

We thank Coco Collection for their continued support, facilitating the expansion of our facilities at the Rescue Centre on Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu. This has enabled us to further develop our Clinical Research Programme that includes the Morris Animal Foundation grant for sea turtle microbiome research, the first blood transfusion-based study on olive ridley sea turtles, and an artificial intelligence platform to aid in microscopic clinical blood cell evaluation. We plan to accelerate our clinical research efforts in 2024 as part of our Conservation Medicine Programme.

In 2023, our patient influx deviated from the norm, with fewer arrivals during the 'entanglement season' (November - March) but a steady flow throughout the year. We treated a total of **37 turtle patients**, with **34 new** admissions, bringing the tally since our Rescue Centre's inception in 2017 to **230**. Among the newcomers, **44% were entanglement victims** (all olive ridleys), and an additional **41% were found floating**. As with every previous year, most of our patients were **olive ridley** turtles, but we also treated six **hawkbills** and four **green** turtles. We successfully **released 13 patients**, bringing our overall release rate to **57%**. Three of these, Shara, Muraka, and Hawwa (all olive ridleys), were tagged as part of our satellite tracking research **#ORPTrack**.

Currently, we have two patients who present a unique condition: Fida and Aisha are both single-side double-amputees. Traditionally, patients in such a condition would be considered candidates for humane euthanasia. However, we've recently been provided with videographic evidence from colleagues in India showcasing patients with similar conditions thriving two years post-release. This revelation has prompted us to reframe our clinical approach towards selected patients facing similar challenges. Together, they represent the first ever olive ridley single-side double amputee to undertake a thorough rehabilitation plan aiming for release. Their progress

emphasises the success of our combined therapeutic strategies and their own resilience in adapting to the challenges they face.

In late 2023, we reopened our refurbished North Malé Atoll Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre based at One&Only Reethi Rah. We expect to open two new rehabilitation facilities in 2024. The first one, Raa Atoll Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre, is located at JOALI BEING whereas the second one is located in Noonu Atoll. We hope that these newly introduced facilities will alleviate the patient burden at the Rescue Centre while also enabling a comprehensive rehabilitation journey for our long-term patients that require prolonged care.

We remain dedicated to fostering local expertise in sea turtle care and raising the standard of sea turtle medicine regionally. This is evident in our upcoming Veterinary Nursing Training Programme in collaboration with the College of Animal Welfare (UK). Additionally, our Visiting Veterinary Programme is evolving into a comprehensive Veterinary Training Programme, where we sponsor veterinary surgeons from the Indian Ocean region to train at our Rescue Centre. These initiatives provide rigorous clinical and didactic training while fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange between developed and developing nations.

Volunteer Programmes

Volunteers are essential in the everyday running of the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre. They assist with all aspects of sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation, including treating wounds, helping with routine medical exams, observing surgeries, diet preparation, feeding, tank and turtle cleaning. Some lucky volunteers even get to experience hatching events! We welcomed 61 volunteers from 12 countries to the Rescue Centre in 2023.

Visiting Veterinarian Program at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre

Our Visiting Vet Programme continued to run at full capacity in 2023. This programme has three main aims: to give exotic animal veterinarians the opportunity to work with wild sea turtles and learn from us; for our resident veterinary team to learn new techniques from other experts and continue their professional training; and to provide training to veterinarians who work with sea turtles in locations where no sea turtle training is available. We welcomed nine visiting vets from four countries in the last year.

#ORP Track

#ORPTrack, or satellite tagging research project, follows rehabilitated olive ridley turtle patients on their return to the wild, aiming to pinpoint foraging areas for this species in the Northern Indian Ocean. Over the past year, we deployed tags on three of our patients: Shara, Muraka and Hawwa. Collectively, they have transmitted information for a combined 275 days so far. Each sea turtle has travelled more than 1,000 km, exhibiting typical diving behaviours with recorded maximum depths ranging from 275 to 300 metres, which is the maximum detection capability of the tags.

Released on July 1st, 2023, Shara averaged 1.12 km/hr, reaching a maximum speed of 7.22 km/hr likely by catching fast currents off Sri Lanka as she entered the Bay of Bengal. By year's end, Shara had travelled 4,950.6 km, primarily within the Bay of Bengal near Konaseema, Andhra Pradesh, in India.

Released on August 1st, 2023, Muraka averaged 1.65 km/hr with a top speed of 3.48 km/hr, travelling westward for 43 days before satellite transmissions ceased on September 13th, 2023.

Released on September 12th, 2023, Hawwa initially swam north towards Lakshadweep at a steady 1.07 km/h, covering 1,272.2 km in 49 days. However, her satellite data took a worrying turn in early November. Dives stopped, and she remained motionless for days in an area 85 km off the west coast of India. When movement suddenly resumed, it was abnormally fast, circling fishing grounds before making a beeline for a west Indian fishing harbour. Subsequent data reveals regular movement between the harbour and the same open-sea location. Fishing activity along the entire Indian coastline is abundant, so it is possible that Hawwa was caught in a fishing net. The tag remained on the fishing vessel explaining the recent tracklines.

At the end of 2023, Shara's tag remained active, allowing us to follow her journey for over 5,000 km. We are excited to continue this project and aim to conduct a preliminary analysis of the recorded dive behaviours in 2024.

Oman

ORP initiated its work in Oman in 2015. Since 2018, we've partnered with Six Senses Zighy Bay resort at the Musandam Peninsula, where we have established a field base. Our efforts in Oman are centred on protecting the sea turtle populations through in-water research, bycatch reduction, threat removal, educational initiatives, and advocating for the establishment of a rescue and rehabilitation centre.

Zighy Bay is a significant sea turtle foraging ground and we have documented a sizable resident green turtle population here. Our research identified 167 individual green turtles and nine hawksbills from 718 sightings between 2019-2020 and 2022-2023, with 56 greens added to the database in the last year. Most encounters occurred in Zighy Bay, however, we also explored Stingray Bay, Sanat Bay, Wonderwall, and Lima Rock, uncovering a substantial sea turtle presence in Wonderwall.

While nesting sea turtles are rare, 2023 brought an unexpected highlight: a sea turtle nest hatched on the resort's beach. Approximately 70 green turtle hatchlings emerged, an extraordinary event given that the Musandam Peninsula's rugged coastline makes for unsuitable nesting conditions.

The primary fishing method used by fishers in Zighy Bay is a technique called beach seine where they deploy large nets with small holes to catch herring, snappers, and trevallies. Unfortunately, this method can result in significant bycatch of non-target species, such as sea turtles and stingrays. In partnership with Six Senses Zighy Bay, we work closely with the local fishermen to reduce the effects of bycatch. The fishers permit us to inspect their nets for bycatch and eagerly help us release any non-target species caught. Larger species inadvertently caught are able to swim inside the pool created by the net and avoid entanglement, so we can usually release them unharmed.

During an inspection in June, our sea turtle biologist, Davide Pansare, found four green turtles trapped in a net. Remarkably, one turtle, 'Amir' (GM004), was already registered in our database - first identified in 2019. Then, in October, another familiar face, 'Squirt' (GM056, identified in 2022), was among two green turtles and two stingrays accidentally caught. Thankfully, all the animals were unharmed and promptly released. These re-sightings highlight the importance of monitoring sea turtle populations and maintaining close collaboration with fishermen to ensure bycatch is released safely.

We also collaborate with the local authorities in Oman. Two productive meetings with the Environmental Authority - Oman (EA) resulted in a joint ocean clean-up near Haffah, a fishing village near Zighy Bay in May, and a sea turtle

training session for EA staff in June. Together, we removed approximately one ton of ghost gear and debris from the sea.

Given the extensive fishing activities in this region, incidents of boat strikes, bycatch, and entanglements are unfortunately common, often resulting in fatal outcomes, as we have sadly observed multiple times. Situated near the heavily trafficked Strait of Hormuz, a vital passage for oil ships, the area faces continual risks of oil spills and tar leaks, as witnessed most recently in October. The lack of nearby veterinary facilities or a dedicated rescue centre in Oman hampers our ability to provide medical care to injured and sick sea turtles, as well as to determine the causes of death for deceased animals. In our ongoing discussions with the EA, we consistently highlight these threats and stress the urgency of establishing a rescue and rehabilitation centre in Oman, conducting more ghost gear clean-ups, and providing comprehensive marine biology training for both authorities and the local community.

The year ended on a positive note with a visit to the all-girls' school in Dibba, the nearest town to Zighy Bay. Davide gave a comprehensive lesson about all things sea turtles to 25 young students, who showed a remarkable level of interest in protecting the marine environment in the Musandam region. It's inspiring to see the potential impact of this generation!

Going forward, we will persist in our push for a sea turtle rescue centre in Oman, crucial for promptly aiding injured or sick turtles. We will also bolster educational outreach, engaging communities, schools, and authorities. Our collaboration with local fishermen will focus on sustainable

practices, bycatch monitoring, and training programmes to empower them in conservation efforts.

Oman Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

This year we identified 56 new individuals, all green turtles. This brings the total number of sightings since the project began to 175 individuals identified across 13 sites. 105 individual green turtles have been identified and 9 individual hawksbills.

Pakistan

ORP has been working in Pakistan since 2015. Until this year, our main activities have focused on ghost gear mitigation and repurposing, and education and outreach. In 2023, however, we reached a huge milestone by adding a sea turtle biologist to our team and initiating sea turtle population research to our conservation efforts here.

In September, we launched continuous nest monitoring on Pakistan's primary nesting beaches, spanning approximately nine kilometres along Hawke's Bay and Sandspit. These beaches, near Kakapir village, have a rich historical reputation as a sea turtle nesting zone. In the past, green turtles and occasionally olive ridleys have been recorded nesting here year-round with a peak in July to December. More recent anecdotal evidence hints at a shift in peak nesting activity towards October to February.

So far, our surveys have identified over 200 green sea turtle tracks, indicating high nesting activity. We also observed the hatching of four out of 119 suspected nests and noted 51 sightings of green turtles nesting. The nests are currently left unmarked to protect them from unwanted attention as these beaches are popular with tourists and visitors.

Our nest monitoring aims to provide sound scientific data on contemporary nesting numbers, species, and nesting

season timing. This can be compared to past records to allow for informed decisions on sea turtle population status and conservation measures. We are also working on a collaboration with local and governmental stakeholders to establish standardised monitoring practices and eco-friendly management on these beaches. In addition, we have been conducting scoping dives of known sea turtle feeding and foraging grounds and will begin in-water Photo-ID surveys next year.

Ghost gear remains a significant threat to sea turtles in the Karachi region, both in the sea and on the beaches. In 2023, we successfully removed 560 kg of ghost gear from various areas, including popular dive sites like Charna Island, Chakowl, Dushiram, and Tankiram. Since the project's inception, we've cleared over six tons of ghost gear from the region's beaches and waters. The recovered ghost gear serves as the cornerstone of our circular economy initiative in Abdul Rehman Goth, a fishing village in Keamari Town, Karachi. After cleaning and preparation, local artisans transform the ghost gear into pet leashes and ghost net bracelets. These products are sold locally in Pakistan and online via ORP's website, with all proceeds benefiting the community. In Pakistan, the ghost leashes are available at Pets Mania pet stores and Healthy Tails pet hospital, as well as at pop-up markets and festivals, generating sales of 222,000 PKR in 2023. Additionally, the US Consulate in Pakistan purchased 160 bracelets for their 4th of July Independence Day celebration, raising over 160,000 PKR for the fishers and artisans involved in their creation.

The US Consulate also funded a documentary film series produced by SOC Films, which premiered in the summer of 2023. Among the films, "Hamara rishta samandar say." ("Our bond with the sea") highlights the remarkable efforts of ORP Pakistan's Usman Iqbal (Programme Manager) and Asif Baloch (Field Coordinator), showcasing ORP Pakistan's impactful work in ghost gear mitigation and marine environment protection.

We are not only expanding our online presence but also actively engaging with schools, universities, and local communities. We host interactive educational and sales booths at various local events, including carnivals, markets, and dog meet-ups, with attendance exceeding thousands of people per event. Our sea turtle Photo-ID and ghost gear removal games draw crowds and provide an excellent opportunity to connect with the public.

In the coming year, we're teaming up with the Lasbela University of Agriculture, Water and Marine Sciences, Uthal, to survey beaches in Baluchistan for sea turtle nesting. These remote and pristine beaches hold potential nesting grounds that we're eager to explore. Additionally, we will be organising workshops for marine science students to train them in field surveys and data collection. By involving them in our efforts, we aim to identify nesting sites and gather scientific data more efficiently. We are also planning to investigate mudflats and sandbars in the Indus Delta for potential sea turtle nesting activities.

Seychelles

Our Seychelles project commenced two years ago in partnership with Six Senses Zil Pasyon. Located in the western Indian Ocean, the Seychelles Archipelago comprises 115 islands, categorised into the granitic inner islands and the coralline outer islands. Our conservation efforts focus on Félicité, an inner island near the renowned Ile Coco Marine Park. This area hosts a thriving population of critically endangered hawksbill turtles, known for their unusual daytime nesting behaviour. Our main objectives include establishing a Photo-ID database for Seychelles, conducting nesting research on Félicité, and implementing education and outreach initiatives.

Since then, our work here has allowed us to contribute to the understanding of population connectivity within the Seychelles and build a detailed population database for sea turtles in the waters surrounding Félicité island. In 2023,

we added 238 sea turtle sightings to our Seychelles database. Three of these sightings were green turtles and the rest were hawksbills. In total, we identified 37 new individuals (all hawksbills) out of which 13% were adult females. This brings the total number of identified sea turtles in Seychelles to 214 since the project began.

We also documented 43 nests (41 hawksbill and two green turtle nests), resulting in a total of 1,711 hatchlings. To assess hatching success, we excavate all nests two days after hatching. This year, our excavations revealed an interesting finding: a rare hawksbill twin embryo that unfortunately perished before hatching. Twinning in sea turtles is extremely rare, occurring in only 0.1% of embryos. Although both hatchlings displayed normal development and were similar in size, they did not survive due to insufficient yolk nutrients to sustain two individuals. The reasons behind twin embryos in sea turtles remain unclear, but some studies suggest that low incubation temperatures and genetic factors may contribute to this phenomenon.

Furthermore, we documented a case of leucism in a deceased hawksbill turtle embryo. Leucism is a congenital disorder characterised by reduced pigmentation, distinct from albinism, which entails a complete absence of melanin. While this particular embryo did not survive to full development, sea turtles with leucism can potentially survive in the wild. All nest excavations are conducted under the research permit issued by the Seychelles Bureau of Standards.

The primary nesting beach on Félicité Island faces significant erosion during the Northwest monsoon season, coinciding with the hawksbill nesting period. Each year, numerous nests require relocation to ensure their safety. This year, eight nests were successfully relocated, resulting in the rescue of 283 hatchlings out of 798 eggs. Although relocated nests typically have lower hatching success rates, the observed rate of 35.5% is relatively low. Two relocated nests were entirely predated by crabs, resulting in zero hatchlings. Despite these challenges and the lower success rate, relocation efforts were crucial. Without relocation, all nests would have been lost to high tides or erosion, resulting in no hatchlings surviving. Given the circumstances, we are satisfied with the positive impact of the relocation process.

To better understand tidal patterns, and anticipate and document the need for nest relocations, we initiated a new research project this year, using drone footage for beach profile monitoring. Our gratitude extends to our partner resort Six Senses Zil Pasyon and Gitta Raulin, a resort guest, for their generous support of this initiative.

A paper detailing our findings from the 2022-2023 nesting season and addressing the challenges faced on the island, especially regarding the restricted nesting space for sea turtles, has been submitted to the Marine Turtle Newsletter and is expected to be published soon!

This year, we expanded our education and outreach initiatives. To mark World Sea Turtle Day in June, we hosted an event at the La Digue school to raise awareness about sea turtle conservation. Moreover, our dedication to educating resort staff and guests remained strong, with 504 guests actively engaging in sea turtle conservation activities. These activities included presentations, turtle snorkelling trips, and observing nesting and hatching events.

Going forward, we aim to enhance our collaborations with local stakeholders and expand our conservation efforts to the Outer Islands of the Seychelles. Additionally, we plan to extend our survey activities to include Takamaka Beach, located about 2 km from our primary nesting site at Grand Anse..

Seychelles Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

This year we identified 37 new individuals, all hawksbills, over 43 sites. This brings the total number of individuals identified since the project began to 214. Total individual green turtles identified since the project began is 9 and total hawksbills is 205.

Turtle Nesting

Data is only recorded on Félicité Island. In total we recorded 43 new nests during the reporting period. We counted 1,881 hatchings.

Publications

In 2023 ORP published 20 scientific publications (peer reviewed articles, theses and official reports) as well as 17 technical reports and six conference presentations. Two particularly impactful scientific manuscripts highlighted the value of Photo-ID in understanding sea turtle populations. The first, published in April 2023 in PLoS One, analysed Photo-ID data collected in the Maldives from 2016 to 2019. This study estimates abundance and population trends for sea turtles at selected sites. The applied models suggested stable or increasing populations of hawksbill and green turtles on many reefs in the short term. This research demonstrates the cost effectiveness of Photo-ID for evaluating population which acknowledges potential biases inherent in community science data.

The September 2023 publication in *Frontiers in Marine Science* explored the use of Photo-ID for documenting and monitoring fibropapillomatosis (FP), a tumour disease, in the green turtle population in southern Kenya. While FP is widespread in sea turtles globally, its cause remains unclear. Through Photo-ID research, we documented tumours in 75 individuals and tracked their progression in 47 affected sea turtles.

We are also proud to present the *Handbook of Sea Turtles*, a pioneering bilingual publication (English and Dhivehi) co-written with the Environmental Protection Agency Maldives. Beautifully illustrated by Hawwa Umna Afeef and Rihaal Adil, this handbook aims to provide accessible sea turtle knowledge for distribution to schools and educational institutions across the Maldives. The publication was made possible with the support of the British High Commission in the Maldives.

Technical Reports

- Gervolino J, Afeef I, Köhnik S and Stelfox M 2023. **Laamu Yearly Report 2022**. Olive Ridley Project, p. 1-45.
- Gervolino J, Afeef I, Köhnik S and Stelfox M 2023. **Nesting in Laamu**. Technical Report 2022. Olive Ridley Project, p. 1-28
- Kalisch L, Köhnik S and Stelfox M 2023. **Nesting on Félicité**. Technical Report 2023. Olive Ridley Project, p. 1-29
- **Olive Ridley Project Annual Review 2022**. Technical Report 2023. Olive Ridley Project, p 1-65
- Afeef I, Rasheed RA, Riyaz EM, Leevan A, Köhnik S, Polyak M, Hallum JC & Singh A. **Handbook of Sea Turtles**. Olive Ridley Project and Environmental Protection Agency, Malé, Maldives, p. 1-36

Peer-Reviewed Articles and Theses

- Hancock J, Choma J, Mainye L, Wambi P, Stelfox M, Polyak MMR, Wambua SM and Köhnik S 2023. [Using Photo-ID to document and monitor the prevalence of Fibropapilloma tumours in a foraging aggregation of green turtles](#). *Frontiers in Marine Science* 10: 1217683
- Hudgins JA, Hudgins EG, Köhnik S, Riyad EM and Stelfox M 2023. [A brighter future? Stable and growing sea turtle populations in the Republic of Maldives](#). *PLoS One* 18(4): e0283973.
- Feakes A 2023. **Coming out of their shells: Repeatable social preferences in Green sea turtles, *Chelonia mydas***. Masters Thesis, Imperial College London, UK.

Sea Turtle Population Research

Photographic identification (Photo-ID) is a non-invasive technique used to identify individual animals in a population and track them over time from natural marks on the body. For sea turtles, it relies on capturing photographs of the unique patterns of scales on the animal's face.

Photo-ID can be used as a non-invasive alternative to tagging, and data may be analysed through Capture-Mark-Recapture (CMR) methods. This technique allows researchers to conduct longitudinal studies of individuals, yielding information about home range, survival rate, migration patterns, life cycle and includes groups that are less studied, such as juveniles and males.

We collect sighting data for both nesting and foraging green (*Chelonia mydas*) and hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) sea turtles in Kenya, Maldives, Oman and Seychelles. Olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), and leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) sea turtles are present in these countries, but less regularly sighted.

ORP began collecting new and historical photographs of foraging and nesting turtles from the Maldives in 2013. We have a ten-year data set for some atolls. We started collecting Photo-ID data from Kenya in 2018 and Oman in 2019. Unfortunately, the project in Oman was put on hold in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but we successfully reinstated it in 2022. ORP also started a new chapter in the Seychelles at the end of 2021, establishing our Photo-ID database in the country.

ORP aims to help fill the gaps in scientific knowledge by providing detailed information on abundance, distribution, population growth rate, apparent survival, and nesting frequency of hawksbill and green sea turtles. We continue to use the Internet of Turtles (IoT) platform to analyse all turtle sightings from Maldives, Kenya, Oman, and Seychelles. The IoT platform combines data analytics with individual animal tracking and uses computer vision to compare new IDs to the existing database.

In the Maldives we have identified 6,373 individual turtles across 678 sites. This year we have had 4,467 sightings with 598 new sea turtle IDs. Thanks go to all of our citizen science contributors for their valuable support, extending the scope of our data collection into areas where no ORP staff were present!

In Kenya, there were over 3,973 sightings of 714 identified turtles, including 84 new individuals in 2023 across 25 sites. In Oman in 2023 we have identified 56 new individuals, across 13 different sites, bringing the total number of

encounters to 332 and identified turtles to 175. In the Seychelles, we identified 37 new turtles over 43 sites, bringing the total number of individuals to 214.

Global Education & Outreach

Education is an integral part of our multifaceted approach to protecting sea turtles and their habitats. We believe that education is a powerful tool for fostering curiosity, increasing awareness, engaging people - particularly young people - and encouraging action at the local, national, and global levels. Our educational initiatives are tailored to meet the needs of all our audiences, both at our field sites and across our digital platforms. We conduct various in-person educational and interactive workshops, talks, and festivals on a broad range of topics, from sea turtle biology to conservation. Additionally, we host and attend webinars and have a vast repository of sea turtle educational resources on our website - including free courses on our website.

Digital Reach - Global Community

A major part of our strategy to increase awareness about the plight of sea turtles and the deadly consequences of ghost gear is a digital and social media presence. We continue to grow our web and social media channels to keep the public engaged with new content and regular updates. Our online learning platform with free courses and resources about all things sea turtle and sea turtle conservation remains popular. Our sea turtle protocols have been translated into multiple languages, and our Sea Turtle FAQ pages are extremely popular, with thousands of visitors every month.

In 2023 our digital presence continued to grow across Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. We also expanded our reach on Tik-Tok and LinkedIn. We place a strong belief in education and knowledge-sharing, and are grateful to be able to reach out to our ever-growing global audience on social media. This interconnectedness has helped us spread the message of sea turtle conservation far and wide, and we look forward to forging new connections in 2024, when we plan to launch a new podcast series focused in sea turtle science and conservation.

Conferences And Talks

At ORP, we actively organise and engage in conferences and webinars to disseminate our research findings to the scientific and conservation communities, as well as to learn from fellow professionals. Here's a look at some of the events we participated in throughout 2023:

- In March 2023, four members of the ORP Team participated in the 41st International Sea Turtle Symposium (ISTS41) held in Cartagena, Colombia. The event provided an excellent platform for us to exhibit our organisation's initiatives on sea turtle rescue and treatment, nesting activity, and research in the Maldives, as well as Photo-ID and health monitoring in Kenya. During the symposium, our team engaged in many discussions with experts from across the world and addressed several enquiries about the technical aspects of Photo-ID and its potential applications.
- Also in March, we hosted a talk titled "Satellites & Surgeons" at the Maldives National University, featuring ORP's Lead Veterinary Surgeon, Dr. Max Polyak, and Spatial Ecology Researcher Rushan bin Abul Rahman. Dr Max shared fascinating updates from the field of sea turtle medicine, including recent breakthroughs that could potentially be applied to sea turtle rehabilitation in the Maldives. Rushan, a PhD candidate, discussed the challenges and benefits of satellite tagging sea turtles and provided updates on the journeys of ORP's

first two satellite-tagged turtles, Autumn and Pickle. While satellite tagging has been done in the Maldives before, it remains a relatively new concept, which sparked a great deal of interest and prompted some insightful questions from the audience. The event had an amazing turnout with over 70 participants keen to learn about opportunities for sea turtle research and medicine in the country.

- In May, to celebrate World Turtle Day, we hosted an online Nesting Workshop for local councils, NGOs, resort operators, and marine biologists in the Maldives. The workshop focused on best practices for protecting sea turtle nests and managing nesting and hatching interactions across the country. We also discussed how attendees could collect vital nesting data under the required research permits, contributing to a deeper understanding of sea turtle nesting patterns in the Maldives. We're pleased to report that several new data contributors signed up following the webinar. Over 50 participants attended live, with an additional 1,200 tuning in via livestream!
- In June, we celebrated World Sea Turtle Day with a webinar titled "Community in Sea Turtle Conservation: Perspectives from the Global South," featuring Dr. Kartik Shanker (India), Kahindi Changwa Galo (Kenya), Dr. AA Yaptinchay (Philippines), and M. Muralidharan (India), who shared their experiences with locally empowered, participatory sea turtle conservation. Dr. Shanker delivered the keynote speech, discussing conservation imperialism, the history of conservation, parachute science, and the interconnectedness of humans and nature. Mr. Kahindi Changwa Galo presented on empowering fishermen to reduce sea turtle bycatch in Watamu, while Dr. Yaptinchay highlighted community-led conservation initiatives in the Philippines. Muralidharan M. shared insights on the varied meanings of marine and sea turtle conservation. The webinar sparked engaging discussions and questions from participants, with 30 joining live and an additional 781 watching the livestream on Facebook.
- Later in June, we hosted another webinar called "The World of Sea Turtle Medicine" with Lead Veterinary Surgeon, Dr Max Polyak and Veterinary Programme Officer, Dr Claire Petros, taking the audience through an introductory journey into the world of sea turtle medicine.
- In Kenya, we had the honour of inspiring young minds at the Oshwal Academy Model UN conference in Mombasa in November. Over 250 students from various schools came together to discuss global issues under the theme "Many Worlds, One Planet." ORP's Project Coordinator in Kenya, Leah Mainye, delivered an engaging talk on sea turtle conservation, highlighting how we bridge divides to achieve effective conservation efforts. The students' thoughtful questions demonstrated their keen interest and desire to learn more about sea turtles and the environment.
- At the same time, ORP's Programme Manager in Kenya, Dr. Joana Hancock, gave a talk to members of the East African Wildlife Society at the esteemed Muthaiga Country Club in Nairobi. Her presentation, "Sea Turtles: A Symbol of Our Shared Homes," shed light on the threats facing these remarkable creatures and highlighted our efforts to protect them. Around 50 guests attended, gaining valuable insights into sea turtle conservation.
- We also participated in Blue Ventures' "Let's Chat" discussion in Mombasa, where Project Coordinator Leah Mainye, along with other emerging marine conservation leaders, engaged in discussions on networking, collaboration, and career development. This forum promotes community-driven strategies, mentorship, and the exchange of innovative ideas for safeguarding our oceans.
- Our impact extended globally through a partnership with the Conservation Education Society, where we

hosted 20 marine workshops for over 300 students from the UAE, USA, and UK throughout the year. Led by ORP's Community Education & Outreach Officer in Kenya, Juma Gwerenya, these interactive sessions delved into topics such as plastic pollution, sea turtle conservation, and the vital role of coastal habitats.

- Meanwhile, Project Coordinator Leah delivered a virtual plenary talk at the Tropical Marine Biology Conference, hosted by Essex University. Her presentation reached hundreds of Master's students, highlighting our work and inspiring the next generation of marine biologists and conservationists in the UK.

Collaborations

Kenya

Bahari Hai

Bahari Hai aim to help create and support a community conscious of the marine environment and actively involved in protecting & establishing healthy ecosystems. Our partnership aims to improve sea turtle research and conservation along the Kenyan coastline.

Conservation Education Society (CES)

The Conservation Education Society believes that, through education, empowerment and collaboration, everyone, big or small, can play a role in preserving our natural world. CES was officially established in March 2019 and operates out of the Marine Education Centre in Diani, Kenya. CES regularly organises educational events which ORP participates in and contributes to, as well as provides administrative and logistical support.

Diani Turtle Watch (DTW)

DTW, a turtle conservation monitoring group, surveys the beach to spot any turtle nesting activities, mortality and turtle stranding cases throughout the day. DTW collaborates with ORP by sharing photos of by-caught turtles and stranded turtles for ID purposes, enriching our database and assisting with information about the threats that affect the turtles feeding off Diani's reef.

Diving The Crab (DTC)

Widely recognised as the best dive centre in both Diani and in Kenya, Diving the Crab (DTC) is one of the main sponsors of the Marine Education Centre. DTC is also very supportive of marine biodiversity related activities in Diani, including ORP's in-water work. Since ORP first arrived in Kenya, DTC has been instrumental in providing logistical support allowing ORP to conduct in-water surveys and explore Diani's reefs, as well as actively participating in guest education, in-water surveys, ghost nest reporting and removal, and staff training.

Kenyatta University

This collaboration focuses on conducting studies on the use of Diani-Chale National Marine Reserve (DCNMR) seagrass lagoon by sea turtles, using a combination of monitoring techniques. In addition we explore the impact of plastic pollution on DCNMR and its potential threat to sea turtles.

Msambweni Beach House

Msambweni Beach House and ORP are working together to advance the research of sea turtles and their

environment in the country and provide educational outreach to international guests. ORP guides tourists to collect citizen scientist data to help understand sea turtle distribution and abundance and provides educational presentations to local staff and guests on sea turtle conservation and their challenges in general.

Pwani University

The partnership between ORP and Pwani University encompasses several key initiatives: conducting population assessments through photo-ID and genetic markers, investigating population connectivity along Kenya's coast and the western Indian Ocean, and analysing the health of juvenile green turtles, particularly the incidence of fibropapillomatosis and its correlation with environmental stressors. Additionally, the collaboration emphasises higher education by offering formal training for undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate students, alongside technical supervision in sea turtle research. It also focuses on outreach to build local community capacity in conservation efforts and mobilising resources for research and student support.

Shimoni Turtle Watch (STW)

The collaboration between Shimoni Turtle Watch and ORP focuses on the implementation of activities and data sharing to study the sea turtle populations within Kisite-Mpunguti National Park and Marine Reserve through photo identification methods. This joint project leverages the strengths of both organisations, with ORP providing strategic oversight and expertise, while STW takes the lead on field data collection and assistance. STW will organise and conduct field trips to gather critical data on sea turtle behaviour and populations, utilising photo ID techniques to monitor individual turtles over time. The collaboration emphasises effective communication and data sharing between the two organisations, ensuring that insights gained from the field are systematically analysed and utilised for conservation efforts. Together, STW and ORP aim to enhance the understanding and protection of the sea turtle populations in this vital marine ecosystem.

Maldives

AgroNational Corporation Pvt (AgroNat)

In 2023, ORP and the Environmental Protection Agency signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Laamu Atoll Council, L. Fonadhoo Council, and AgroNat (AgroNational Corporation) outlining the plans to protect the sea turtle nesting beach on L. Gaadhoo, Maldives. The first year of the Gaadhoo Protection Program saw significant strides for the protection of the main green turtle nesting beach on L. Gaadhoo - *Velaa Heylhi* in the Maldives

Amilla Maldives

Our new partnership with Amilla Maldives Resort in Baa Atoll, Maldives aims to provide a central hub for data collection in Baa Atoll along with community engagement. Moreover ORP plans to identify local stakeholders in Baa to extend its data collection activities on sea turtle populations in the region. Finally ORP plans to work alongside identified local stakeholders to minimise threats to sea turtles such as poaching in the region.

Coco Collection

Our long standing partnership with Coco Collection Resorts continues. Our Marine Turtle Rescue Centre is located on Coco Dhuni Kolhu in Baa Atoll. We would like to thank Coco Collection for all their support and for hosting the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre, our staff, volunteers and interns.

Environmental Protection Agency Maldives (EPA)

In 2023, ORP and EPA signed into an Memorandum of Understanding with Laamu Atoll Council, L. Fonadhoo Council, and AgroNat outlining the plans to protect the sea turtle nesting beach on L. Gaadhoo, Maldives. The first year of the Gaadhoo Protection Program saw significant strides for the protection of the main green turtle nesting beach on L. Gaadhoo - *Velaa Heylhi* in the Maldives.

Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi, Shaviyani Atoll

In April 2022 we embarked on a new partnership with Fairmont Maldives Sirru Fen Fushi Resort in Shaviyani Atoll, Maldives. This partnership aims to provide a central hub for data collection in the region along with community engagement. Moreover ORP plans to identify local stakeholders in Shaviyani to extend its data collection activities on sea turtle populations in the region.

Fonadhoo Council, Laamu

In 2023, ORP and EPA signed into an MoU with Laamu Atoll Council, L. Fonadhoo Council, and AgroNat outlining the plans to protect the sea turtle nesting beach on L. Gaadhoo, Maldives. The first year of the Gaadhoo Protection Program saw significant strides for the protection of the main green turtle nesting beach on L. Gaadhoo - *Velaa Heylhi* in the Maldives.

Hadhdhunmathi (Laamu) Council

The primary focus of the project is to protect nesting sea turtles and their eggs, while collecting consistent data on nesting and poaching from the southwestern beach on L. Gaadhoo, Maldives.

International Pole and line Foundation (IPNLF)

International Pole and Line Foundation - Maldives, registered NGO in Maldives in October 2020 (CR/62/2020), is the local chapter of International Pole and Line Foundation founded in 2012, with the aim of promoting sustainable management of the world's responsible pole and line, handline and troll (collectively known as 'one-by-one' tuna fisheries while also recognizing the importance of safeguarding the livelihoods they support. IPNLF and ORP partnered together alongside N.Lhohi Council AND zero Waste Maldives to establish a makerspace recycling facility on Lhohi Island complemented by organising a waste upcycling competition and creating a circular economy project focused on ghost gear recycling. Additionally, there will be training and capacity building for upcycling, along with offering basic jewellery-making training.

Joali Being, Raa Atoll

In 2022, we partnered with Joali Being Resort in Raa Atoll. This partnership has allowed ORP to have a presence in the atoll through education and outreach initiatives in the local community as well as collecting data on sea turtles

residing and nesting here. In addition, we are opening a second rehabilitation facility here in 2024 to expand our capacity to care for injured and sick sea turtles rescued in the Maldives.

Maldives Underwater Initiative (MUI)

MUI (Maldives Underwater Initiative) is a marine conservation initiative from Six Senses Laamu, Maldives, which unites the resort and its three NGO partners under one umbrella, with the aim to consolidate shared research, science communication, community education and outreach goals. The NGO's are Olive Ridley Project, Manta Trust and Blue Marine Foundation.

Ministry of Climate Change, Environment and Energy (MoECCT)

WAMCO, in collaboration with MoECCT, are working with the ORP to oversee sea turtle nesting on the beaches of R. Vandhoo, Maldives and to protect sea turtles and their eggs on the island. The staff at MoECCT and WAMCO will receive training and co-supervision from ORP. Key responsibilities include conducting training and awareness sessions for WAMCO staff about sea turtles, as well as reporting any illegal take incidents to the Environmental Protection Agency of Maldives (EPA). The overall goal of the project is to enhance monitoring efforts and gather comprehensive data on nesting patterns at R. Vandhoo, allowing for comparisons with historical records to better understand the current situation on the island.

Ocean & Reefs (formerly Marine Life Protectors)

Continues to financially support ORP for rescue and rehabilitation efforts in the Maldives and along with our education and outreach efforts in Kenya.

Olive Ridley Project Maldives

In 2023 Olive Ridley Project Maldives was established as a separate NGO in the Maldives. Whilst they share our objectives and we work closely together they are independently managed under Maldivian law. We made our first grant to Olive Ridley Project Maldives in 2023.

One&Only Reethi Rah, North Malé Atoll

Our partnership with One&Only Reethi Rah focuses on advancing research of sea turtles in North Malé Atoll. In addition, we opened a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre here in 2019 for turtle patients in need of long-term rehabilitation without veterinary care. This frees up tank space at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre to allow admittance of more injured sea turtles that require urgent veterinary attention. Additionally, neighbouring resorts in a resort-dense atoll have a local point to send injured sea turtles.

Prodivers & Kuredu Island Resort & Spa, Lhaviyani Atoll

We continued our partnership with Prodivers, a German dive centre operator based on Kuredu Island Resort & Spa in Maldives, to work together to advance the research of sea turtles in Lhaviyani Atoll and provide educational outreach to international guests and Maldivian nationals. We would like to thank Prodivers for their support.

Secretariat of N.Lhohi Council

Secretariat of N. Lhohi council is an island institution established under the Decentralised Act of Maldives to rule, govern and serve the citizens of South Noonu Lhohi. N.Lhohi Council and ORP partnered together alongside Zero Waste Maldives and International Pole And Line Foundation to establish a makerspace recycling facility on Lhohi Island complemented by organising a waste upcycling competition and creating a circular economy project focused on ghost gear recycling. Additionally, there will be training and capacity building for upcycling, along with offering basic jewellery-making training.

Six Senses Laamu, Laamu Atoll

We continue our partnership with Six Senses Laamu, a resort in Laamu Atoll to work together to advance the research of sea turtles in Laamu and provide educational outreach to international guests and Maldivian nationals. Here we work closely with two other not-for-profit organisations and resort staff under the umbrella Maldives Underwater Initiative (MUI), with the ultimate goal of creating a network of locally managed marine protected areas, in consultation with the community. We would like to thank Six Senses Laamu for their support.

Six Senses Kanuhura, Lhaviyani Atoll

This partnership, established in 2023, helps continue collecting long term data sets of sea turtle population and habitat use in Lhaviyani Atoll, along with education and outreach efforts amongst the local community and resort stakeholders. The long term goal of this partnership is to foster collaboration between local NGOs, ORP and commercial partners.

Soneva Jani, Noonu Atoll

Having been long-time data contributors to the ORP, we officially went into partnership in 2021. This partnership aims to expand rehabilitation efforts in the country by providing additional rehabilitation facilities in Noonu Atoll. In addition, our team will collect data on sea turtle populations, sea turtle health, and nesting in the region.

WAMCO (Waste Management Corporation Limited)

WAMCO, in collaboration with MoECCT, are working with the ORP to oversee sea turtle nesting on the beaches of R. Vandhoo, Maldives and to protect sea turtles and their eggs on the island. The staff at MoECCT and WAMCO will receive training and co-supervision from ORP. Key responsibilities include conducting training and awareness sessions for WAMCO staff about sea turtles, as well as reporting any illegal take incidents to the Environmental Protection Agency of Maldives (EPA). The overall goal of the project is to enhance monitoring efforts and gather comprehensive data on nesting patterns at R. Vandhoo, allowing for comparisons with historical records to better understand the current situation on the island.

Zero Waste Maldives

Zero Waste Maldives (ZWM) (CR/143/2018) is a registered NGO working in the Maldives on waste reduction, circular economy and climate change issues. The organisation works on changing the perception of waste as something to be discarded to something of value through circular economy and waste-to-wealth initiatives. Zero Waste Maldives and ORP partnered together alongside N.Lhohi Council and IPNLF to establish a makerspace recycling facility on Lhohi Island complemented by organising a waste upcycling competition and creating a circular

economy project focused on ghost gear recycling. Additionally, there will be training and capacity building for upcycling, along with offering basic jewellery-making training.

Oman

Six Senses Zighy Bay

The aim of this partnership, established in 2018, is to use non-invasive research techniques to better understand sea turtle population health in the region. Additionally, we work with local fishers to reduce the impact of bycatch on sea turtles and conduct educational outreach in the Musandam region. We hope to work with existing sea turtle conservation groups to assist with ongoing research and conservation in the country.

Seychelles

Six Senses Zil Pasyon

Extending our relationship with Six Senses, we started working in the Seychelles in late 2021. The aim of this partnership is to use non-invasive research techniques to better understand sea turtle population health in the region. Additionally, we hope to work with existing sea turtle conservation groups to assist with ongoing research and conservation in the country.

World

International Sea Turtle Symposium (ISTS)

We regularly attend international symposiums including the ISTS. We also co-organised the sea turtle photo-ID workshop to develop standard protocols and new methods of analyses.

NGO Tuna Forum

The NGO Tuna Forum brings together NGOs and other individuals and organisations that work comprehensively on global tuna sustainability issues. ORP currently sits on three working groups: Bycatch Mitigation, Data and Transparency and Well-Managed FAD Guidance. The aim of this involvement is to ensure ghost gear and ghost fishing are brought into the conversation of global tuna fisheries at the policy level. We hope our experience and expertise will help guide stakeholders to make informed decisions on the issue and ensure it remains firmly on the agenda.

Ocean Care

OceanCare has been raising its voice on behalf of marine life since 1989. The international marine conservation organisation, based in Switzerland, holds Special Consultative Status with UN ECOSOC and contributes to Agenda 2030 and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. ORP and Ocean Care continue their long standing partnership to help rescue and rehabilitate injured and sick sea turtles in the Maldives.

Satlink

Satlink, a Spanish company focused on the development of technological solutions that foster the sustainability of the fishing industry and ocean resource protection, has partnered with ORP and the International Pole And Line Foundation (IPNLF) to establish a programme for the removal and reuse of abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing nets and other fishing gear (known as ALDFG) in Noonu Atoll. This project began in 2022 and builds on lessons learnt

from previous pilot projects in Gemanafushi. If successful, we hope to scale this project nationwide to address the ALDFG issue in the country.

Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance (STRA)

STRA, registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation #1197327 in England & Wales, is a global network for sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation centres to share clinical knowledge and data to enhance medical practices at facilities worldwide, supporting the global conservation effort for these endangered species. ORP's Marine Turtle Rescue Centre was the first rescue facility to pilot ProVet Cloud, a patient management software adapted specifically for sea turtles.

University of Derby

The University of Derby in the UK is collaborating with the ORP and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to enhance our understanding of the genetic makeup of sea turtles in the Maldives. This partnership aims to conduct comprehensive genetic studies that will provide valuable insights into the population structure, diversity, and health of sea turtle species in the region. By analysing genetic data, the partnership hopes to identify distinct populations, assess their resilience to environmental changes, and inform conservation strategies.

Financial Review

The Olive Ridley Project (ORP) experienced a dynamic financial year in 2023, marked by substantial growth in both income and expenditure, driven by the continuous improvement of our fundraising efforts and the post-Covid resumption of our charitable programmes. This section provides a summary of our financial performance, highlighting the key elements that shaped our financial landscape over the reporting year.

Income

In 2023, ORP achieved a total income of £694,038, representing a significant increase from the previous year's £559,797. This growth was driven primarily by an increase in individual donations, which rose to £320,355 from £197,569 in 2022. The breakdown of income sources is as follows:

Donations, Grants, and Legacies: £525,858, with unrestricted funds contributing £268,584 and restricted funds adding £257,274.

Charitable Activities: £164,038, an increase from £133,993 in 2022.

Investment Income: £4,142.

Expenditure

Total expenditure for the year amounted to £617,357, up from £383,117 in 2022. The major areas of expenditure were:

Raising Funds: £50,554, which covered costs associated with fundraising activities, compared to £10,814 in 2022, facilitating the generation of £694,038 in income. This represents a return on fundraising investment (ROI) of approximately 13.73, meaning that for every pound spent on fundraising, ORP generated approximately £13.73 in income.

Charitable Activities: £566,803, a substantial increase from £372,303 in 2022. This expenditure includes staff costs, equipment and medical supplies, other charitable activities, and donated services and facilities.

Net Income and Fund Balances

ORP reported a net income of £76,681 for 2023, down from £176,180 in 2022. This was after accounting for net gains on investments of £518. The net movement in funds was a positive £77,199, leading to a closing fund balance of £583,463, up from £506,264 at the beginning of the year.

Unrestricted Funds: Decreased slightly to £462,533 from £474,097.

Restricted Funds: Increased significantly to £120,930 from £32,167, reflecting the receipt of targeted grants and donations.

Financial Position

As of 31 December 2023, ORP's total net assets stood at £583,463. The balance sheet highlights include:

Fixed Assets: £78,598, including tangible fixed assets and investments.

Current Assets: £565,776, comprising cash at bank and in hand, and debtors.

Creditors: £60,911, representing amounts falling due within one year.

The charity remains in a strong financial position with adequate resources to continue its operations and support its mission of protecting sea turtles and their habitats through rescue and rehabilitation, scientific research, and education and outreach.

The financial performance of ORP in 2023 reflects our successful fundraising efforts and prudent financial management.

Fundraising

ORP is currently funded entirely through donations and grants, with the vast majority of our income being from private donations from our adoption and rescue centre volunteering programmes, as well as generous contributions from our corporate partnerships. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all our supporters, partners and donors for their invaluable support in furthering our mission.

In 2023 ORP's cost-to-income ratio for fundraising remained low, underscoring our ability to manage resources effectively and ensuring that more funds go directly to our sea turtle conservation projects.

Additionally our registration with the Fundraising Regulator this year highlights our dedication to transparency, ethical fundraising practices, and maintaining the trust of our donors.

To enhance our fundraising capabilities, ORP recruited a full-time fundraiser, which has already resulted in increased donor engagement and expanded fundraising activities. Moving forward, we plan to diversify our funding streams, enhance our digital and public fundraising activities, build local fundraising capacity, and cultivate new long-term

relationships with corporate partners and major donors.

Commercial Partners

In order to diversify our fundraising income, the charity has formed partnerships with carefully selected Commercial Partners. We would like to thank all our long term commercial partners for their support:

10 International (Sea Change Wine), All Scrubbed Up, Bracenet, Dhiraagu, Follow Your Legend, Fourth Element, , Kind Traveller, Mimie Reed, Oevaali Art Shop, and Reolink. We would also like to thank Honu, Yoga Tage, and Manta Reisen for raising funds for us.

Reserves Policy

The appropriate level of financial reserves held by ORP is considered each year by the Trustees. In order to operate effectively in the event of unforeseen circumstances, the Trustees have agreed that financial reserves should be maintained to cover a minimum of 3 months of essential operating costs. Essential operating costs are defined as the costs of key personnel within the organisation (CEO, COO, Lead Scientist, Veterinary Team and Project Leads), essential medical supplies, IT costs and governance costs. This amounts to £56,000 at the end of 2023.

Given the growth in income received over the past 2 years, current funds within ORP are in excess of the minimum reserve requirements. However, with the acceleration of key initiatives and expansion plans, our total fund position is forecast to reduce to levels more aligned with our reserving policy within the next 3 years.

Investment Policy

The trustees have general power of investments and have freedom to invest in assets as they see fit. The trustees aim to diversify any investments including low risk investments where capital is not put at risk and lower risk listed securities.

Plans for Future Periods

Our strategic plan is a living document, constantly evolving to meet new challenges and opportunities in sea turtle conservation. A key focus in 2024 is to refine it based on the latest science, community needs, and our goals. This update will ensure we prioritise efforts, optimise resource allocation, and strengthen impact measurement - all crucial for remaining at the forefront of sea turtle conservation.

To achieve this, we are establishing regional NGO affiliates and branches. This expansion boosts our agility, local responsiveness, and overall impact, while strengthening our presence across jurisdictions for more effective outreach.

We are also taking a two-pronged approach to elevate regional expertise in sea turtle care. First, we are relaunching our Visiting Veterinary Programme as a comprehensive Veterinary Training Programme. This initiative sponsors Indian Ocean veterinary surgeons working in sea turtle conservation to come and train at our Marine Turtle Rescue Centre in the Maldives. Additionally, we're collaborating with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons for a

Veterinary Nursing Training Programme. Both programs offer rigorous training and foster knowledge exchange between developed and developing nations.

Furthermore, we are expanding our capacity with two new sea turtle rehabilitation centres in the Maldives - one each in Raa and Noonu atolls - in partnership with JOALI BEING and Soneva Jani, respectively. We will also keep advocating for and contributing to the establishment of a dedicated Rescue and Rehabilitation Center in Oman.

Statement of Trustee's Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable Law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of the financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the trustees on and signed on their behalf by:



Amanda Costain
Trustee



Lee Cannan
Trustee/Treasurer

REGISTERED NUMBER: 1165905

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023

SEGRAVE & PARTNERS LLP
TURNPIKE HOUSE
1208/1210 LONDON ROAD
LEIGH ON SEA
ESSEX
SS9 2UA

Statement of Financial Activities – Year ended 31st December 2023

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year ending 31st December 2023. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

	Notes	2023			2022
		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
Income					
Donations and legacies	3.1	268,584	257,274	525,858	425,601
Charitable activities	3.2	105,780	58,258	164,038	133,993
Income from investments	3.3	4,142	0	4,142	203
		378,506	315,532	694,038	559,797
Expenditure					
Raising funds	5.1	50,554	0	50,554	10,814
Charitable activities	5.2	352,254	214,549	566,803	372,303
		402,808	214,549	617,357	383,117
Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains/(losses)		(24,302)	100,983	76,681	176,680
Net gains/(losses) on investments	3.3	518	0	518	(500)
Net income / (expenditure)		(23,784)	100,983	77,199	176,180
Transfer between funds	11	12,220	(12,220)	0	0
Net movement in funds		(11,564)	88,763	77,199	176,180
Reconciliation of funds					
Fund balance brought forward		474,097	32,167	506,264	330,084
Fund balance carried forward		462,533	120,930	583,463	506,264

The notes on pages 4 to 10 form an integral part of the financial statements.


Balance Sheet – As at 31st December 2023

	Notes	31/12/2023 £	31/12/2022 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	7	71,580	27,917
Investments	8	7,018	6,500
		<u>78,598</u>	<u>34,417</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	9	6,445	13,345
Cash at bank and in hand		559,331	512,939
		<u>565,776</u>	<u>526,284</u>
Creditors – amounts falling due within one year	10	(60,911)	(54,437)
		<u>504,865</u>	<u>471,847</u>
Net current assets		<u>504,865</u>	<u>471,847</u>
Total net assets		<u>583,463</u>	<u>506,264</u>
Funds of the charity			
Restricted income funds	11	120,930	32,167
Unrestricted funds		462,533	474,097
Total funds		<u>583,463</u>	<u>506,264</u>

The notes on pages 4 to 10 form an integral part of the financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 24th April 2024.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed: 
 Lee Cannan
 Trustee & Treasurer

Dated: 
 Amanda Costain
 Trustee

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023

1. Basis of preparation

The Olive Ridley Project (“ORP”, “the Charity”) is on a mission to protect sea turtles and their habitats through rescue and rehabilitation, scientific research and education and outreach.

ORP is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in the United Kingdom (charity number 1165905). The address of the registered office is 91 Padiham Road, Sabden, Clitheroe, BB7 9EX.

The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102, Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention. They are prepared in pound sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity, rounded to the nearest £1.

Accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis.

2. Accounting Policies

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below.

Going Concern

The Charity meets its day-to-day working capital requirements primarily through the cash generated from its fundraising activities. The trustees have performed a detailed review of future forecasts and projections, and have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, the trustees adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.1. Income recognition

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (“SoFA”) when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Income from grants is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Legacies are included in the SoFA when receipt is probable, that is, when there has been grant of probate, the executors have established that there are sufficient assets in the estate and any conditions attached to the legacy are either within the control of the charity or have been met.

Gift Aid receivable is included in income when there is a valid declaration from the donor. Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise.

Donated services and facilities are included in the SOFA when received at the value of the gift to the Charity, provided the value of the gift can be measured reliably. Donated services and facilities that are consumed immediately are recognised as income with an equivalent amount recognised as an expense under the appropriate heading in the SOFA. In accordance with the SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised as income.

Investment gains and losses include both realised and unrealised gains and losses resulting from the sale or revaluation of investments at market value at the end of the year.

2.2. Expenditure recognition

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Raising funds expenditure comprises costs directly associated with fundraising activities. Charitable expenditure comprises costs directly attributable to the delivery of ORP charitable objectives. Other support costs comprise indirectly attributable overhead costs incurred to support the delivery of the Charity's objectives.

2.3. Assets held on the balance sheet

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are stated at cost or valuation less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation is applied to all tangible fixed assets. Depreciation rates are calculated to write down the cost or valuation, less estimated residual value, on a straight-line basis over the expected useful lifetime of each asset. Depreciation rates used are disclosed in note 7 of the notes to the financial statements.

Fixed asset investments in quoted shares, traded bonds and similar investments are valued initially at cost and subsequently at fair value (their market value) at the reporting date.

Debtors and creditors are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Unrestricted funds are funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in the furtherance of the core objectives of the charity, and which have not been restricted to other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. A breakdown of the restricted funds is provided in note 11.

2.4. Judgements and estimates

In the application of the Charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision only affects that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3. Analysis of income

3.1. Income from donations, legacies and grants

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Individual donations	197,254	123,101	320,355	186,063	11,506	197,569
Corporate partner donations	32,623	0	32,623	32,013	0	32,013
Resort partners donations	36,475	0	36,475	34,335	0	34,335
Gift aid	2,232	0	2,232	2,733	0	2,733
Legacies	0	0	0	37,000	0	37,000
Grants (non-government)	0	35,767	35,767	0	27,458	27,458
Donated services & facilities	0	98,406	98,406	0	94,493	94,493
	268,584	257,274	525,858	292,144	133,457	425,601

Further details on donated services and facilities are provided in note 4.

3.2. Income from charitable activities

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Resort partner income	0	57,767	57,767	0	51,355	51,355
Rescue centre volunteers	105,780	0	105,780	81,978	0	81,978
Ghost gear product sales	0	491	491	0	660	660
	105,780	58,258	164,038	81,978	52,015	133,993

ORP receives restricted donations from partner resorts to support the provision of on-site marine biologists and general project management costs.

ORP operates a volunteer scheme at our rescue centre within the Maldives. The donations associated with this scheme contribute to unrestricted income to support all charitable objectives.

3.3. Income from investments

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Interest income	4,142	0	4,142	203	0	203
Unrealised gains / (losses)	518	0	518	(500)	0	(500)
	4,660	0	4,660	(297)	0	(297)

4. Donated goods, services and facilities

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Biologist fees paid directly	0	57,006	57,006	0	46,978	46,978
Accommodation & Board	0	27,070	27,070	0	30,711	30,711
Transportation	0	14,330	14,330	0	16,804	16,804
	0	98,406	98,406	0	94,493	94,493

In carrying out its charitable activities, ORP maintains partnerships with selected resorts across Maldives, Oman, Kenya and the Seychelles. As part of these contractual partnerships, ORP provides on-site marine biologists and also veterinary services and volunteers to run the turtle rescue centre. In return, partner resorts provide accommodation, board and transfer flights to ORP representatives. Within some resorts, marine biologist fees are paid directly by the resort partner.

The value of accommodation and board for ORP representatives is estimated based on the wholesale cost incurred by the partner resorts. The value of transfer flights is approximated based on the average flight costs over the financial period.

5. Analysis of expenditure

5.1. Costs of Generating Funds

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fundraising agents	24,642	0	24,642	9,875	0	9,875
Advertising and marketing	0	0	0	55	25	80
Incurred seeking donations	25,912	0	25,912	859	0	859
	50,554	0	50,554	10,789	25	10,814

5.2. Expenditure on charitable activities

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Wages & consultant fees:						
Rescue and rehabilitation	39,001	15,061	54,062	19,787	16,663	36,450
Scientific research	101,782	45,779	147,561	28,451	48,513	76,964
Education and outreach	27,568	8,368	35,936	19,720	0	19,720
Charity operations	85,511	0	85,511	57,192	0	57,192
Equipment & medical supplies	22,975	22,561	45,536	44,382	5,140	49,522
Other charitable activity expenditure	63,090	23,541	86,631	27,807	2,372	30,179
Donated services & facilities	0	98,406	98,406	0	94,493	94,493
Support costs	12,327	833	13,160	7,394	389	7,783
	352,254	214,549	566,803	204,733	167,570	372,303

5.3. Analysis of support costs

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bank charges	3,963	0	3,963	2,530	0	2,530
Postage & stationery	2,238	833	3,071	2,613	389	3,002
Office costs	861	0	861	0	0	0
Legal fees	2,835	0	2,835	0	0	0
Independent examination	450	0	450	500	0	500
Insurance	1,980	0	1,980	1,751	0	1,751
	12,327	833	13,160	7,394	389	7,783

6. Employees & Trustees

6.1. Employees

The average monthly number of full-time equivalent persons employed by the charity during the year was 1 (2022: 1).

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	40,000	32,917
Social security costs	0	0
Pension costs	1,013	800
	<u>41,013</u>	<u>33,717</u>

6.2. Trustees

No trustees received any remuneration or expenses from the Charity during the financial year (2022: £nil).

7. Tangible fixed assets

	Rescue Centre Equipment
	£
Cost:	
Fixed assets cost at the beginning of the year	46,562
Additions	52,786
Fixed assets cost at the end of the year	<u>99,348</u>
Depreciation:	
Depreciation at the beginning of the year	18,645
Depreciation	9,123
Depreciation at the end of the year	<u>27,768</u>
Net Book Value:	
Net book value at the beginning of the year	27,917
Net book value at the end of the year	<u>71,580</u>

Veterinary equipment at our rescue centre within the Maldives is assumed to depreciate on a straight-line basis at 10% per year, reflecting the average useful life of the equipment.

8. Investment assets

	Listed Investments
	£
Carrying value at the beginning of the year	6,500
Net gain / (loss) on revaluation	518
Carrying value at the end of the year	<u>7,018</u>

The investments held by ORP are all in listed securities, and are valued at market value at the reporting date.

9. Debtors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Partner resort donations - debtors	6,445	13,345
	6,445	13,345

10. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023	2022
	£	£
Partner resort donations – creditors	23,650	21,634
Volunteer advance deposits	36,614	32,185
Other creditors	647	618
	60,911	54,437

11. Restricted funds

	Balance at 31/12/2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfer to Unrestricted	Balance at 31/12/2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Rescue centre	0	12,257	(27)	(12,230)	0
Genetics study	0	76,993	(38,748)	0	38,245
Sea turtle hospital	0	45,000	0	0	45,000
Partner resorts	15,622	156,173	(150,312)	0	21,483
Kenya project	142	3,049	(3,191)	0	0
OceanCare grant	0	15,134	(14,746)	0	388
Expedition funding	12,534	6,435	(3,246)	0	15,723
Pakistan circular economy	152	491	(552)	0	91
Turtle festival funding	3,717	0	(3,727)	10	0
	32,167	315,532	(214,549)	(12,220)	120,930

During 2023 a restricted donation of £12,230 was received to fund the purchase of a new piece of medical equipment within our rescue centre. This equipment was purchased, with the value being held as a fixed asset within the accounts. Given the nature and use of the new equipment, the value of the fixed asset was transferred from a restricted fund to an unrestricted fund.

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2023**

Independent examiners report to the trustees of The Olive Ridley Project in respect of the year ended 31st December 2023.

This is a report in respect of an examination carried out on the financial statements set out on pages one and two under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the directions given by the Charity Commissioners under sub-section 5(b) of that section.

Responsibilities of trustees and independent examiners

As described in the annual report, the charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

It is our responsibility to:

- 1) examine account under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011
- 2) follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011
- 3) state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of opinion

Our examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Opinion

No matter has come to our attention in connection with our examination which gives us reasonable cause not to believe that in any material respect:

- 1) proper accounting records have been kept in accordance with Section 137 of the Charities Act 2011, and;
- 2) the financial statements accord with those records.



Segrave & Partners LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
Turnpike House
1208/1210 London Road
Leigh on Sea
Essex
SS9 2UA

Date: 25th July 2024

OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

England & Wales - Charity number 1165905

Accounts



OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

The Olive Ridley Project

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year ending: 31st December 2022

Charity no: 1165905

Legal and Administrative Information

Trustees

Dr Mike Sweet
Jannicke C Hallum (until 31 January 2022)
Lee Cannan (from 21 March 2022)
Cliona Kirby
Amanda Costain
Zacari Edwards (from 18 January 2022)

Chief Executive / Founder
Chief Operating Officer
Senior Project Scientist
Scientific Advisors

Dr Martin Stelfox
Jannicke C Hallum (from 1 February 2022)
Dr Stephanie Köhnik

Lead Veterinary Surgeon
Communications Officer
Communications Intern
Graphic Designer
Veterinary Surgeons

Dr Jillian Hudgins
Dr Max Polyak
Dr Claire Petros
Anadya Singh
Mohamed Naaif
Susie Gibson
Dr Amelia Liddell
Dr June Ang
Dr Mariana Fragoso

Veterinary Nurse
Volunteer & Educational Outreach
Education & Outreach Assistant
Liaison Officer
Researcher - Spatial Ecology
Researcher - GIS Ecology

Lauren Valentine
Risha Ali Rasheed
George Evans
Ibrahim Shameel
Rushan Bin Abdul Rahman
Jane Lloyd

Sea Turtle Biologists/Guest Educators
Maldives

Rosie Brown
Joe Rigby
Emily Mundy
Olivia Forster
Neus Segura
Mariyam Niuma
Moosa Mohamed
Aminath Angeela
Alfraah Abdul Sathaar
Julian Gervolino

Maldives Interns

Abdulla Swift Hameed
Adam Naahi Fauzy
Afraah Abdul Sathaar
Sarah Ibrahim

Seychelles

Mariyam Niuma
Lara Kalisch
Tom Osborne
Dr Joana Hancock
Jenni Choma
Leah Mainye
Juma Gwerenya

Oman

Project Manager Kenya
Infield Supervisor Kenya
Project Coordinator Kenya
Research Assistant Kenya
Project Manager Maldives
Project Manager Pakistan
Project Coordinator Pakistan
Community Leader Pakistan
Field Coordinator Pakistan
Ambassadors

Isha Afeef
Usman Iqbal
Asif Baloch
Waqar J Khan
Muhammad Hanif
Matt Sorum
Andy Torbet

Registered Office	91 Padiham Road, Sabden, Clitheroe, BB7 9EX
Bank	Lloyds Bank 8 Royal Parade Plymouth, PL1 1HB
Independent Examiner	Carly Exeter FCCA Segrave & Partners LLP Turnpike House 1208/1210 London Road Leigh on Sea Essex SS9 2UA

The Olive Ridley Project

Trustees' Report

For the year ending 31st December 2022

Structure, governance and management

This Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is regulated by its constitution whose only voting members are its trustees. The CIO was established by Dr. Martin Stelfox (CEO and founder) in 2013 and then became the CIO on the 7th March 2016.

New trustees are appointed by the existing trustees and serve for three years after which they may put themselves forward for re-appointment. The Charity provides for a minimum of 3 trustees, to a maximum of 7 trustees.

At the quarterly trustee meetings, the trustees agree on the broad strategy and areas of activity for the charity, including consideration of grant making, investment, reserves and risk management policies and performance. The day to day administration of grants and the processing and handling of applications prior to consideration by the trustee is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

The trustees formally approved arrangements complying with the CC30 guide 'The recruitment, appointment and induction process for new charity trustees and how to set a framework for recruitment.' and recruit new trustee(s) for their experience, empathy and knowledge of the charity and to keep the skills and composition of the trustee body and succession planning under review. The trustees have also developed a code of conduct for trustees including formal statements of role and responsibilities and provision for trustee training. New trustees may be sought by open advertisement or through peer to peer dialogue. The ultimate decision on selection is a matter for the trustees.

On appointment, new trustees sign a constitution committing them to giving of their time and expertise. The induction process includes an initial meeting with the trustees, followed by a series of short meetings with the Chief Executive Officer on day to day activities within the charity, current projects, grant making process and powers and responsibilities of the trustee board. The welcome pack includes a brief history of the charity, copy of the trustee board minutes, a copy of the constitution, 5-year plan and a copy of the Charity Commission's guidance 'The Essential Trustee: What You Need to Know' and 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

All trustees give their time freely and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests in accordance with the charity policy and update all policies including, 'Bullying and Harassment', 'Code of Conduct', 'Conflicts of Interest', 'Equal Opportunities', 'Financial Management', 'Health & Safety' and 'Safeguarding Children and Young people'.

Objectives, Mission and Principal Activity

The Olive Ridley Project takes a multidimensional approach to protecting sea turtles and their habitat. In 2022 as ORP expanded its workforce and technical ability it decided to take a more holistic approach to sea turtle conservation by changing the mission from 'protecting sea turtles in the Indian Ocean from ghost gear' to 'protecting sea turtles and their habitats everywhere'. The charity updated its objects:

To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of sea turtles and their habitats, in particular, but not exclusively by:

- (a) promoting humane behaviour towards sea turtles by providing appropriate care, protection, treatment and security for animals which need care and attention by reason of sickness, maltreatment, poor circumstances or ill usage and to educate the public and veterinarian community in matters pertaining to sea turtle welfare

in general and the prevention of cruelty and suffering to sea turtles.

- (b) advancing the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of sea turtles, by provision of talks, workshops, online courses and training; and
- (c) advancing the education of the scientific community by filling scientific data gaps in sea turtle research.

Nothing in this constitution shall authorise an application of the property of the CIO for the purposes which are not charitable in accordance with section 7 of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and section 2 of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008.

Public Benefit

All trustees follow the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. By closely following this guideline we ensure the charity stays true to its purposes and focuses resources in direct relation to the charitable purposes.

We focus on protecting sea turtles and their habitats through rescue and rehabilitation, education and outreach and scientific research worldwide. We achieve this in the following ways:

1. Conducting workshops, informal meetings and seminars with local communities, governments, schools and the public to promote sea turtle conservation;
2. Hiring infield project coordinators that can disseminate our research findings and promote awareness to local communities;
3. Working with local fishing communities to mitigate threats to sea turtles including marine plastics, bycatch and safe release education;
4. Operating a Marine Turtle Rescue Centre and a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre that allow Maldivian nationals, local schools and veterinarian surgeons from under resourced regions to work alongside qualified professionals to increase personal development and awareness;
5. Establishing relationships with research institutes to advance our research capacity and subsequently increase knowledge within the sea turtle scientific community;
6. Continue to maintain a citizen science projects, specific to sea turtles, that allows people from all backgrounds to contribute to scientific research and develop personal skills;
7. Offering paid internships to Maldivian and Kenyan nationals to build in-country capacity;
8. Providing open access resources such as educational videos and an e-learning platform on our [website](#), with the addition of a Frequently Asked Turtle Questions page and educational blogs. This resource provides information on everything you need to know about sea turtles, including free publications such as our Sea Turtle Code of Conduct and Turtle Entanglement Protocol. Our protocols explain how to behave around foraging, nesting, and hatchling turtles, and what to do when finding an entangled sea turtle and are published in several languages. The aim of the publications is a) to reduce human disturbance, whether it be intentional or accidental, to sea turtles in all of their habitats while still allowing people to have an enjoyable wildlife encounter, and b) to increase the chances of survival for entangled sea turtles;
9. Maintaining very active social media channels and engage with our followers through various messaging platforms;
10. Working with a number of journalists from TV channels/programs, newspapers and magazines to further spread our message about sea turtle conservation; and
11. Contributing to scientific journals to advance the scientific community knowledge on sea turtles and the threats they face.

Risk management

The Trustees have identified the major risks applicable to the charity and believe that appropriate action has been taken to manage and mitigate against these risks. Furthermore, the Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the operations, reputation and finance of the Olive Ridley Project. The CEO assesses and updates the likelihood and impact of material risks and ensures controls are in place, such as special risk assessments for general fieldwork and working at the rescue centre.

The trustees accept that to achieve our objectives some areas of our work require the acceptance and management of risks.

Achievements and Performance 2022

This reporting period is running from January to December 2022 and captures our charitable activities across Maldives, Pakistan, Kenya, Oman and Seychelles.

During 2022 our charitable objectives were officially altered to reflect the change from protecting sea turtles in the Indian Ocean from ghost gear to protecting sea turtles and their habitats everywhere. Operations kicked off in the Seychelles at the start of 2022 and we were able to resume operations in Oman following the lifting of Covid 19 restrictions.

The team now counts more than 30 experts in various disciplines. We are at the forefront of sea turtle conservation, influencing local policy makers, working with governments and fishing communities and collaborating with a number of research institutes and advocacy groups.

At the end of 2021, ORP received a very generous donation which allowed us to bring forward programmes planned for 2023-2026. These initiatives include new research priorities and expansion of the team in core areas in line with our goal to make the charity financially sustainable for the long term and providing a safe and supportive working environment.

On the rescue and rehabilitation front, we expanded our veterinary team to include a resident veterinary nurse at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre in Baa Atoll. This role is an essential part of any veterinary team, providing both clinical and administrative support. We also started work to expand and improve the clinic at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre and continued construction of two more rehabilitation facilities in the Maldives.

We were able to diversify and expand our analyses of sea turtle populations, distribution, health and threats in the last year and continue to build upon our spatial ecology, parasitology, sea turtle behaviour, genetics and fishery related threats research. This year we have set up several initiatives to take advantage of new and existing technology to help us fill data gaps in sea turtle knowledge. These research projects include:

- Satellite tagging of released olive ridley turtle patients to gain insights into the feeding and migration habits of olive ridley sea turtles – a pelagic species about which little is known beyond their arribada nesting behaviour.
- The employment of temperature and humidity loggers as part of our nest monitoring research to improve our understanding of incubation conditions and their effect on hatching success.
- The use of drones to monitor nesting beaches and increase our observer coverage. In conjunction with AI technology, we hope to unravel several mysteries about sea turtles over the coming years, identify new nesting beaches and be able to better protect known nesting beaches against poaching.

Education and outreach remains a strong focus point for ORP and we were delighted to be able to add a full-time

volunteer, education and outreach officer to the team in 2022. Tasked with overseeing and streamlining all educational initiatives across the charity, launching a sea turtle guardian training programme, and improving our internship and volunteer programmes, this role is key for ORP to achieve our goal of increasing capacity for sea turtle conservation at the grassroots level. A highlight of 2022 was the Vaavoshi festival - the first multi-atoll sea turtle festival to be arranged in the Maldives.

Our site expansions in 2022 include two new bases in Shaviyani and Baa atolls in the Maldives through new partnerships with Fairmont Sirru Fen Fushi and Amilla Maldives Resort & Residences respectively. We also restarted our project in Oman after a two year hiatus brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our team in Kenya is growing and our activities and research areas are expanding and diversifying. We joined forces with Pwani University to investigate sea turtle health through genetics and started a pilot study with the Arribada Initiative using Snapper GPS receivers to help us understand fine-scale movements of green turtles in foraging areas.

In the Seychelles, one of the top five nesting grounds in the world for the critically endangered hawksbill, we began our nesting protocols and had a very successful first year of data collection.

And finally, we added two new members to the team in Pakistan, expanded to Kakapir village which is located between Sandspit, one of Pakistan's most prolific sea turtle nesting beaches, and Hawke's Bay, and initiated sea turtle Photo-ID and nest monitoring research.

As we move into 2023 and reflect on how far we have come from our humble beginnings, we recognise that our achievements would not have been possible without the hard work of our dedicated and passionate team, the invaluable contributions by our citizen scientists, and our volunteers, project partners and supporters. We would like to extend our sincere gratitude for your commitment to protecting sea turtles and their habits and supporting the incredibly important work we do, and we look forward to working with you all in 2023 and beyond.

Research

In 2022, we implemented and extended many of the research projects initiated in the previous year, aiming to improve our analysis of sea turtle populations, distribution, health and threats in the Indian Ocean.

Our satellite tagging project #ORPTrack, led by ORP Spatial Ecology Researcher, [Rushan Bin Abdul Rahman](#), kicked off in 2022, with two satellite tags successfully deployed with the assistance of our former Resident Veterinary Surgeon [Dr Minnie Liddell](#) and Sea Turtle Biologist [Joe Rigby](#).

Together, the tags collected movement data over 121 days and over 4,700km for the two rehabilitated olive ridley turtles. Preliminary analyses provided us with first insights into seascape use and movement patterns of both sea turtles. Nine additional tags have been purchased with the help of our generous supporters and are being prepared for an exciting tagging season in 2023.

In addition to our nest monitoring projects in Maldives and Seychelles, we implemented a new technique to improve our understanding of incubation conditions: we now collect sand temperature and humidity data in three atolls and on Félicité Island. This is the first step towards understanding hatchling sex ratios in these locations and comparing them to data from other nesting beaches.

Additionally, results from our nest monitoring efforts, a study evaluating the socioeconomic value of sea turtles in Maldives, and another summarising risk factors and health conditions influencing the outcome of rescue and rehabilitation, were presented at the Fourth Maldives Marine Science Symposium in Malé in August 2022.

The sampling expedition for sea turtle population genetics in the Maldives, in close cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency planned for Q2 of 2022 was unfortunately delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. A one-day training trip for all participants was executed in September 2022 and we are now aiming to complete the expedition in 2023.

In Kenya, we initiated a new partnership with Pwani University to extend our in-water studies investigating sea turtle health. Additionally, we started testing experimental satellite trackers in cooperation with the Arribada Initiative to help develop low-cost fine-scale tracking methods for sea turtles.

In addition to ORPs regular technical reports and reviews, ORP team members were part of a working group that created and published the first ever National Red List Assessments for select species in the Maldives in February 2022, covering each of the five sea turtle species which have been reported from the country.

Three of the assessments - for hawksbills, greens and olive ridleys - were led by ORPs CEO Dr Martin Stelfox and Senior Project Scientist Dr Stephanie Köhnik. Amongst other resources, they included information about each species' population, nesting activity and potential threats as collected in ORPs Photo-ID, nesting, veterinary and entanglement databases, resulting in an evaluation of each species' extinction risk following categories and criteria established by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The working group found that for olive ridley turtles not enough information was available for the Maldives, hence listing them as "Data Deficient". Green and hawksbill turtle populations each experienced a significant decline in recorded nesting activity in the country and have therefore been listed as "Endangered" (green) and "Critically Endangered" (hawksbill) in the country, which is in agreement with regional trends for these species in the Indian Ocean.

Publications

- Afeef I, Köhnik S and Stelfox M 2022. Laamu Yearly Report 2021.
- Afeef I, Köhnik S and Stelfox M 2022. Nesting in Laamu - Technical Report 2021.
- Kalisch L, Köhnik S and Stelfox M 2022. Nesting on Félicité - Technical Report 2021.
- Köhnik S and Stelfox M 2022. Still swimming with turtles: tourist-turtle interactions in the Maldives pre- and post-COVID-19. Indian Ocean Sea Turtle Newsletter, published online: <https://www.cms.int/iosea-turtles/en/news/still-swimming-turtles-tourist-turtle-interactions-maldives-pre-and-post-covid-19>
- Köhnik S 2022. *Eretmochelys imbricata*. The Maldives Red List of Threatened Species. Available online: <http://www.environment.gov.mv/v2/en/download/14670>
- Köhnik S and Stelfox M 2022. *Chelonia mydas*. The Maldives Red List of Threatened Species. Available online: <http://www.environment.gov.mv/v2/en/download/14688>
- Stelfox M and Köhnik S 2022. *Lepidochelys olivacea*. The Maldives Red List of Threatened Species. Available online: <http://www.environment.gov.mv/v2/en/download/14672>
- Olive Ridley Project. Annual Review 2022, Available online: https://oliveridleyproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/ORP_Annual-Review_2021.pdf

Sea Turtle Population Research

Photographic identification (Photo-ID) is a non-invasive technique used to identify individual animals in a population and track them over time from natural marks on the body. For sea turtles, it relies on capturing photographs of the unique patterns of scales on the animal's face.

Photo-ID can be used as a non-invasive alternative to tagging, and data may be analysed through Capture-Mark-Recapture (CMR) methods. This technique allows researchers to conduct longitudinal studies of individuals, yielding information about home range, survival rate, migration patterns, life cycle and includes groups that are less studied, such as juveniles and males.

We collect sighting data for both nesting and foraging green (*Chelonia mydas*) and hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) sea turtles in Kenya, Maldives, Oman and Seychelles. Olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), and leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) sea turtles are present in these countries, but less regularly sighted.

ORP began collecting new and historical photographs of foraging and nesting turtles from the Maldives in 2014. We have a nine-year data set for some atolls. We started collecting Photo-ID data from Kenya in 2018 and Oman in 2019. Unfortunately, the project in Oman was put on hold in 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but we successfully reinstated it in 2022. ORP also started a new chapter in the Seychelles at the end of 2021, establishing our Photo-ID database in the country.

ORP aims to help fill the gaps in scientific knowledge by providing detailed information on abundance, distribution, population growth rate, apparent survival, and nesting frequency of hawksbill and green sea turtles. We continue to use the Internet of Turtles (IoT) platform to analyse all turtle sightings from Maldives, Kenya, Oman, and Seychelles. The IoT platform combines data analytics with individual animal tracking and uses computer vision to compare new IDs to the existing database.

In the Maldives, we have recorded 33,889 identified turtle encounters from 5,789 different individuals until the end of 2022, including 574 newly identified turtles. Thanks to all of our citizen science contributors for their valuable support extending the scope of our data collection into areas where no ORP staff were present! Additionally, two new sea turtle biologist positions were established at the end of 2022, extending our research into Shaviyani and reinstating it in Baa Atoll.

In Kenya, there were over 3,769 sightings of 666 identified turtles (173 new individuals in 2022) who are now registered. We have added 265 turtle encounters in Oman in 2022, including 74 new identified individuals, bringing the total number of encounters to 332 and identified turtles to 114.

In our first full year of data collection in the Seychelles, we found 122 new turtles, bringing the aggregate number to 124, spotted over 249 encounters in total.

New Project Plans

Maldives

Sea Turtle Rescue & Rehabilitation

2022 was another busy year for the veterinary team. We admitted 32 new turtle patients at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre over the course of last year. The first three months of the year were particularly busy with 18 new patients admitted - the busiest quarter on record. We successfully released 16 patients back to the wild, with two olive ridleys, Autumn and Pickle, becoming our first sea turtle patients to be satellite tracked upon release.

Most of our patients were olive ridley turtles, but we also treated one green and four hawksbills. The majority of our patients were found floating rather than entangled this year. However, upon analysis of their injuries, we suspected that most of them had been entangled but managed to free themselves. Unusually, we also had a green entanglement victim.

Unfortunately, we lost 15 of our turtle patients. Three of these died shortly after being admitted with their injuries being too severe or help arriving too late. One of the patients that we could not save was our long-term resident Disco, who had been with us over two years. Disco was found floating with a missing front flipper and suffering from severe buoyancy syndrome. An endoscopy procedure in April 2022 revealed incredibly abnormal lungs with severe pathologic changes, especially in her left lung, as well as a damaged liver. Disco's case shows how ghost gear entanglement can cause grave external injuries as well as devastating damage to internal organs. Unfortunately our vets have few options when treating critical patients that have no chance of survival in the wild since euthanasia is

not permitted in the Maldives. For example our beloved Heidi, another long term patient was sent to his forever home at the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth, UK. His journey to the UK was kindly sponsored by British Airways and his transfer to Malé was supported by Trans Maldivian Airways. The decision to transport Heidi to the UK was determined due to a lack of alternatives available to Heidi. We hope Heidi will be more comfortable in a larger environment.

We have also been working on expanding our sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation facilities, including our clinic at the Rescue Centre. Two new rehabilitation centres are under construction at our partner resorts Soneva Jani (Noonu Atoll) and JOALI BEING (Raa Atoll) in the Maldives. The Rescue Centre at Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu will soon have a surgical suite and a clinical lab next door - twice the space we currently have. We would like to thank Coco Collection for their continued support and for making this possible.

In June, we welcomed our first Veterinary Nurse to the Rescue Centre – [Lauren Valentine](#). The veterinary nurse role is an essential part of any veterinary team, providing both clinical and administrative support. Thanks to Lauren's presence and expertise, we have been able to elevate our veterinary practices and provide even better care for our patients. Resident Veterinary Surgeon, Dr Minnie Liddell left Maldives after 18 months in April 2022. She was followed by Dr June Ang, who took over for six months, before [Dr Mariana Fragoso](#) joined our veterinary team at the end of the year.

Maldives Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

2022 was a very successful year for our Photo-ID research, with 574 newly identified sea turtles being registered: 176 greens and 398 hawksbills. We're proud of this achievement, which was only possible thanks to the excellent submissions from our citizen science contributors.

This year, North Malé became the second atoll from our database to surpass 1,000 registered individuals. With 1,028 identified individuals, it comes a close second to Baa Atoll, which recorded a total of 1,075 turtles. North Malé remains the atoll with the largest number of recorded hawksbills in the country to date - 942 individuals are registered here. The second and third largest number of hawksbills have been identified in Baa (844) and Ari (798). Lhaviyani Atoll remains the only atoll where the number of known green turtles exceeds the number of hawksbills, with 404 green turtles over 343 hawksbills. The second and third largest number of green turtles can be found in Laamu (290) and Baa Atoll (231).

The large number of resorts in the central atolls, as well as a consistent effort by our team members in certain atolls has resulted in better data coverage. The northern and southern atolls still have fewer turtles photographed and we hope to extend our data collection in those areas in the future.

Photo-ID not only allows us to monitor the Maldivian sea turtle population in the water, but also makes it possible to follow nesting turtles and the success of their nests over time. ORP sea turtle biologists have identified 34 different females nesting or attempting to nest in Baa, Laamu, Lhaviyani, Noonu, North Malé and Raa Atoll. Out of these, 16 turtles were observed laying more than one nest and six have been seen in more than one nesting season.

The so-called remigration interval describes the time nesting females take between active nesting seasons. In green turtles, the remigration interval is usually two to four years. We have observed a remigration interval of five years for one individual in Baa Atoll, who was first sighted in August 2017 before returning in June 2022. Cookie, a turtle known to nest in Laamu Atoll, has been seen in three different nesting seasons: 2018, 2021 and 2022. She took an 18 month break between the last two seasons. On average, greens nest every three years in the Maldives, based on seven remigration observations.

The 34 turtles were observed laying one to six nests per nesting season, for a total of 82 nests between 2017 and 2022. That means each turtle was observed to lay an average of 1.4 nests per season.

A turtle identified for the first time in Raa Atoll in 2022 laid three nests, all of which unfortunately had a very low hatching success rate - less than five percent. We believe that it was the health and fertility of the nesting turtle

rather than the environmental factors that played a role in the low success of these nests.

Turtle Nesting

ORP is continuing to collect data on sea turtle nesting mainly from Baa, Laamu and Lhaviyani atolls, where ORP's Sea Turtle Biologists monitor the nests. We are encouraging other biologists in the country to report any nesting incidences, for example from South Malé, Noonu, Raa or Haa Daalhu Atoll.

Data for nesting is limited due to the small number of sea turtle biologists collecting nesting information

In total we recorded 310 true nests and 251 false crawls during the reporting period. We counted 10,651 live hatchlings, although not all nests have hatched and some nests were not observed hatching. We have recorded an average hatching success of 79.7% hatching success in all nests that have hatched and could be examined post-hatching. The average time of incubation was 61 days.

Internship Program

One of ORP's goals is to build local and national capacity for sea turtle conservation and rehabilitation in all our locations. Our internship programmes, only open to residents of our host country, offer great opportunities to gain hands-on experience in many aspects of sea turtle conservation.

Our first intern joined us in 2017 for a three-month stint at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre. Here interns learn about sea turtle care and husbandry, sea turtle conservation and the running of a rescue centre. They also assist with educational outreach and, if lucky with their timing, with nest monitoring and hatching events. We have since trained 19 interns at the Rescue Centre, some of which have gone on to work full-time for ORP, other conservation NGOs, and even the government.

In January 2022 we also started a sea turtle biology internship with Maldives Underwater Initiative at Six Senses Laamu, and later in the year at Soneva Jani. The interns here learn how to collect Photo-ID data through underwater surveys, assist with nest monitoring and hatching events, and take part in educational activities at the resorts and in the community. The interns also support the resorts' marine biologists with additional research and educational activities.

We have since combined the two programmes so that interns now do three months at the Rescue Centre and three months with a sea turtle biologist. Working alongside both the veterinary team and sea turtle biologists allow the interns to gain a thorough understanding of the many sides of sea turtle conservation and research - the end goal being to fully train them to work with ORP long term.

All ORP interns receive a stipend, as well as meals and accommodation for their duration of stay.

Volunteer Programs

Volunteers are essential in the everyday running of the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre. They assist with all aspects of sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation, including treating wounds, helping with routine medical exams, observing surgeries, diet preparation, feeding, tank and turtle cleaning. Some lucky volunteers even get to experience hatching events! We welcomed 60 volunteers from 14 countries to the Rescue Centre in 2022.

Visiting Veterinarian Program at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre

Our Visiting Vet Programme ran at full capacity in 2022 for the first time in two years. This programme has three main aims: to give exotic animal veterinarians the opportunity to work with wild sea turtles and learn from us; for our resident veterinary team to learn new techniques from other experts and continue their professional training;

and to provide training to veterinarians who work with sea turtles in locations where no sea turtle training is available. We welcomed five visiting vets from four countries in the last year.

We also welcomed several other experts to the Rescue Centre in 2022. In May, Arribada Initiative visited our Rescue Centre to trial pilot satellite tags on our patients, as they aim to create cost-effective tags for future tracking projects. We were also a part of an exchange with Project Biodiversity, a conservation non-profit organisation committed to protecting wildlife in Cape Verde. Dr Claire Petros visited Cape Verde in August to establish whether there is a need for a rescue centre there. Meanwhile, Albert Taxonera, the Executive Director of Project Biodiversity visited the Rescue Centre, along with his Scientific Coordinator, Kirsten Fairweather. This was a great opportunity for knowledge exchange, with the veterinary team providing clinical experience in treating sea turtles, and Albert in turn sharing his extensive knowledge of community led programmes and the use of drones for nest monitoring.

Kenya

2022 finally brought some normality to our work in Kenya with the resumption of regular in-water surveys at all sites and the establishment of new exciting research and monitoring initiatives. To assist us in achieving our goals, Jenni Choma joined our team as an in-field supervisor.

Our regular diving surveys, conducted across 12 dive sites, resulted in 883 encounters of green turtles (of which 173 were new individuals), and 94 hawksbill turtles (including 18 new individuals). In addition, we conducted surveys to identify potential foraging sites for green turtles outside the reef with an emphasis on Diani's seagrass lagoon, both by snorkelling trips and by drone surveys.

To continue our efforts in understanding the dynamics of the green turtles in our area, we joined forces with Pwani University to carry out collaborative work such as genetic studies. We also teamed up with the Arribada Initiative to conduct a pilot study using Snapper GPS receivers. This would help us understand fine-scale movements of green turtles in foraging areas. We managed to tag and sample three juvenile turtles by the end of the year, with two more tags available for deployment in 2023.

In our outreach efforts, our project coordinator, Leah Mainye, participated in the 12th WIOMSA Scientific symposium in South Africa and the Tenth Meeting of the WIO Marine Turtle Task Force. At a local level, our volunteer, Juma Gwerenya, led a three-month pilot study along Diani Beach. This was to help to understand the community along the coast and individual perceptions of sea turtles and their conservation in the region. The results were used to define our Community Education and Outreach Program for 2023.

Kenya Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

To date, ORP in Kenya has recorded 3,234 sea turtle sightings at the reserve, with 2,782 being green turtles and 452 being hawksbill turtles, corresponding to 539 individual green turtles and 73 individual hawksbill turtles.

Oman

Our activities in Oman restarted in 2022 with ORP's new sea turtle biologist Tom Osborne arriving at the Musandam peninsula in January.

Throughout the year we recorded 317 turtle sightings, including some familiar faces from 2019, and added a total of 74 new additions to our database (72 greens and 2 hawksbills). The majority of sea turtles spotted in the area are still green turtles, which outnumber the identified hawksbills 10:1. The newly established regular house reef snorkels were a huge success with the guests at our partner resort, as were the sea turtle talks for adults and children.

In cooperation with the Environment Protection Agency and Six Senses Zighy Bay, ORP organised and carried out two large scale ghost gear clean ups. With the help of 40 participants, a total of four tons (3,628 kg) of ghost gear was successfully removed from the ocean. In the process, the remains of a sea turtle were found in one of the nets, but

thankfully no other wildlife was found entangled.

This year, we also started exploring the possibility of establishing a sea turtle rescue centre in Oman. As Musandam is a rather remote location separated from the rest of Oman by the United Arab Emirates, we are considering Muscat, Oman's capital, as a suitable location. Talks and meetings with relevant government officials and stakeholders have been initiated, thus laying the groundwork for further negotiations in the upcoming year.

Oman Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

This year we had a total of 265 sightings and identified 74 new individuals. This brings the total number of sightings since the project began to 332 with 114 individuals identified. Total sightings of greens are 317 with 105 individuals and total sightings of hawksbills are 15 with 9 individuals identified.

Seychelles

We completed our first full year of work in Seychelles thanks to our partner, Six Senses Zil Pasyon, located on Félicité Island. Félicité Island is in close proximity to Ile Coco Marine Park and Sister Islands, which are renowned for juvenile hawksbill turtle populations. The island is also a prominent location for nesting hawksbill and green turtles.

We surveyed 15 different sites throughout the year both on land and in the water, resulting in over 300 survey hours. We recorded a total of 124 new individuals in 2022, of which the majority were Hawksbill turtles (N=117). The addition of the Zil Pasyon excursion boat in the last quarter of the year allowed us to add additional survey sites. Hawksbill turtles made up the majority of sightings in the water, and nesting activity was also higher for hawksbill turtles with 28 nests compared to 7 for green turtles.

Hawksbill turtles in Seychelles have a distinct nesting season from October until March. Seychelles is also one of the only locations in the world where hawksbills exhibit daylight nesting. Green turtles may nest all year round, but on Félicité we only observed them in the cooler months of August and September. Unfortunately, due to severe erosion on the main nesting beach, a significant amount of nests (n=10) had to be relocated. The nests are due to hatch in the first quarter of 2023.

This year we also worked on establishing new partnerships with local organisations such as the Seychelles Parks and Garden Authority (SPGA) and the Turtle Action Group Seychelles.

Seychelles Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

This year we had a total of 244 sightings and identified 124 new individuals. This brings the total number of sightings since the project began to 249 with 126 individuals identified. Total sightings of greens are 8 with 7 individuals and total sightings of hawksbills are 241 with 119 individuals identified.

Turtle Nesting

Data is only recorded on Félicité Island. In total we recorded 40 true nests and 76 false crawls during the reporting period. We counted 4,185 live hatchlings, although not all nests have hatched and some nests were not observed hatching. We have recorded an average hatching success of 84.89% hatching success in all nests that have hatched and could be examined post-hatching. The average time of incubation was 64 days.

Pakistan

We expanded both our team and operations in Pakistan in 2022. Two additions were made to the team: Waqar J Khan, joined us as Community Leader, and Muhammad Hanif, as Field Coordinator, in Kakapir. And, whilst we continued our educational outreach, ghost gear recovery and circular economy projects, we also initiated two new

research initiatives: sea turtle Photo-ID and nest monitoring for the first time in Pakistan.

Waqar is responsible for running and expanding our circular economy project. He initiated ORP's participation in pop up markets and carnivals to sell our ghost net products, and also ensured that these are stocked in prominent pet stores. This has greatly increased the project's visibility and the demand for products made by the community.

Hanif is helping us establish our presence in his village, Kakapir, located in the middle of turtle nesting beaches Sandspit and Hawke's Bay. Kakapir residents often interact with nesting females and hatchlings during the nesting season. Hanif educates the residents on ghost nets, nesting protocols and sea turtle conservation.

We took our educational outreach initiatives from the classroom to the beach in 2022 - instead of making visits to schools, we invited the students to come for a walk on the beach with us for a more impactful and interactive session in the actual environment that sea turtles inhabit. This approach has been a great success and we plan to expand the programme next year.

Pakistan's coastline serves as nesting habitat for primarily green turtles, although hawksbills and olive ridleys are also occasionally spotted. While green turtles are seen in large numbers every year, no data currently exists by which we can estimate population numbers.

In an attempt to fill this crucial knowledge gap, we began monitoring sea turtle nesting activity in September 2022. We've recorded eleven nesting females thus far on Hawke's Bay, which we are hoping to identify with Photo-ID in the future. We hope to expand our monitoring efforts to Kakapir, Manora and Sandspit Beach in 2023.

Education & Outreach

Education is a big part of ORP's mission and an important aspect of our multifaceted approach to protecting sea turtles and their habitats. We believe education is a powerful tool to increase awareness, engage people – particularly young people – and stimulate action at local, international and policy level.

Our educational outreach initiatives take many forms and include a wide range of topics. We cover everything from sea turtle biology, anatomy, husbandry and veterinary care to threats, conservation and research findings. We organise workshops, talks and educational festivals, take part in conferences and symposiums, host webinars, visit schools and welcome school children to visit us. We also offer a [free online learning platform](#) and provide internships to build local capacity for sea turtle conservation and rehabilitation.

Our audience is global, diverse and includes everyone from school children to tourists to scientists and fellow conservationists and wildlife veterinarians. During 2022, we strengthened our commitment to education and outreach by welcoming Risha Ali Rasheed as our first full-time volunteer and educational outreach officer. Risha, who had initially joined us in 2020 as a volunteer coordinator, now oversees all educational initiatives across the charity. She frequently visits schools, local communities and resorts to conduct lectures, workshops, and take part in and arrange educational festivals.

For the past two years, most educational and outreach initiatives had to be virtual due to the Covid-19 pandemic but in 2022 we were finally able to resume in-person events. We once again welcomed school children to the Rescue Centre and relaunched Vaavoshi Festival as a multi-atoll event, reaching more than 3,700 children and local community members. The festival was a huge success and was even featured on [CNN's Call to Earth Day](#). In Kenya, we took part in the third edition of the popular Diani Sea Turtle Festival, organised by our partners, Conservation Education Society.

Our online learning platform continues to do well with 541 new enrolments in 2022 for our free e-Turtle School and Sea Turtle Science & Conservation courses. To date, 184 students have 'graduated'. e-Turtle School received a refresh in 2022 and we added a new lesson on the importance of sea turtles. We were also delighted to receive unexpected help from [Spongebob Squarepants](#) in reaching a new audience. Our Sea Turtle Science Video "[What Are Barnacles](#)" now has 1.6 million views on YouTube!

Digital Reach - Global Community

A major part of our strategy to increase awareness about the plight of sea turtles and the deadly consequences of ghost gear is a digital and social media presence. We continue to grow our web and social media channels to keep the public engaged with new content and regular updates. Our website now includes an online learning platform with free courses and resources about all things sea turtle and sea turtle conservation. Our sea turtle protocols have been translated into multiple languages, and our Sea Turtle FAQ pages are extremely popular, with thousands of visitors every month.

In 2022 our digital presence continued to grow across Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Youtube. We also expanded our reach to Tik-Tok and LinkedIn. We place a strong belief in education and knowledge-sharing, and are grateful to be able to reach out to our ever-growing global audience on social media. This interconnectedness has helped us spread the message of sea turtle conservation far and wide, and we look forward to forging new connections in 2023.

We launched three major social media campaigns; one on the common misconceptions regarding nesting turtles in the Maldives and another on sea turtle Photo-ID, aimed at increasing Photo-ID submissions from the general public and citizen scientists. Through interactive posts across our social media channels, both campaigns reached an average total of 40K people.

On World Sea Turtle Day, we conducted a week-long campaign that highlighted the threats to sea turtle populations worldwide. The campaign ended with a three-part illustration series on "Why are sea turtles important to YOU". This series exemplified the many ways in which sea turtles contribute to the welfare of human societies and were therefore pleased that this reached 14K people across our social media platforms.

Vaavoshi Sea Turtle Festival Maldives

Vaavoshi Sea Turtle Festival, initially conceptualised by our former Resident Veterinary Surgeon, Dr Claire Lomas in 2019, is a celebration of sea turtles and marine habitats. 'Vaavoshi', meaning 'olive ridley' in Dhivehi - the local language of the Maldives, aims to spread awareness about key marine habitats and ecosystems, the critical role that sea turtles play in maintaining these habitats, and the threats faced by marine life in the country.

In October 2022, Vaavoshi Sea Turtle Festival was celebrated across eight atolls in the Maldives as the first multi-atoll festival in the country. Nationwide, 2,177 students and more than 1,606 community members joined the festivities. The festival's main objective is to educate students on the importance of protecting sea turtles and their habitats through a variety of fun educational activities. These included talks, video and poster competitions, beach clean-ups, sand sculpture competitions, and a marine creature parade where students marched together advocating for the protection of sea turtles and their habitats. The festival also addressed cultural attitudes towards sea turtles by clearing misconceptions regarding the species and their conservation status.

The support for Vaavoshi 2022 was phenomenal. We hope it will inspire younger generations to become more conscious of their actions and consider education and career opportunities in marine sciences and conservation. The success of the Vaavoshi Festival was only possible thanks to the help and participation of many - most of all the eight schools that co-hosted the festival with us with support from the Ministry of Education. Additionally, we had support from parents, island councils, Maldives Police Service, NGOs, local businesses, individuals and volunteers, partner

resorts, the British High Commission in the Maldives, Bank of Maldives, and the Environmental Protection Agency of Maldives.

Conferences And Talks

At ORP, we routinely organise and participate in conferences and webinars to share our research findings among the scientific and conservation communities, as well as to gain insights from other professionals. Here are some of the events we participated in in 2022:

- In March 2022 ORP joined the International Sea Turtle Symposium hosted in Perth and conducted online. The International Sea Turtle Symposium is a global gathering where sea turtle biologists, conservationists, indigenous groups, researchers, academics, and advocates, come together to share knowledge, build capacity, network and collaborate towards the protection and conservation of sea turtles.
- In May, ORP members participated in a webinar on ‘Maldivian Youth in Sea Turtle Conservation’, hosted by the Environment Protection Agency of the Maldives.
- We hosted our 2nd annual World Sea Turtle Day webinar in the Maldives titled ‘Sea Turtle Science in the Maldives’, which highlighted key milestones in turtle conservation since, and presented ongoing projects by organizations working for sea turtle research and rehabilitation.
- ORP members participated in the Fourth Maldives Marine Science Symposium, in August 2022 at the Maldives National University, Malé, and presented across a wide range of topics from nesting to socio-economic value of sea turtles to the Maldives’ tourism industry.
- From 7th-9th October, ORP participated in the New Scientist Live 2022 exhibition, a fantastic multidisciplinary festival of scientific discovery and ideas. Former ORP members who now volunteer with us in the UK, stepped in to run the ORP stall and share our research and conservation efforts with over 300 attendees.
- The 12th Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association Symposium (WIOMSA) held from 12th-15th October 2022 in South Africa. Our Kenya team presented on Photo-ID as a ‘Tool to Study Sea Turtle Populations in Kenyan Marine Protected Areas’.
- ORP’s Senior Project Scientist, Dr Stephanie Köhnik gave a presentation on the successful integration of Citizen Science in conservation, to the German Youth for Conservation (Naju) group at the Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich.

Collaborations

Kenya

Conservation Education Society (CES)

The Conservation Education Society believes that, through education, empowerment and collaboration, everyone, big or small, can play a role in preserving our natural world. CES was officially established in March 2019 and operates out of the Marine Education Centre in Diani, Kenya. CES regularly organises educational events which ORP participates in and contributes to, as well as provides administrative and logistical support.

Diani Turtle Watch

DTW, a turtle conservation monitoring group, surveys the beach to spot any turtle nesting activities, mortality and turtle stranding cases throughout the day. DTW collaborates with ORP by sharing photos of by-caught turtles and stranded turtles for ID purposes, enriching our database and assisting with information about the threats that affect the turtles feeding off Diani's reef.

Diving The Crab

Widely recognised as the best dive centre in both Diani and in Kenya, Diving the Crab (DTC) is one of the main sponsors of the Marine Education Centre. DTC is also very supportive of marine biodiversity related activities in Diani, including ORP's in-water work. Since ORP first arrived in Kenya, DTC has been instrumental in providing logistical support allowing ORP to conduct in-water surveys and explore Diani's reefs, as well as actively participating in guest education, in-water surveys, ghost nest reporting and removal, and staff training.

D.M. Tours

D.M.Tours is Diani's leading tour agency, tailoring high quality traveling experiences for the most demanding adventurers. D.M. Tours has become one of ORP's most helpful supporters, by facilitating logistics to conduct in-water surveys during Covid-19 times, and by submitting regular sea turtle sightings along Diani Beach.

Bahari Hai

Bahari Hai aim to help create and support a community conscious of the marine environment and actively involved in protecting & establishing healthy ecosystems. Our partnership aims to improve sea turtle research and conservation along the Kenyan coastline.

Maldives

Amilla

Our new partnership with Amilla Fushi Resort in Baa Atoll, Maldives aims to provide a central hub for data collection in Baa atoll along with community engagement. Moreover ORP plans to identify local stakeholders in Baa to extend its data collection activities on sea turtle populations in the region. Finally ORP plans to work alongside identified local stakeholders to minimise threats to sea turtles such as poaching in the region.

Coco Collection

Our long standing partnership with Coco Collection Resorts continues. Our Marine Turtle Rescue Centre is located on Coco Dhuni Kolhu in Baa Atoll. We would like to thank Coco Collection for all their support and for hosting the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre, our staff, volunteers and interns.

Joali Being, Raa Atoll, Maldives

2022 marks the first year of ORP's partnership with Joali Being. It is allowing ORP to have a presence in the area through education and outreach with the local community as well as collecting data on sea turtles residing and nesting here.

Fairmont

In April 2022 we embarked on a new partnership with Fairmont Resort in Shaviyani Atoll, Maldives. This partnership aims to provide a central hub for data collection in the region along with community engagement. Moreover ORP plans to identify local stakeholders in Shaviyani to extend its data collection activities on sea turtle populations in the region.

Maldives Underwater Initiative (MUI)

MUI (Maldives Underwater Initiative) is a marine conservation initiative from Six Senses Laamu, Maldives, which unites the resort and its 3 NGO partners under one central banner, with the aim to consolidate shared research,

science communication, community education and outreach goals. The NGO's are Olive Ridley Project, Manta Trust and Blue Marine Foundation.

One&Only Reethi Rah, North Malé Atoll, Maldives

In addition to advancing research of sea turtles in North Malé Atoll, we have also opened a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre at One&Only Reethi Rah for turtle patients in need of long-term rehabilitation without veterinary care. This frees up tank space at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre to allow admittance of more injured turtles that require veterinary attention. Additionally, neighbouring resorts in a resort-dense atoll have a local point to send injured turtles. If required, ORP will arrange for injured turtles to be sent to our turtle veterinarian for further care.

Prodivers & Kuredu Island Resort & Spa, Lhaviyani Atoll, Maldives

We continued our partnership with Prodivers, a German dive centre operator based on Kuredu Island Resort & Spa in Maldives, to work together to advance the research of sea turtles in the Maldives and provide educational outreach to international guests and Maldivian nationals. We would like to thank Prodivers for their support.

Six Senses Laamu, Laamu Atoll, Maldives

We continue our partnership with Six Senses Laamu, a resort in Laamu Atoll, Maldives, to work together to advance the research of sea turtles in Laamu Atoll and provide educational outreach to international guests and Maldivian nationals. Here we work closely with 2 other not-for-profit organisations and resort staff under the umbrella Maldives Underwater Initiative, with the ultimate goal of creating a network of locally managed marine protected areas, in consultation with the community. We would like to thank Six Senses Laamu for their support.

Soneva Jani, Noonu Atoll, Maldives

Having been long-time data contributors to the ORP, we officially went into partnership in 2021. This partnership aims to expand rehabilitation efforts in the country by providing additional rehab facilities in Noonu Atoll. In addition, our team will collect data on sea turtle population health in the region that will help contribute to the national database.

Pakistan

Indus Scuba

Indus Scuba is a dive centre based in Karachi, Pakistan. They provide invaluable logistical and equipment support for ghost gear recovery dives in the region and also sponsored the PADI Open Water Certification of 3 ORP team members, adapting the training to Urdu no less.

Seychelles

Six Senses Zil Pasyon

Extending our relationship with Six Senses, we started working in the Seychelles in late 2021. The aim of this partnership is to use non-invasive research techniques to better understand sea turtle population health in the region. Additionally, we hope to work with existing sea turtle conservation groups to assist with ongoing research and conservation in the country.

Oman

Six Senses Zighy Bay

Extending our relationship with Six Senses, we started working in the in Oman in 2018 and due to COVID restricted ceased operations between 2020-2021. However we were able to restart our operations in January of 2022. The aim of this partnership is to use non-invasive research techniques to better understand sea turtle population health in the region. Additionally, we hope to work with existing sea turtle conservation groups to assist with ongoing research and conservation in the country.

World

International Pole & Line Foundation (IPNLF)

IPNLF works to develop, support and promote socially and environmentally responsible pole-and-line and handline tuna fisheries around the world. Our collaboration aims to develop a large scale ghost gear recovery project in the Maldives that incentivises fishers and other stakeholders.

International Sea Turtle Symposium

We regularly attend international symposiums including the ISTS. We also co-organised the sea turtle photo-ID workshop to develop standard protocols and new methods of analyses.

Blue Banana Lab

We highly appreciate the one off donation in 2022 from Blue Banana Lab to help with the running of our rehabilitation centres, specifically through providing funds to help replace much needed pumps and pipes at the centre.

Marine Life Protectors

We continue our long partnership with Marine Life Protectors and appreciate their continued support in our research operations in Kenya and rescue and rehabilitation efforts in the Maldives.

NGO Tuna Forum

The NGO Tuna Forum brings together NGOs and other individuals and organisations that work comprehensively on global tuna sustainability issues. ORP currently sits on three working groups: Bycatch Mitigation, Data and Transparency and Well-Managed FAD Guidance. The aim of this involvement is to ensure ghost gear and ghost fishing are brought into the conversation of global tuna fisheries at the policy level. We hope our experience and expertise will help guide stakeholders to make informed decisions on the issue and ensure it remains firmly on the agenda.

Satlink

Satlink, a Spanish company focused on the development of technological solutions that foster the sustainability of the fishing industry and ocean resource protection, has partnered with ORP and the International Pole & Line Foundation (IPNLF) to establish a programme for the removal and reuse of abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing nets and other fishing gear (known as ALDFG) in Noonu Atoll. This project began in 2022 and builds on lessons learnt from previous pilot projects in Gemanafushi. If successful, we hope to scale this project nationwide to address the ALDFG issue in the country.

Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance (STRA)

STRA, a charity registered in England & Wales, is a Global Network for Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Centres to share clinical knowledge and data to enhance medical practices at facilities worldwide, supporting the global conservation effort for these endangered species. ORP's Marine Turtle Rescue Centre was the first rescue facility to pilot ProVet Cloud, a patient management software adapted specifically for sea turtles.

Silver Goat Media

We appreciate the support of Silver Goat Media in publishing a children's story book 'The Adventures of Olive the Sea Turtle' co-authored by our very own CEO, Martin Stelfox. This book educates children in a fun way of the many threats and obstacles a hatchling sea turtle faces in the world today.

Financial Review

The Olive Ridley Project is committed to minimising administrative costs and increasing revenue to maximise the reach of its conservation and research programmes. To achieve our objectives, we rely on senior staff, veterinarians, researchers and project coordinators to work as consultants within the charity. Consultants are solely funded through

donations and grants.

During 2022 ORP has seen record financial growth, with income received during the year of £559,797, an increase of 45% on the previous year. At 31/12/2022, ORP had net assets on the balance sheet of £506,264, of which £32,167 were restricted funds.

The sustained financial growth over the past two years has enabled us to expand our charitable operations and accelerate programmes included in our longer term plans. As a result, expenditure during 2022 was £383,617, an increase of 129% on the previous year. Given our strong balance sheet position, we have committed to a range of new initiatives within our financial budget and we therefore expect this level of expenditure to increase further in 2023.

In 2022, 97% of our expenditure was spent on charitable activities undertaken to further our charitable objectives and 3% was spent on raising funds. The split of expenditure across our three core objectives was:

- Rescue and Rehabilitation – 30%
- Scientific Research – 42%
- Education & Outreach – 7%

56% of our expenditure during the year was from unrestricted funds, with 44% from restricted funds.

Fundraising

ORP is currently funded entirely through donations and grants, with the vast majority of our income being from private donations generated through our adoption and rescue centre volunteering programs, and donations from our corporate partnerships. We would like to thank all our supporters and donors for their support

A strategic review of our fundraising was performed during the year, and as a result we will be securing the support of a full-time fundraiser during 2023. The aim here is to maintain the growth ambitions of the charity through the optimisation of our existing income sources and diversification into new areas of funding.

OceanCare

OceanCare is a Swiss charity committed to marine wildlife protection. Since 2011 they have had a Special Consultative Status on marine issues with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. OceanCare provides funding for our lead veterinarian. We would like to thank OceanCare for their generous and continued support.

Commercial Partners

In order to diversify our fundraising income, the Charity formed several new partnerships with carefully selected Commercial Partners in the financial year. In addition to our existing relationships, we partnered with:

- Bracenet - A company that specialises in converting ghost gear into bracelets - Through this collaboration a range of sea turtle specific bracelets will be developed, 2 EURO per item sold being sent to ORP.
- Turtlee Green - Thanks to Turtlee Greens popular website customers donate and generate fundraisers for ORP whilst also providing plastic free alternatives to consumers. We thank Turtlee Green for this new partnership.

We would also like to thank all our long term commercial partners for their support:

10 International (Sea Change Wine), Excelsior Maldives Private Limited, Fourth Element, Legend Bracelets, Redhand Limited, Silver Goat Media, Turtle Sodas, All Scrubbed Up, Kind Traveller, Mimie Reed, Oevaali Art Shop,, Reolink and Saywhat Bottles, Dhiraagu.

Reserves Policy

The appropriate level of financial reserves held by ORP is considered each year by the Trustees. In order to operate effectively in the event of unforeseen circumstances, the Trustees have agreed that financial reserves should be maintained to cover a minimum of 3 months of essential operating costs. Essential operating costs are defined as the costs of key personnel within the organisation (CEO, COO, Lead Scientist, Veterinary Team and Project Leads), essential medical supplies, IT costs and governance costs. This amounts to £54,000 at the end of 2022.

Given the growth in income received over the past 2 years, current funds within ORP are in excess of the minimum reserve requirements. However, with the acceleration of key initiatives and expansion plans, our total fund position is forecast to reduce to levels more aligned with our reserving policy within the next 3 years.

Investment Policy

The trustees have general power of investments and have freedom to invest in assets as they see fit. The trustees aim to diversify any investments including low risk investments where capital is not put at risk and lower risk listed securities.

Plans & Objectives for 2023

We have five main charitable objectives for 2023:

1. Continue to expand research projects in order to:
 - Fill data gaps in sea turtle population health
 - Expand our satellite tagging program to identify major foraging habitats, fisheries interactions and release success
 - Assess environmental factors influencing sea turtle behaviour and nesting
 - Assess green turtle feeding behaviour and diet composition
 - Establish a Sea Turtle Health Database of clinical indices to track population health of sea turtles in Maldivian waters
2. Expand our ghost gear recovery and repurposing projects in the Maldives and Pakistan
 - Expand our ghost gear recovery efforts in Noonu Atoll, Maldives
 - Extend circular economy products into local shop owners and pop up markets in Pakistan
3. Increase collaborative projects with local groups and governments
 - Finalise and sign multi stakeholder agreements to protect sea turtles on Gaadhoo in Laamu Atoll
 - Finalise and sign multi stakeholder agreements to protect sea turtles in Vandhoo in Raa Atoll
 - Continue to work with governments to assist in data collection and/or conservation management of sea turtles.
 - Engage local groups and individuals in sea turtle conservation and research.
4. Provide the best possible care for injured sea turtles in the Indian Ocean
 - Expand our clinical and rehabilitation facilities in the Maldives and in other areas in need of our expertise
 - Serve as leading innovators in sea turtle medical therapy to ensure best veterinary practices are implemented at our sea turtle hospital and share these innovations and therapies with other sea turtle rescue centres internationally

- Evolve our Visiting Veterinary Programme into a formalised training tool in sea turtle medicine with special emphasis on increasing clinical knowledge of veterinarians from developing countries.
- Establish Clinical Research Programme to investigate specific disease processes prevalent in sea turtles inhabiting the region

5. Build national and local capacity for sea turtle conservation

- Build relationships with local NGOs, universities and local groups to help protect sea turtles and their habitats.
- Increase local participation in scientific research
- Expand our online learning tools to compliment national and international learning projects.

Statement of Trustee's Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable Law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of the financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the trustees on 11th October 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Amanda Costain
Trustee



Lee Cannan
Trustee/Treasurer

REGISTERED NUMBER: 1165905

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022

SEGRAVE & PARTNERS LLP
TURNPIKE HOUSE
1208/1210 LONDON ROAD
LEIGH ON SEA
ESSEX
SS9 2UA

Statement of Financial Activities – Year ended 31st December 2022

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year ending 31st December 2022. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

	Notes	2022			2021
		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Total Funds £
Income					
Donations and legacies	3.1	292,144	133,457	425,601	346,896
Charitable activities	3.2	81,978	52,015	133,993	38,791
Income from investments	3.3	203	0	203	0
		374,325	185,472	559,797	385,687
Expenditure					
Raising funds	5.1	10,789	25	10,814	1,265
Charitable activities	5.2	204,733	167,570	372,303	166,526
		215,522	167,595	383,117	167,791
Net income/(expenditure) before investment gains/(losses)		158,803	17,877	176,680	217,896
Net gains/(losses) on investments	3.3	(500)	0	(500)	0
Net income / (expenditure)		158,303	17,877	176,180	217,896
Transfer between funds	11	9,191	(9,191)	0	0
Net movement in funds		167,494	8,686	176,180	217,896
Reconciliation of funds					
Fund balance brought forward		306,603	23,481	330,084	112,188
Fund balance carried forward		474,097	32,167	506,264	330,084

The notes on pages 4 to 10 form an integral part of the financial statements.

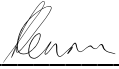
Balance Sheet – As at 31st December 2022


	Notes	31/12/2022 £	31/12/2021 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible fixed assets	7	27,917	18,897
Investments	8	6,500	7,000
		<u>34,417</u>	<u>25,897</u>
Current assets			
Debtors	9	13,345	2,528
Cash at bank and in hand		512,939	335,126
		<u>526,284</u>	<u>337,654</u>
Creditors – amounts falling due within one year	10	(54,437)	(33,467)
Net current assets		<u>471,847</u>	<u>304,187</u>
Total net assets		<u>506,264</u>	<u>330,084</u>
Funds of the charity			
Restricted income funds	11	32,167	23,481
Unrestricted funds		474,097	306,603
Total funds		<u>506,264</u>	<u>330,084</u>

The notes on pages 4 to 10 form an integral part of the financial statements.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Board of Trustees on 11th October 2023.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

Signed: 
 Lee Cannan
 Trustee & Treasurer

Dated: 
 Amanda Costain
 Trustee

Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022

1. Basis of preparation

The Olive Ridley Project (“ORP”, “the Charity”) is on a mission to protect sea turtles and their habitats through rescue and rehabilitation, scientific research and education and outreach.

ORP is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in the United Kingdom (charity number 1165905). The address of the registered office is 91 Padiham Road, Sabden, Clitheroe, BB7 9EX.

The financial statements have been prepared in compliance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102, Charities SORP (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention. They are prepared in pound sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity, rounded to the nearest £1.

Accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis for the financial year ended 31 December 2022 and the prior year comparative position. Accounts for periods up to 31 December 2021 have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis.

2. Accounting Policies

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below.

Going Concern

The Charity meets its day-to-day working capital requirements primarily through the cash generated from its fundraising activities. The trustees have performed a detailed review of future forecasts and projections, and have a reasonable expectation that the Charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus, the trustees adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

2.1. Income recognition

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (“SoFA”) when the charity is legally entitled to the income after any performance conditions have been met, the amount can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

Income from grants is recognised when the Charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Legacies are included in the SoFA when receipt is probable, that is, when there has been grant of probate, the executors have established that there are sufficient assets in the estate and

any conditions attached to the legacy are either within the control of the charity or have been met.

Gift Aid receivable is included in income when there is a valid declaration from the donor. Any Gift Aid amount recovered on a donation is considered to be part of that gift and is treated as an addition to the same fund as the initial donation unless the donor or the terms of the appeal have specified otherwise.

Donated services and facilities are included in the SOFA when received at the value of the gift to the Charity, provided the value of the gift can be measured reliably. Donated services and facilities that are consumed immediately are recognised as income with an equivalent amount recognised as an expense under the appropriate heading in the SOFA. In accordance with the SORP (FRS 102), general volunteer time is not recognised as income.

Investment gains and losses include both realised and unrealised gains and losses resulting from the sale or revaluation of investments at market value at the end of the year.

2.2. Expenditure recognition

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Raising funds expenditure comprises costs directly associated with fundraising activities. Charitable expenditure comprises costs directly attributable to the delivery of ORP charitable objectives. Other support costs comprise indirectly attributable overhead costs incurred to support the delivery of the Charity's objectives.

2.3. Assets held on the balance sheet

Tangible fixed assets costing more than £1,000 are stated at cost or valuation less accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation is applied to all tangible fixed assets. Depreciation rates are calculated to write down the cost or valuation, less estimated residual value, on a straight-line basis over the expected useful lifetime of each asset. Depreciation rates used are disclosed in note 7 of the notes to the financial statements.

Fixed asset investments in quoted shares, traded bonds and similar investments are valued initially at cost and subsequently at fair value (their market value) at the reporting date.

Debtors and creditors are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Unrestricted funds are funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in the furtherance of the core objectives of the charity, and which have not been restricted to other purposes.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. A breakdown of the restricted funds is provided in note 11.

2.4. Judgements and estimates

In the application of the Charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision only affects that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3. Analysis of income

3.1. Income from donations, legacies and grants

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £
Individual donations	186,063	11,506	197,569	240,517	35,973	276,490
Corporate partner donations	32,013	0	32,013	12,778	0	12,778
Resort partners donations	34,335	0	34,335	10,133	0	10,133
Gift aid	2,733	0	2,733	1,949	0	1,949
Legacies	37,000	0	37,000	0	0	0
Grants (non-government)	0	27,458	27,458	0	1,058	1,058
Donated services & facilities	0	94,493	94,493	0	44,488	44,488
	292,144	133,457	425,601	265,377	81,519	346,896

ORP receives an annual grant from OceanCare to support the funding of specialist veterinary services within the charity.

Further details on donated services and facilities are provided in note 4.

3.2. Income from charitable activities

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Resort partner income	0	51,355	51,355	0	421	421
Rescue centre volunteers	81,978	0	81,978	35,706	0	35,706
Ghost gear product sales	0	660	660	0	2,664	2,664
	81,978	52,015	133,993	35,706	3,085	38,791

ORP receives restricted donations from several partner resorts to support the provision of on-site marine biologists and general project management costs.

ORP operates a volunteer scheme at our rescue centre within the Maldives. The donations associated with this scheme contribute to unrestricted income to support all charitable objectives.

3.3. Income from investments

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Interest income	203	0	203	0	0	0
Unrealised gains / (losses)	(500)	0	(500)	0	0	0
	(297)	0	(297)	0	0	0

4. Donated goods, services and facilities

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Biologist fees paid directly	0	46,978	46,978	0	17,958	17,958
Accommodation & Board	0	30,711	30,711	0	17,071	17,071
Transportation	0	16,804	16,804	0	9,459	9,459
	0	94,493	94,493	0	44,488	44,488

In carrying out its charitable activities, ORP maintains partnerships with selected resorts across Maldives, Oman and the Seychelles. As part of these contractual partnerships, ORP provides on-site marine biologists and also veterinary services and volunteers to run the turtle rescue centre. In return, partner resorts provide accommodation, board and transfer flights to ORP representatives. Within some resorts, marine biologist fees are paid directly by the resort partner.

The value of accommodation and board for ORP representatives is estimated based on the wholesale cost incurred by the partner resorts. The value of transfer flights is approximated based on the average flight costs over the financial period.

5. Analysis of expenditure

5.1. Costs of Generating Funds

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fundraising agents	9,875	0	9,875	0	0	0
Advertising and marketing	55	25	80	1,265	0	1,265
Incurred seeking donations	859	0	859	0	0	0
	10,789	25	10,814	1,265	0	1,265

5.2. Expenditure on charitable activities

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Wages & consultant fees:						
Rescue and rehabilitation	19,787	16,663	36,450	12,890	12,756	25,646
Scientific research	28,451	48,513	76,964	5,431	15,701	21,132
Education and outreach	19,720	0	19,720	9,870	0	9,870
Charity operations	57,192	0	57,192	27,883	184	28,067
Equipment & medical supplies	44,382	5,140	49,522	6,726	16,578	23,304
Other charitable activity expenditure	27,807	2,372	30,179	7,140	2,601	9,741
Donated services & facilities	0	94,493	94,493	0	44,488	44,488
Support costs	7,394	389	7,783	3,647	631	4,278
	204,733	167,570	372,303	73,587	92,939	166,526

5.3. Analysis of support costs

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bank charges	2,530	0	2,530	1,614	0	1,614
Printing, postage & stationery	2,613	389	3,002	58	631	689
Independent examination	500	0	500	400	0	400
Insurance	1,751	0	1,751	1,575	0	1,575
	7,394	389	7,783	3,647	631	4,278

6. Employees & Trustees

6.1. Employees

The average monthly number of full-time equivalent persons employed by the charity during the year was 1 (2021: 1).

	2022	2021
	£	£
Wages and salaries	32,917	23,703
Social security costs	0	0
Pension costs	800	0
	<u>33,717</u>	<u>23,703</u>

6.2. Trustees

No trustees received any remuneration or expenses from the Charity during the financial year (2021: £nil).

7. Tangible fixed assets

	Rescue Centre Equipment
	£
Cost:	
Fixed assets cost at the beginning of the year	32,428
Additions	14,134
Fixed assets cost at the end of the year	<u>46,562</u>
Depreciation:	
Depreciation at the beginning of the year	13,531
Depreciation	5,114
Depreciation at the end of the year	<u>18,645</u>
Net Book Value:	
Net book value at the beginning of the year	18,897
Net book value at the end of the year	<u>27,917</u>

Veterinary equipment at our rescue centre within the Maldives is assumed to depreciate on a straight-line basis at 10% per year, reflecting the average useful life of the equipment.

8. Investment assets

	Listed Investments
	£
Carrying value at the beginning of the year	7,000
Net gain / (loss) on revaluation	(500)
Carrying value at the end of the year	<u>6,500</u>

The investments held by ORP are all in listed securities, and are valued at market value at the reporting date.

9. Debtors

	2022	2021
	£	£
Partner resort donations - debtors	13,345	2,528
	13,345	2,528

10. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	£	£
Partner resort donations – creditors	21,634	7,858
Volunteer advance deposits	32,185	25,209
Other creditors	618	400
	54,437	33,467

11. Restricted funds

	Balance at 31/12/2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfer to Unrestricted	Balance at 31/12/2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Rescue centre	2,574	526	(3,100)	0	0
Partner resorts	6,871	150,475	(141,332)	(392)	15,622
Kenya project	0	5,373	(5,231)	0	142
OceanCare grant	8,799	12,168	(12,168)	(8,799)	0
Expedition funding	3,901	10,290	(1,657)	0	12,534
Satellite tagging	0	1,980	(1,980)	0	0
Pakistan circular economy	278	660	(786)	0	152
Turtle festival funding	1,058	4,000	(1,341)	0	3,717
	23,481	185,472	(167,595)	(9,191)	32,167

The transfer of funds for the OceanCare grant from restricted to unrestricted relates to a correction to earlier accounting periods. The grant is received on an annual basis, and all costs are incurred within the same annual period.

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2022**

Independent examiners report to the trustees of The Olive Ridley Project in respect of the year ended 31st December 2022.

This is a report in respect of an examination carried out on the financial statements set out on pages one and two under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the directions given by the Charity Commissioners under sub-section 5(b) of that section.

Responsibilities of trustees and independent examiners

As described in the annual report, the charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

It is our responsibility to:

- 1) examine account under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011
- 2) follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011
- 3) state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of opinion

Our examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Opinion

No matter has come to our attention in connection with our examination which gives us reasonable cause not to believe that in any material respect:

- 1) proper accounting records have been kept in accordance with Section 137 of the Charities Act 2011, and;
- 2) the financial statements accord with those records.



Segrave & Partners LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
Turnpike House
1208/1210 London Road
Leigh on Sea
Essex
SS9 2UA

Date: 19th July 2023

OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

England & Wales - Charity number 1165905

Accounts



OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

The Olive Ridley Project

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year ending: 31st December 2021

Charity no: 1165905

Legal and Administrative Information

Trustees	Prof. Mike Sweet Jannicke C Hallum Matt Shoulders, Treasurer (until December 2021; replaced by Lee Cannan) Cliona Kirby (from May 2021) Amanda Costain (from July 2021)
Chief Executive / Founder	Dr Martin Stelfox
Senior Project Scientist	Dr Jillian Hudgins (until June 2021)
Senior Project Scientist	Dr Stephanie Köhnk (from June 2021)
Scientific Advisors	Dr Jillian Hudgins (from June 2021)
Website and Media Manager	Jannicke C Hallum
Lead Veterinary Surgeon	Dr Claire Petros
Graphic Designer	Susie Gibson
Veterinary Surgeon	Dr Amelia Liddell
Researcher - Spatial Ecology	Rushan Bin Abdul Rahman
Researcher - GIS Ecology	Jane Lloyd
Communications Officer	Rosie Brown (From June 2021)
Sea Turtle Biologists/Guest Educators <i>Maldives</i>	Jo Goodfellow (Until Feb 2021) Isha Afeef (From Feb 2021) Rosie Brown (Until May 2021) Joe Rigby (From May 2021) Emily Mundy Olivia Forster (From December 2021) Moosa Mohamed (From December 2021) <i>Lara Kalisch (From December 2021)</i>
<i>Seychelles</i>	
<i>Kenya</i>	
Project Manager	Dr Joana Hancock
Project Coordinator	Leah Mainye
Project/Field Coordinators	
<i>Maldives</i>	Ibrahim Shameel Risha Ali Rasheed
<i>Pakistan</i>	Usman Iqbal Asif Baloch
Ambassadors	Matt Sorum Andy Torbet
Registered Office	28 Stone Moor Bottom, Padiham, Burnley Lancashire, BB12 7BW
Bank	Lloyd's Bank 8 Royal Parade Plymouth, PL1 1HB
Independent Examiner	Carly Spencer FCCA Segrave & Partners LLP Turnpike House 1208/1210 London Road Leigh on Sea Essex SS9 2UA

The Olive Ridley Project

Trustees' Report

For the year ending 31st December 2021

Structure, governance and management

This Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is regulated by its constitution whose only voting members are its trustees. The CIO was established by Dr. Martin Stelfox (CEO and founder) in 2013 and then became the CIO on the 7th March 2016.

New trustees are appointed by the existing trustees and serve for three years after which they may put themselves forward for re-appointment. The Charity provides for a minimum of 3 trustees, to a maximum of 7 trustees.

At the quarterly trustee meetings, the trustees agree on the broad strategy and areas of activity for the charity, including consideration of grant making, investment, reserves and risk management policies and performance. The day to day administration of grants and the processing and handling of applications prior to consideration by the trustee is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

The trustees formally approved arrangements complying with the CC30 guide 'The recruitment, appointment and induction process for new charity trustees and how to set a framework for recruitment.' and recruit new trustee(s) for their experience, empathy and knowledge of the charity and to keep the skills and composition of the trustee body and succession planning under review. The trustees have also developed a code of conduct for trustees including formal statements of role and responsibilities and provision for trustee training. New trustees may be sought by open advertisement or through peer to peer dialogue. The ultimate decision on selection is a matter for the trustees.

On appointment, new trustees sign a constitution committing them to giving of their time and expertise. The induction process includes an initial meeting with the trustees, followed by a series of short meetings with the Chief Executive Officer on day to day activities within the charity, current projects, grant making process and powers and responsibilities of the trustee board. The welcome pack includes a brief history of the charity, copy of the trustee board minutes, a copy of the constitution, 5-year plan and a copy of the Charity Commission's guidance 'The Essential Trustee: What You Need to Know' and 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

All trustees give their time freely and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests in accordance with the charity policy and update all policies including, 'Bullying and Harassment', 'Code of Conduct', 'Conflicts of Interest', 'Equal Opportunities', 'Financial Management', 'Health & Safety' and 'Safeguarding Children and Young people'.

Objectives, Mission and Principal Activity

The Olive Ridley Project takes a multidimensional approach to protecting sea turtles and their habitat in the Indian Ocean. We do this through fostering cross-sectoral collaboration and cooperation, public education, research and rehabilitation. Our charitable purposes are as follows:

1. To Promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of the Indian Ocean in particular but not exclusively by:
 - a) The removal of ghost gear from the marine environment reducing the negative effects on coastal communities and marine animals particularly the Olive Ridley sea turtle and
 - b) By promoting the recycling of end of life fishing nets
2. To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of the marine sea turtle but not exclusively the Olive Ridley sea turtle by provisions of talks, workshops, training and research.

3. To promote humane behaviour towards the Olive Ridley sea turtle by providing appropriate care, protection, treatment and security for animals which are in need of care and attention by reason of sickness, maltreatment, poor circumstances or ill usage and to educate the public in matters pertaining to animal welfare in general and the prevention of cruelty and suffering among animals.

* for the purpose of this clause, we define “ghost gear” as either abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear.

Public Benefit

All trustees follow the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. By closely following this guideline we ensure the charity stays true to its purposes and focuses resources in direct relation to the charitable purposes.

We focus on building awareness and education surrounding sea turtle conservation in the Indian Ocean region, and in particular in Maldives, Oman, Kenya and Pakistan. We mainly focus on the negative impacts of marine plastics, such as ghost nets, on sensitive habitats and to coastal communities. We achieve this in the following ways:

1. Conducting workshops, informal meetings and seminars with local communities, governments, schools and the public to remove and report ghost gear and promote sea turtle conservation;
2. Hiring infield project coordinators that can disseminate our research findings and promote awareness to local communities;
3. Teaching local fishing communities how to rework ghost gear into other products to generate an alternative income whilst protecting sensitive turtle habitats;
4. Operating a Marine Turtle Rescue Centre and a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre that allow Maldivian nationals and local schools to work alongside qualified professionals to increase personal development and awareness;
5. Establishing relationships with research institutes to advance our research capacity and subsequently increase knowledge within the sea turtle scientific community;
6. Building a citizen science project, specific to sea turtle and ghost net science, that allows people from all backgrounds to contribute to scientific research and develop personal skills;
7. Offering paid internships to Maldivian nationals at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre to build in-country capacity - there is currently no opportunity for veterinary training in Maldives;
8. Providing open access resources such as educational videos and an e-learning platform on our [website](#), with the addition of a Frequently Asked Turtle Questions page and educational blogs. This resource provides information on everything you need to know about sea turtles, including free publications such as our Sea Turtle Code of Conduct and Turtle Entanglement Protocol. Our protocols explain how to behave around foraging, nesting, and hatchling turtles, and what to do when finding an entangled sea turtle and are published in several languages. The aim of the publications is a) to reduce human disturbance, whether it be intentional or accidental, to sea turtles in all of their habitats while still allowing people to have an enjoyable wildlife encounter, and b) to increase the chances of survival for entangled sea turtles;
9. Maintaining very active social media channels and engage with our followers through various messaging platforms;
10. Working with a number of journalists from TV channels/programs, newspapers and magazines to further spread our message about sea turtle conservation; and
11. Contributing to scientific journals to advance the scientific community knowledge on sea turtles and the threats they face.

Risk management

The Trustees have identified the major risks applicable to the charity and believe that appropriate action has been taken to manage and mitigate against these risks. Furthermore, the Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the operations, reputation and finance of the Olive Ridley Project. The CEO assesses and updates the likelihood and impact of material risks and ensures controls are in place, such as special risk assessments for general fieldwork and working at the rescue centre.

Achievements and Performance 2021

This reporting period is running from January to December 2021 and captures our charitable activities across Maldives, Pakistan and Kenya. Unfortunately, our operations in Oman remained suspended due to Covid-19 restrictions for the whole year.

As we commit to expanding our operations to protect sea turtles and their habitats, we are excited to announce an expansion into the Seychelles in the last month of this year. This partnership builds on our relationship with Six Senses at their property Zil Pasyon on Félicité island. Our work will focus on local population distribution, abundance and health to minimise common threats in the area. In addition, we are excited to work with local and international partners to assist existing research efforts and hope to provide consistent data streams to these organisations. Reporting from the Seychelles will commence from 2022.

In 2021 we recorded a total of 66 sea turtle strandings in the Maldives, 79% (52) of these were olive ridleys. The number of olive ridley strandings drastically reduced when compared to previous years (2020 = 104, 2019 = 157, 2018 = 103, 2017 = 153, 2016 = 77, 2015 = 114 and 2014 = 78). This is likely due to a lack of reporting associated with the pandemic and unlikely a true indication of stranding rates in 2021. We managed to transfer 50% (33) of these strandings to our rehabilitation and rescue facilities and released twenty sea turtles back into the wild.

In the same period, we recorded a total of 454 new individual sea turtles in the Maldives (121 green turtles, 325 hawksbill turtles) and 127 new individuals in Kenya (116 green, 11 hawksbill).

Species richness wildly differs between the Maldives and Kenya. Kenya continues to be dominated by green turtles across all five monitoring sites. However, the Maldives is dominated by hawksbill turtles across 17 of the 19 atolls monitored. Interestingly, despite a higher proportion of recorded hawksbill turtles, very few nests are reported in the Maldives.

This year we were able to record sea turtle nesting activity in the Maldives from Noonu Atoll (31), Baa Atoll (2), Lhaviyani Atoll (29), North Malé (4) and Laamu Atoll (30). Average incubation period was 58 days, reflecting findings from our report in 2020. However, nesting success this year (71%) decreased when compared to our last reporting period (82%). We were able to record more nests this year and therefore suspect these figures represent a true representation of the success rate seen in the Maldives.

Operations in Pakistan were halted for much of 2020. However, in 2021 we were able to continue operations for much of the year. The team recovered 393 kg of ghost gear, predominantly in the form of monofilament gill nets. The community managed to raise 105,000 PKR (\$600) in alternative income from this waste. Our dog leash sales were a little slow in 2021, however, we are planning a marketing campaign in 2022 to target both international and Pakistani communities.

Although the Covid-19 pandemic is far from over we are seeing parts of the world return to some level of normality. At the end of 2021 our volunteering and internship programs were in full swing as travel became less restricted. We continued to push the boundaries in science and conservation, published three novel research papers and presented at international conferences. We also assisted governments with data collection and report writing. We pride ourselves in our collaborative approach to conservation and continue to ensure collaboration remains a top priority to protect sea turtles and their habitats.

Careful planning goes into all our operations and this year we updated our 5-year business plan for 2022 - 2026. This strategic plan has been developed to help guide the charity, organise our teams and ensure we stay focused on our objectives and operate sustainably for years to come. It also forms the backbone of our operations and provides a

reference and metric at the end of each year to measure our achievements.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, ORP has been able to quickly adapt to an ever changing world and continue our work thanks to the exceptional support from our corporate sponsors and individual givers, an agile and dedicated team, and stringent cost saving efforts. At the end of the year we were extremely fortunate to receive a very generous gift, making 2021 a record breaking year in donations for the charity.

This donation has both provided us with financial security for the next couple of years and allowed us to make giant leaps forward and accelerate programmes and initiatives that were originally planned for 2023-2026.

We are fully committed to being transparent about, and accountable for, how we spend all donations we receive.

Research

ORP continued to push the boundaries and pioneer research techniques to analyse sea turtle populations, distribution, health and threats in the Indian Ocean throughout 2021. Though the global pandemic continued to have an impact on our possibilities to carry out infield research for much of the year, we focused on analysis of data already collected, and on planning new research projects for the future.

Our satellite tagging project, led by ORP researcher Rushan Bin Abdul Rahman and Senior Scientist Dr Stephanie Köhnk was still paused in 2021, but we have secured a continued research permit and all necessary equipment has been transported to the Rescue Centre.

Towards the middle of the year a total of three papers led by the ORP team were accepted for publication. The first paper was led by Dr. Martin Stelfox and Dr. M Martin-Cerceda, exploring a successful example on how to engage researchers and society. It is available as an open access publication at <https://www.scienceopen.com/document/read?vid=8c5210ca-9cdf-4108-b109-680ab0d7321f>.

The second paper led by ORP senior scientist Dr. Stephanie Köhnk, documenting the presence of sanguivorous ectoparasites found on entangled sea turtles in the Maldives was accepted in June and published in December. Stephanie has renewed a respective research permit in the Maldives and is further working with Dr. Joana Hancock towards extending this research into Kenya in the next year.

Lastly, a paper summarising the results of sea turtle nesting activity on an island in Baa Atoll and describing the finding of a polycephalic embryo for the first time in the Maldives was published at <https://ojvr.org/index.php/ojvr/article/view/1940/2270> The study combined the veterinary knowledge of Dr. Minnie with the nest monitoring and analysis skills of Biologist & Communications Officer Rosie Brown and Dr Stephanie Köhnk.

Additionally, we contributed towards a global study on hawksbill sea turtle genomics and initiated planning a targeted sampling expedition together with the EPA in the first half of 2022. Finally, we assisted the Maldivian government in the preparation of the first ever national Red List Assessment for Marine Reptiles and hope to see these chapters published in early 2022.

We will continue our research and to pursue our goal to fill data gaps, as well as explore new research opportunities in 2022. We have a number of new projects in the pipeline and we are excited to get started.

Publications:

- Stelfox M, Martin-Cerceda M, Vahed K, Hudgins J, Köhnk S, Iqbal U, Shameel I, Hancock JM and Sweet M 2021. The Olive Ridley Project (ORP): A successful example of how to engage researchers, conservation practitioners and civil society. *Research for All* 5(2): 448–73.

- Köhnek S, Liddell A and Brown R 2021. Finding of a two-headed green turtle embryo during nest monitoring in Baa Atoll, Maldives. *Onderstepoort Journal of Veterinary Research* 88(1): a1940.
- Köhnek S, Petros C, Lomas C, Riyad EM, Shameel I, Hawlitschek O and Stelfox M 2021. Stowaways: Marine Leeches infecting Olive Ridley Sea Turtles washed into Maldivian Waters entangled in Ghost Nets. *Comparative Parasitology* 88(2): 169-176.
- Olive Ridley Project 2021. Annual Review 2020. Technical Report.
- Afeef I, Hudgins J, Köhnek S and Stelfox M 2021. Nesting in Laamu - Technical Report 2020. Olive Ridley Project.
- Afeef I, Hudgins J, Köhnek S and Stelfox M 2021. Laamu Yearly Report 2020. Olive Ridley Project.

Sea Turtle Population Research

Photographic identification (Photo ID) is a non-invasive technique used to identify individual animals in a population and track them over time from natural marks on the body. For sea turtles, it relies on capturing photographs of the unique patterns of scales on the animal's face.

Photo ID can be used as a non-invasive alternative to tagging and data may be analysed through Capture-Mark-Recapture (CMR) methods. This technique allows researchers to conduct longitudinal studies of individuals, yielding information about home range, survival rate, migration patterns, and life cycle and includes groups that are less studied, such as juveniles and males.

We collect sightings data for both nesting and foraging green (*Chelonia mydas*) and hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) sea turtles in Kenya, Maldives, Oman and Seychelles. Olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), and leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) sea turtles are present in these countries as well, but less regularly sighted.

ORP began collecting new and historical photographs of foraging and nesting turtles from the Maldives in 2014. We have an eight-year data set for some atolls. We started collecting Photo ID data from Kenya in 2018 and Oman in 2019. Unfortunately, the project in Oman has been on hold since 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but we are looking at reinitiating it in 2022. Additionally, ORP has started a new chapter in the Seychelles in 2021.

The project aims to help fill the gaps in scientific knowledge by providing detailed information on the abundance, distribution, population growth rate, apparent survival, and nesting frequency of hawksbill and green sea turtles.

We continue to use the Internet of Turtles (IoT) platform to analyse all turtle sightings from Maldives, Kenya, Oman, and now Seychelles as well. The IoT platform combines data analytics with individual animal tracking. IoT uses computer vision to compare new IDs to the existing database and Wildbook to store metadata.

The total number of turtle encounters reported in the Maldives is 29,318 as of the end of 2021, including 454 newly identified turtles. We further worked on cleaning up old encounters and eradicating double identifications. No research expeditions to the North of the country were completed during the reporting period due to ongoing travel restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic. We still received turtle ID data from citizen scientist and marine biologists in the area, which we are very grateful for. Additionally, three new biologists joined the team, extending our research in Raa, northern North Malé and Noonu atolls towards the very end of 2021 and beginning of 2022.

With four year data sets of certain sites in Kenya, totalling over 3,000 sightings of 664 identified turtles (127 new individuals in 2021), we are looking to analyse these data using CMR, replicating our Maldivian population studies and gaining first insight into population stability and growth in Kenya.

New Project Plans

Maldives

Sea Turtle Rescue & Rehabilitation

After a tough 2020, this year saw some return to normalcy here in the Maldives. A more stable stream of tourists meant consistent boat traffic, therefore allowing for detection of entangled turtles that was a little more in line with previous years. This year we admitted 33 new patients, with a further 5 to care for carried over from 2020. We were able to successfully rehabilitate and release 20 patients, including our longest term resident Azura, who was with us for a total of 2 years, 8 months and 11 days. Serendipitously, we were able to release her with a returning volunteer, who had been here the day Azura arrived in April 2019, so it was a very rewarding moment. It is a testament to the hard work and dedication of many people over the years, including ORP veterinarians, biologists, interns and volunteers who cared for her.

Our Rehabilitation Centre at One & Only Reethi Rah in North Malé Atoll has been invaluable in the triage and rehabilitation of our turtle patients, with Dr Minnie and Joe, the sea turtle biologist, working closely together to coordinate the collection and transfer of injured turtles from across North Malé Atoll. We are excited to have more rehabilitation tanks across Maldives to further increase our capacity to care for turtle patients.

We continue to provide high quality veterinary care to turtles rescued across the Maldives, majority of which were found entangled in ghost gear and need surgical intervention. This year we finally acquired an endoscope, which will allow us to go the extra mile for some of our more challenging patients.

We also had Dr Alex McGhee visit the Rescue Centre to set up our new patient management software in collaboration with the Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance and Provet Cloud, who are generously providing the software for free.

Turtle movements between reefs

The vast majority of the over 5,200 identified turtles are very faithful to a specific reef and have only been recorded on one site. Only 128 turtles have been seen on more than one reef (2.4 %). Of these, only 17 have visited three, and only one individual visited four sites in total. On average, green turtles move between sites less than 3 km apart and hawksbills less than 10 km.

Most green turtle movement has been recorded in Lhaviyani atoll (15 cases), with a lot of movement around Kuredu island (see right).

The longest green turtle movement was recorded in South Ari Atoll, along the outreef from Dhidhdhoo to Dhigurah.

Records of hawksbill turtles on multiple sites indicate that they are moving along reef structures, such as long outreefs or hopping between close reef structures on the inside of atolls. Most hawksbill turtle movement has been recorded in Ari Atoll (53 cases), with most turtles moving along the outreef from Dhidhdhoo to Dhigurah at the southern end of the atoll.

The longest distance between sites was covered by hawksbill turtles from Shaviyani to Noonu Atoll (up to 76.8 km) and by a single turtle sighted in South Ari as well as Rasdhoo Atoll (89.7 km, see right).

We suspect intra- and inter-atoll movement might be more common and aim to discover migration routes and patterns in the future with further extending our photo ID database.

Maldives Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

This year, Baa Atoll has passed the total number of 1000 identified individual turtles and is now at 1003! Of these, 209 are green turtles and 794 hawksbills. A close second is North Malé Atoll, with 996 individual turtles, 914 of which are hawksbills and 82 greens. The largest number of green turtles can still be found in Lhaviyani (359) and Laamu Atoll (243). Both atolls also have a resident hawksbill population with 271 and 434 individuals respectively.

The large number of resorts in the central atolls, as well as a consistent effort by our team members in certain atolls has resulted in better data coverage. The northern and southern atolls still have few turtles photographed and we greatly appreciate all submissions from citizen scientists.

The total number of turtle sightings in 2021 was 3,196 with 454 new individuals sighted. This takes the totals since records began to 29,318 sightings (hawksbills 20,160 and greens 9,158) with 5,251 individuals sighted (hawksbills 4,080 and greens 1,171).

Turtle Nesting

ORP is continuing to collect data on sea turtle nesting mainly from Baa, Laamu and Lhaviyani atolls, where ORP's Sea Turtle Biologists monitor the nests. We are encouraging other biologists in the country to report any nesting incidences, for example from South Malé, Noonu, Raa or Haa Daalhu Atoll.

In total we recorded 96 true nests and 54 false crawls during the reporting period. We counted 2,807 hatchlings to date, with 71% hatching success in all nests that have hatched and could be examined post-hatching. The average time of incubation was 58 days. A manuscript describing the finding of a hatchling with polycephaly and other congenital malformations during nest content analysis has been published. In Laamu Atoll, ORP continued to monitor nesting on Gaadhoo, an uninhabited island thought to be one of the most significant green turtle nesting sites in the Maldives. Unfortunately, the nesting beach is subject to illegal poaching.

We plan to use the data we collect to justify government protection for Gaadhoo, and to help prevent proposed development which could have detrimental impacts on the turtle nesting beach. Long-term, we hope to establish a ranger programme to consistently monitor the nesting turtle population and deter poachers. Various funding options have been sought out to kickstart the ranger programme (e.g., Hans-Schiemenz-Fonds from the *German Society for Herpetology and Reptile Care*). ORP is also working closely with Blue Marine Foundation to help create a network of protected areas (including Gaadhoo) in Laamu.

Satellite tagging

Our satellite tagging project, led by ORP researcher [Rushan Bin Abdul Rahman](#) was still paused in 2021, but we have secured a continued research permit and all necessary equipment has been transported to the Rescue Centre and [Dr Minnie Liddell](#) and Sea Turtle Biologist [Joe Rigby](#) are prepared to get started! We are eagerly awaiting our first patient ready for release.

Parasite Study

ORP senior scientist Dr. Stephanie Köhnk is documenting the presence of sanguivorous ectoparasites found on entangled sea turtles in the Maldives and a paper was accepted in June and published in December 2021. Stephanie has renewed a respective research permit in the Maldives and is working with [Dr. Joana Hancock](#) towards extending this research into Kenya in 2022.

Internship Program

ORP's Internship Program for Maldivian nationals is critical in achieving our goal to build local capacity in the Maldives; there are currently no other veterinarian training facilities available in the country. The interns work at the Rescue Centre for a three-month period and play an integral part in the daily running of the Rescue Centre. They receive a stipend, food, and accommodations during the internship.

The interns are taught basic turtle medical care and husbandry and help educate both guests and the school groups that visit the Rescue Centre. Once their internship is complete, they become turtle ambassadors for the project and continue to spread awareness of the project's work and goals in the Maldives.

The Marine Turtle Rescue Centre was supported by four interns this year: Ali Jinaad, Aminath Zein Ismail, Mohamed Shah and Mariyam Niuma.

Volunteer Programs

We run three volunteer programs in Maldives, however, due to the Covid-19 pandemic the research expedition was suspended for the duration of the reporting period.

Volunteering at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre

The Rescue Centre welcomes anyone who is interested in sea turtle conservation and husbandry to volunteer. The volunteers help us care for the turtle patients and run the Rescue Centre. We launched The Rescue Centre Volunteer Program in 2017 and it has been very successful, however it was suspended for most of 2020 due to the pandemic.. It was safely reinstated for the duration of the reporting period, first at limited capacity and later in the year at full capacity. Many of our volunteers had re-booked from 2020 and were incredibly excited to finally be able to help us at the rescue centre. They continue to be an integral part of the running of the centre and we truly appreciate their efforts.

Volunteer Research Assistant Sea Turtle Expedition

Haa Alif Atoll is situated in the far north of Maldives where very little scientific work has been done. The lack of data in this region is what scientists call a “black hole”. We aim to fill this gap so that we can accurately interpret sea turtle population and movements in the Maldives. Due to its remote location, Haa Alif Atoll has very few resources to conduct dedicated sea turtle research or run marine conservation projects. In addition to our research, we drive community projects, working with the local schools, our local partner Island Development and Environmental Awareness Society (IDEAS), and with members of the community to help tackle common issues affecting marine habitats for turtles.

This project is sustained through the generous contributions of our expedition volunteers and brings economic benefits to the island of Kelaa in the form of ecotourism.

We cancelled all planned research expeditions in the reporting period due to the pandemic.

Visiting Veterinarian Program at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre

The ORP Visiting Veterinarian Program, launched in 2019, provides a unique opportunity for qualified veterinarians specialising in exotic medicine from around the world to obtain hands-on experience working with wild sea turtles.

In 2021, the visiting vet program resumed and we hosted Dr Paul Ramos, an experienced wildlife veterinarian. While his time with us was a fascinating addition to his professional skills, Dr. Paul's large social media following helped raise awareness of our charity and the work we do. His rescue footage was shared by the Dodo and on TikTok, thus helping our work reach millions of people on Social Media.

For 2022, we are expanding our program to include veterinarians from all around the world, who are in need of further clinical training in order to be able to work with sea turtles.

Kenya

Sea Turtle Population & Habitat Studies – Diani Chale Marine National Park & Reserve

The main aim of the project here is to build a monitoring program to identify sea turtle foraging and aggregation hotspots in the Diani Chale Marine National Park and Reserve (DCMNPR), which will inform a site management plan currently being developed.

Olive Ridley Project has been running a sea turtle ID Program in Kenya since December 2018, focusing its work in the Diani-Chale Marine National Park and Reserve. The reserve is located approximately 25 km south of Mombasa, and

includes a linear fringing reef that extends 25 Km between Tiwi (4°12'36"S; 39°37.06"E) in the north, to Chale Island off Gazi Bay (04°27'807"S; 39°32.158E) in the south.

Based at Diani Marine Education Centre (MEC), the ORP Kenya team, led by a marine biologist, conducts regular scuba diving surveys along the reef, collecting data on sea turtle abundance, distribution and behavior, to identify sea turtle foraging and aggregation hotspots in the reserve. Diving surveys are conducted through the dive centre Diving the Crab, in collaboration with members of the MEC, volunteers, while independent divers are encouraged to submit their photos.

The ORP team in Kenya was able to continue its work from January 2021 due to a generous sponsorship from our partners Marine Life Protectors and continuous logistic support from the dive centre, Diving the Crab, in Diani. As the world continued facing travel restrictions, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, the team was reorganised with biologist Leah Mainye taking the lead as on-site Project Coordinator, under remote supervision.

Our Project Coordinator performed a total of 135 dives and two snorkeling surveys along Diani beach and one dive survey at Kisite Mpunguti Marine and Reserve. These efforts resulted in the sighting of 722 (116 new) green turtles and 84 (11 new) hawksbill individual turtles. Most of these sightings have been uploaded to the Internet of Turtles, the global online database for sea turtle sightings, despite ongoing problems experienced with this platform throughout the year.

As in previous years, ORP was a proud participant in the annual Diani Sea Turtle Festival, held in June. We were also featured in Kenya's video chapter of the celebrations of the 20th Anniversary of the IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU, promoted by @ Indian Ocean South East Asia (WSTD@IOSEA), on World Sea Turtle Day.

In order to promote ORP Kenya's work, we participated in different community outreach programs as well as workshops, such as the compilation of National Wildlife Census report meeting hosted by Kenya Wildlife Service, the Transboundary Conservation Area workshop hosted by WIOMSA, a consultative meeting with African Network of Animal Welfare and turtle conservation groups, a public consultative meeting with stakeholders to restore self-sustaining and functional reef ecosystem presented by Reefolution Foundation and many more community group meetings.

Kenya Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

ORP has established the first facial ID database for Kenya along with MEC, featuring turtles identified by the team in DCMNRPR. In 2021 a total of 806 photos were submitted, with 123 new individuals identified. .

To date, ORP in Kenya has recorded 3,108 sea turtle sightings at the reserve, with 2,750 being green turtles and 358 being hawksbill turtles, corresponding to 590 individual green turtles and 74 individual hawksbill turtles.

We would like to thank MEC and CES for hosting us and for organisational support, and Diving the Crab for logistical support.

Oman

Unfortunately due to the COVID-19 pandemic we were inactive in Oman. However we plan to resume all activities at the beginning of 2022.

Pakistan

Pakistan's coastline is split into two major provinces, Sindh and Baluchistan. Significant green turtle nesting occurs in Sindh province between the Hawksbay and French Beach coastlines. Between these two nesting sites is the fishing village of Abdul Rehman Goth (ARG). This village consists of around 3000+ small scale artisanal fishers who operate close to marine turtle nesting and foraging activity.

Unfortunately, fishing nets are often abandoned, lost or discarded (ghost gear) resulting in a significant threat to sea turtle habitats. ORP has been working alongside the village since 2015 to develop initiatives that aim to avoid gear abandonment or disposal at sea or on beaches.

A circular economy initiative allows fishers and their families to convert ghost gear into products, such as dog leashes and bracelets, helping individuals secure an alternative income for themselves and the community. Moreover, owing to our educational programmes, fishers are returning end of life fishing gear and recycling gear to avoid it being disposed of in the environment in the first instance.

5 men and 4 women are currently involved in the circular economy project, making ghost net bracelets and 'ghost leashes' - a pet leash made out of ghost gear. Each ghost leash repurposes 81.5sqm / 880sqf of ghost net recovered from the Indian Ocean.

Both the ghost leashes and the ghost net bracelets are sold on ORP's website and are quite popular: 71 dog leashes and 73 bracelets were sold in 2021. All proceeds are returned to the local community and in 2021, the sales of these products raised approximately £400 additional income for the artisans.

We plan to expand the product range and duplicate our circular economy project in other nearby villages over the next year.

Although ORP's work in Pakistan was still affected by the pandemic in 2021 due to several lockdowns in the region, we still managed to recover almost 400 kg of ghost gear.

One of the sights we frequently visit is a tugboat wreck off the coast of Gadani. The wreck has become a hot spot for ghost nets as the entire tugboat is covered with nets and traps hundreds of marine animals. The ecosystem that has developed in and around the tugboat is rich in marine life. Hence it has also become a fishing spot where fishers cast their nets – which often get entangled. It is important for the fishers to understand the topography of the underwater ecosystem to reduce the risk of net entanglement, and we have been educating the fishers in the area about why they are losing their nets. The tugboat is also developing into a popular scuba location and removing ghost nets also helps make it a safe place for recreational divers.

Many of the beaches in the region where we operate are green turtle nesting beaches, and also popular tourist spots. We plan to initiate Turtle Watching Tours along some of these nesting beaches in 2022. The aim is to educate people on the appropriate code of conduct around sea turtles, whether it is a nesting female or a hatchling, so that minimal stress or discomfort is caused to the turtles.

This initiative will employ residents of Kakapir, a village located on the edge of Sandspit Beach, where green sea turtles come to nest each year. The plan will be put into effect from the beginning of the next nesting season.

With the help of ORP Pakistan volunteers and other divers in the area, we were able to raise funds to secure new football kits for the local football team of Abdul Rehman Goth, Buleji Baloch in the first half of the year. Most of the players in the team are also fishers and often help ORP collect and manage ghost gear. The ORP logo on the team's t-shirts invokes people's curiosity and questions about the logo initiate a dialogue where the team is able to impart information on ghost gear. So now, we literally have a football team of outreach people helping promote ORP's message as they go around playing matches in other fishing villages!

ORP - Pakistan is also working with MAHI (Maritime Archaeological and Heritage Institute) to locate and remove

ghost nets on shipwreck sites. Moreover, MAHI and ORP collaborate in creating awareness around ghost nets and its impact across fishing villages like Ibrahim Hyderi, Gharo and Gujju.

Education & Outreach

Education is a big part of ORP's mission and an important aspect of our multifaceted approach to protecting sea turtles and their habitats. We believe education is a powerful tool to increase awareness, engage people and stimulate action. We usually educate school children, local communities, boat crews, divers, fishermen, tourists, resort staff, and biologists, face to face and in-person and this has started to pick up again during 2021.

We have continued with our [e-learning platform](#) on our website with free courses and resources, for both sea turtle lovers in general and the more science minded, about everything sea turtles. We hope this free knowledge sharing hub will be an important environmental education resource to help guide aspiring young scientists and supplement existing educational tools for remote learning and school projects.

In the reporting period, 425 students enrolled in our free courses and we had 65 e-Turtle school graduates and 38 Sea Turtle & Science Conservation graduates.

Webinars

This year ORP hosted a webinar on World Turtle Day for the Maldivian community on 23rd May. The webinar was co-hosted by Maldives Underwater Initiative, the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Technology (MoECCT), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). A range of topics were covered from historic use of sea turtles in the Maldives and the legal history of turtle protection to reporting illegal activity concerning turtles today, such as poaching and keeping hatchlings as pets, and how best to swim with sea turtles. Over 50 different people joined the event, most of whom were extremely engaged with the event!

ORP co-hosted the Maldives Marine Biologist Virtual webinar with the Manta Trust, Maldives Whale Shark Research Programme, and Maldives Marine Research Institute in August. The goal was to reach marine biologists working in the Maldives and provide information on how to submit sightings and encounter data to research organisations. We reached almost 200 people with the webinar.

ORP celebrated World Sea Turtle Day on the 16th June by hosting a webinar '*Protecting Sea Turtles in the Maldives*' for marine biologists and conservationists in the Maldives, along with MoECCT and EPA. Over 150 people attended the event. The webinar focused on how to assist with sea turtle research and conservation as citizen scientists and researchers, and shared ORP's research on population studies, nesting studies, and ghost-gear studies. ORP also covered code of conducts and best practices for wild turtle and nesting turtle encounters.

Conferences And Talks

Dr. Claire Petros - invited expert speaker at the first regional turtle workshop of West Africa discussing sea turtle medicine and first aid. Seven countries attended this workshop including Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Mauritania, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Cape Verde, and Senegal.

Dr. Martin Stelfox - invited expert speaker at the 3rd Northern Indian Ocean Marine Turtle Task Force, Six countries attended including the Maldives, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.

Dr. Joana Hancock - invited guest speaker at SSI Marine Ecology Series to discuss the importance of citizen science in monitoring sea turtle foraging aggregations, using Kenya as a case study. The talk (held virtually) was promoted by MEGADIVE Diving Centre (Portugal) and was attended by about 50 diving enthusiasts.

Educational Festivals

Laamafaru Festival, Maldives

Laamafaru Festival is a joint venture between our partner resort, Six Senses Laamu, and the Laamu community, focusing on raising awareness about the marine ecosystems in Laamu. Due to travel restrictions related to COVID-19, this year Six Senses Laamu held the festival simultaneously across 7 different islands in November, and also at an 8th school that was unable to participate earlier due to monitoring status. The event coordinated different educational activities across the islands. These activities included speeches, debates and performances by the students, as well as clean-ups and poster competitions. This is the biggest festival to date.

Collaborations

Kenya

Conservation Education Society (CES)

The Conservation Education Society believes that, through education, empowerment and collaboration, everyone, big or small, can play a role in preserving our natural world. CES was officially established in March 2019 and operates out of the Marine Education Centre in Diani, Kenya. CES regularly organises educational events which ORP participates in and contributes to, as well as provides administrative and logistical support.

Diani Turtle Watch

DTW, a turtle conservation monitoring group, surveys the beach to spot any turtle nesting activities, mortality and turtle stranding cases throughout the day. DTW collaborates with ORP by sharing photos of by-caught turtles and stranded turtles for ID purposes, enriching our database and assisting with information about the threats that affect the turtles feeding off Diani's reef.

Diving The Crab

Widely recognised as the best dive centre in both Diani and in Kenya, Diving the Crab (DTC) is one of the main sponsors of the Marine Education Centre. DTC is also very supportive of marine biodiversity related activities in Diani, including ORP's in-water work. Since ORP first arrived in Kenya, DTC has been instrumental in providing logistical support allowing ORP to conduct in-water surveys and explore Diani's reefs, as well as actively participating in guest education, in-water surveys, ghost nest reporting and removal, and staff training.

D.M. Tours

D.M.Tours is Diani's leading tour agency, tailoring high quality traveling experiences for the most demanding adventurers. D.M. Tours has become one of ORP's most helpful supporters, by facilitating logistics to conduct in-water surveys during Covid-19 times, and by submitting regular sea turtle sightings along Diani Beach.

Maldives

Coco Collection

Our long standing partnership with Coco Collection Resorts continues. Our Marine Turtle Rescue Centre is located on Coco Dhuni Kolhu in Baa Atoll. We would like to thank Coco Collection for all their support and for hosting the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre, our staff, volunteers and interns.

IDEAS

We hope to continue our partnership with IDEAS (Island Development and Environmental Awareness Society) of Kelaa to conduct sea turtle research expeditions in Haa Alif Atoll in the latter part of 2022 once the Covid-19 pandemic is over. IDEAS works for the development of Ha. Kelaa in all aspects and areas such as Education &

Training, Healthcare, Social Development, Environmental Awareness and Conservation, Sports & Recreation, Youth Development, Women Empowerment and Human Rights.

Joali Being, Raa Atoll, Maldives

We have extended our sea turtle research and rehabilitation efforts into Raa Aatoll this year by partnering with Joali Being. This new partnership will begin to develop rehabilitation facilities for injured sea turtles in the area whilst also providing a base to collect research data in 2022. We also hope to extend our community work by collaborating with local communities on sea turtle conservation and research.

Maldives Underwater Initiative (MUI)

MUI (Maldives Underwater Initiative) is a marine conservation initiative from Six Senses Laamu, Maldives, which unites the resort and its 3 NGO partners under one central banner, with the aim to consolidate shared research, science communication, community education and outreach goals. The NGO's are Olive Ridley Project, Manta Trust and Blue Marine Foundation.

One&Only Reethi Rah, North Malé Atoll, Maldives

In addition to advancing research of sea turtles in North Malé Atoll, we have also opened a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre at One&Only Reethi Rah for turtle patients in need of long-term rehabilitation without veterinary care. This frees up tank space at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre to allow admittance of more injured turtles that require veterinary attention. Additionally, neighbouring resorts in a resort-dense atoll have a local point to send injured turtles. If required, ORP will arrange for injured turtles to be sent to our turtle veterinarian for further care.

Patina Maldives, Fari Islands, North Malé Atoll, Maldives

Officially partnered in December 2021 this new partnership will assist with data collection in North Malé and complement the data already collected in the region. Additionally, Patina Maldives, Fari Islands plan to support the ORP and the EPA on a nationwide genetic research study to better understand the genetic makeup of Hawksbill sea turtles in the country.

Prodivers & Kuredu Island Resort & Spa, Lhaviyani Atoll, Maldives

We continued our partnership with Prodivers, a German dive centre operator based on Kuredu Island Resort & Spa in Maldives, to work together to advance the research of sea turtles in the Maldives and provide educational outreach to international guests and Maldivian nationals. We would like to thank Prodivers for their support.

Six Senses Laamu, Laamu Atoll, Maldives

We continue our partnership with Six Senses Laamu, a resort in Laamu Atoll, Maldives, to work together to advance the research of sea turtles in Laamu Atoll and provide educational outreach to international guests and Maldivian nationals. Here we work closely with 2 other not-for-profit organisations and resort staff under the umbrella Maldives Underwater Initiative, with the ultimate goal of creating a network of locally managed marine protected areas, in consultation with the community. We would like to thank Six Senses Laamu for their support.

Soneva Jani, Noonu Atoll, Maldives

Having been long-time data contributors to the ORP, we officially went into partnership in 2021. This partnership aims to expand rehabilitation efforts in the country by providing additional rehab facilities in Noonu Atoll. In addition, our team will collect data on sea turtle population health in the region that will help contribute to the national database.

Pakistan

Indus Scuba

Indus Scuba is a dive centre based in Karachi, Pakistan. They provide invaluable logistical and equipment support for ghost gear recovery dives in the region and also sponsored the PADI Open Water Certification of 3 ORP team members, adapting the training to Urdu no less.

Seychelles

Six Senses Zil Pasyon, Seychelles

Extending our relationship with Six Senses, we started working in the Seychelles in late 2021. The aim of this partnership is to use non-invasive research techniques to better understand sea turtle population health in the region. Additionally, we hope to work with existing sea turtle conservation groups to assist with ongoing research and conservation in the country.

World

International Pole & Line Foundation (IPNLF)

IPNLF works to develop, support and promote socially and environmentally responsible pole-and-line and handline tuna fisheries around the world. Our collaboration aims to develop a large scale ghost gear recovery project in the Maldives that incentivises fishers and other stakeholders.

International Sea Turtle Symposium

We regularly attend international symposiums including the ISTS. We also co-organised the sea turtle photo-ID workshop to develop standard protocols and new methods of analyses. However, this year the conference was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The conference has been rescheduled for 2022.

The Great Our-tours

We partnered with the national award-winning outdoor education provider The Great Out-tours to produce an activity filled range of curriculum-linked and risk-assessed educational resources inspired by sea turtles. The Sea Turtles Activity Bundle is targeted at primary/secondary children, adults in care, and domestic home settings. This is a great addition to our online learning platform and will help ORP further our goal of using education as a tool in sea turtle conservation.

Marine Life Protectors

NGO Tuna Forum

The NGO Tuna Forum brings together NGOs and other individuals and organisations that work comprehensively on global tuna sustainability issues. ORP currently sits on three working groups: Bycatch Mitigation, Data and Transparency and Well-Managed FAD Guidance. The aim of this involvement is to ensure ghost gear and ghost fishing are brought into the conversation of global tuna fisheries at the policy level. We hope our experience and expertise will help guide stakeholders to make informed decisions on the issue and ensure it remains firmly on the agenda.

Satlink

Satlink, a Spanish company focused on the development of technological solutions that foster the sustainability of the fishing industry and ocean resource protection, has partnered with ORP and the International Pole & Line Foundation (IPNLF) to establish a programme for the removal and reuse of abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing nets and other fishing gear (known as ALDFG) in Noonu Atoll. This project will begin in 2022 and build on lessons learnt from previous pilot projects in Gemanafushi. If successful, we hope to scale this project nationwide to address the ALDFG issue in the country.

Sea Turtle Rescue Alliance (STRA)

STRA, a charity registered in England & Wales, is a Global Network for Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Centres to share clinical knowledge and data to enhance medical practices at facilities worldwide, supporting the global conservation effort for these endangered species. ORP's Marine Turtle Rescue Centre was the first rescue facility to pilot ProVet Cloud, a patient management software adapted specifically for sea turtles.

Global Online Community

A major part of our strategy to increase awareness about the plight of sea turtles and the deadly consequences of ghost gear is digital/social media presence. We continue to grow our web and social media channels to keep the public engaged with new content and regular updates. Our website now includes an online learning platform with free courses and resources about all things sea turtle and sea turtle conservation. Our sea turtle protocols have been translated into multiple languages, and our Sea Turtle FAQ pages are extremely popular, with thousands of visitors every month.

Our website traffic grew substantially in 2021 with a 56% increase in page views (538,680 vs 345,673 the previous year) and a 53% increase in users (273,918 vs 179,286 the previous year). Our digital community of supporters and followers span the globe, the biggest audiences being in the US, the UK, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Australia, Canada, Singapore, Philippines, and Malaysia, in the age range 18-34. Our website has slightly more male than female visitors, but our social media channels have more female than male followers.

Although many conferences and events were cancelled this year, such as ISTS and Scuba Digital, our digital presence continues to increase, particularly on social media. On Instagram, we welcomed over 4,800 new followers and over 1,400 on Facebook. We even set up a TikTok account and have had almost 20,000 views of our 2021 content alone.

Since the pandemic began, the importance of our digital presence has really been put on display. A big part of our work is education and outreach and we are incredibly grateful to be able to educate our ever-growing following on social media and share our most up-to-date news with our supporters, whether that be about a new sea turtle patient, new scientific report or new education/outreach initiative.

In September 2021 ORP took part in Sea Turtle Talks, an online Twitter conference. We delivered a series of tweets on 'The Olive Ridley Project: Protecting Sea Turtles and Their Habitats' covering our core goals, past achievements and future directions.

Sea Turtle Talks was a free 3-day, ISTS supported, virtual event and was a fantastic opportunity to connect with sea turtle conservationists from all around the world. A lot of new and exciting sea turtle research was presented at the conference, all of which is still available on the [@SeaTurtleTalks](#) Twitter page.

Fundraising

ORP is funded entirely through donations and grants.

Private Donations

Private donations are largely generated online, through our symbolic turtle adoption and monthly giving programs and one-time gifts, and by volunteers at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre. Our online donations increased compared to the same period in the previous year. Our volunteer programme was able to resume at the beginning of 2021, albeit at a reduced capacity.

We were fortunate enough to receive a large donation at the end of 2021 which allowed us to revisit our strategy for the next five years and bring forward programmes planned for 2023-2026, as well as incorporate new initiatives that otherwise would not have been possible. We once again wish to express our deepest gratitude to our generous donor, who has requested anonymity, for this life altering donation.

We would like to thank everyone who adopted and donated for supporting our work during another difficult year - their generosity has been incredible and they are the reason we can continue to do what we do. We had an exceptional year for sea turtle adoptions and a phenomenal response to our Giving Tuesday campaign. Many supporters did birthday fundraisers for us and we received several generous gifts. We would also like to thank our commercial partner, Legend Bracelets, for helping us promote the turtle adoption program - it has made a big difference.

OceanCare

OceanCare is a Swiss charity committed to marine wildlife protection. Since 2011 they have had a Special Consultative Status on marine issues with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. OceanCare provides funding for our lead veterinarian. We would like to thank OceanCare for their generous and continued support.

Commercial Participators

In order to diversify our fundraising income, the Charity formed several new partnerships with carefully selected Commercial Participators in the financial year. In addition to our existing relationships, we partnered with:

- All Scrubbed Up makes bespoke reusable scrub hats for veterinary and healthcare professionals with the aim of reducing the use of disposables. ORP received 10% of the sale price per sea turtle scrub hat sold.
- Kind Traveller is a veteran-and-women-owned public benefit corporation registered in the USA, and is the world's first socially conscious Give + Get hotel booking and media platform that empowers travellers to positively impact communities and the environment in the destinations they visit. ORP receives a \$10 donation per booking made on the platform from hotels and resorts that have nominated ORP as their preferred charity.
- Mimie Reed, an international sustainable luxury resort-wear brand, producing swimwear crafted from regenerated ocean waste, handcrafted sunglasses of recycled acetate and thrives to use ecologically friendly materials in the production process. They have agreed to donate 3% of the retail price of all products sold.
- Oevaali Art Shop, a company registered in the Maldives, has agreed to donate to ORP 5% from the sale of a sapphire and silver turtle pendant.
- Pet Impact provides pet care essentials with a positive or reduced environmental impact. Products are sold directly to consumers through e-commerce/online market platforms. They have agreed to donate a fixed amount every 3 months.
- Reolink, owned by Ezcloud Innovation Limited, a company registered in Hong Kong, makes security products for consumers and business owners, including night-vision and motion activated cameras that can run on batteries and solar panels. Reolink donated several solar powered night vision outdoor cameras to assist with monitoring turtle nests and the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre.
- Saywhat Bottles, a company registered in the Netherlands, produces an eco-friendly bottle to keep drinks hot or cold and aims to eliminate plastic water bottles ending up in the ocean. They have agreed to donate a fixed amount each month to ORP.

We would also like to thank all our long term commercial partners for their support:

10 International (Sea Change Wine), Excelsior Maldives Private Limited, Fourth Element, Legend Bracelets, Redhand Limited, Silver Goat Media, Turtle Sodas, and Yokka.

Plans & Objectives for 2022

In 2022 we will seek to widen the objectives for the charity and gain the charity commission's approval for this. The new charitable objectives will be as follows:

To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of sea turtles and their

habitats in particular but not exclusively by:

1. Promote humane behaviour towards sea turtles by providing appropriate care, protection, treatment and security for animals that need care and attention by reason of sickness, maltreatment, poor circumstances or ill usage and to educate the public and veterinarian community in matters pertaining to sea turtle welfare in general and the prevention of cruelty and suffering to sea turtles.
2. Advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of sea turtles, by provision of talks, workshops, online courses and training.
3. Advance the education of the scientific community by filling scientific data gaps in sea turtle research.

The large private donation made at the end of 2021 will allow us to review our plans and bring forward some of the items in our five year plan. We have allocated 53% of this donation to be spent on direct charitable activities over the next two years, focusing on education and outreach initiatives, scientific research, and rescue and rehabilitation efforts. We are, for example:

- Starting educational Sea Turtle Watch Tours on nesting beaches in Pakistan;
- Growing our veterinary team in the Maldives to increase our capacity to care for injured sea turtles and fill data gaps in veterinary research.
- Expanding our research programmes to include and advance satellite tagging, genetics, parasites and behaviour to gain a better understanding of their foraging habits, population health and environmental drivers that change behaviour.
- Expanding our research areas along the south coast from Diani, Kenya and increasing capacity building; and
- Planning a podcast to reach a wider audience and different demographic.

The remainder of the donation will be invested in the long-term success and financial sustainability of the charity. This includes bringing on board two new key team members: a fundraiser and a Chief Operating Officer (COO). Until now, ORP has relied on volunteers and willing team members to fundraise. However, as the charity grows and expands, this becomes an unsustainable way of operating and ensuring financial security. A dedicated fundraiser will help ensure ORP's financial sustainability by establishing and maintaining diverse income streams from individual givers and corporate partners, as well as through grants, legacy, and trust donations.

Bringing onboard a COO will allow the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to focus more time on advocacy, policy, expansion plans, and creating and building relationships with other stakeholders. The goal is to bridge the gap between policymakers and researchers by communicating our research findings effectively, as well as making sure that our research informs policy decisions in the areas of sea turtle conservation and management.

The COO's role will be to oversee daily business and administrative processes; support the charity's objectives, programs and team members; and assist the CEO in all aspects of running the charity.

We have four main objectives for 2022:

1. Continue to expand research projects
 - Fill our understanding of sea turtle populations dynamics
 - Expand sea turtle epibiont research
 - Investigate survival rates of olive ridleys post rehabilitation release
 - Assess environmental factors influencing sea turtle behaviour
 - Assess green turtle feeding behaviour and diet composition.
 - Identify major foraging habitats.
 - Identify and fill data gaps in sea turtle research
2. Expand our ghost gear recovery and repurposing projects in the Maldives and Pakistan
 - Expand our ghost gear recovery efforts in the Noonu Atoll, Maldives
 - Refine circular economy model in Pakistan.

3. Increase collaborative projects with local groups and governments

- Assist with Sea Turtle Red List Assessment in the Maldives
- Continue to work with governments to assist in data collection and/or conservation management of sea turtles.
- Engage local groups and individuals in sea turtle conservation and research.

4. Provide the best possible care for injured sea turtles in the Indian Ocean

- Expand our rescue and rehabilitation facilities in the Maldives and in other areas in need of facilities
- Utilise emerging evidence based veterinary medicine to ensure best veterinarian practices are implemented at our rescue centre and share these gold standard practices with other turtle rescue centres internationally.
- Continue our visiting veterinarian program and harness knowledge gained from these specialists and provide training for vets from low resource countries.

Financial Review

The Olive Ridley Project is committed to minimising administrative costs and increasing revenue to maximise the reach of its conservation and research programmes.

Income this financial year reached £365,884 and was predominantly achieved through donations and grants.

To achieve our objectives, we rely on senior staff, veterinarians, researchers and project coordinators to work as consultants within the charity. Consultants are solely funded through donations and grants.

We have an end of year surplus of £237,683, due to a large donation received towards the end of the year.

Reserves Policy

The Charity Trustees are responsible for ensuring the organisation has enough unrestricted reserves to safeguard the charity's core activities in periods of fluctuating income and operate on a skeleton staff for 3 months. Skeleton staff includes the CEO, senior staff and veterinarian scientist. The Charity Trustees have calculated an appropriate reserves range for the Charity of £30,000 - £40,000 in 2022, growing to £100,000 - £120,000 by 2026 in line with increased expenditures and expansion of the Charity. The Charity Trustees consider that this target range provides sufficient flexibility in the context of operational requirements for the Charity and the financial impact of risk the Charity faces.

The minimum reserves required is the equivalent of operating the Charity on a skeleton staff for a period of three months, or £20,000 in 2022, increasing to £63,000 by 2026.

Free reserves as of 31st December 2021 were £308,881.

Restricted reserves are £26,246. These are in relation to grants received from other organisations or private donations for specific projects and purposes.

Statement of Trustee's Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable Law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of the financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the trustees on 5th September 2022 and signed on their behalf by:



Amanda Costain
Trustee



Lee Cannan
Trustee/Treasurer

REGISTERED NUMBER: 1165905

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021

SEGRAVE & PARTNERS LLP
TURNPIKE HOUSE
1208/1210 LONDON ROAD
LEIGH ON SEA
ESSEX
SS9 2UA

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	TOTAL 2021	TOTAL 2020
<u>RECEIPTS</u>					
Donations	267,941	41,822	-	309,763	45,033
Grants	-	1,058	-	1,058	1,616
Sales	-	-	-	-	337
Volunteers Rescue Centre	55,063	-	-	55,063	4,861
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>	323,004	42,880	-	365,884	51,847
<u>PAYMENTS</u>					
Expedition Costs	-	566	-	566	-
Bank Charges	1,614	-	-	1,614	952
Wages and Consultants	27,883	184	-	28,067	25,871
Research	5,431	15,700	-	21,131	20,069
Veterinary Services	12,890	12,756	-	25,646	12,130
Education and Outreach	9,870	-	-	9,870	-
Expenses	2,064	1,022	-	3,086	978
Equipment	3,327	16,578	-	19,905	1,178
Travel Costs	2,497	-	-	2,497	500
Subsistence	137	-	-	137	-
Medical Supplies	1,299	-	-	1,299	89
Independent Examination	400	-	-	400	952
Insurance	1,575	-	-	1,575	-
Marketing	1,265	-	-	1,265	973
Printing, Postage and Stationery	58	631	-	689	140
Computer, Software and Internet Costs	575	-	-	575	-
Sundries	72	-	-	72	-
Tee-Shirts	1,794	-	-	1,794	43
Ghost Gear Products	-	1,013	-	1,013	-
Investment	7,000	-	-	7,000	-
<u>TOTAL PAYMENTS</u>	79,751	48,450	-	128,201	63,876
<u>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) OF RECEIPTS</u>					
<u>OVER PAYMENTS</u>	243,253	(5,570)	-	237,683	(12,028)
<u>TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS</u>	26,364	(26,364)	-	-	-
<u>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AFTER TRANSFERS</u>	269,617	(31,934)	-	237,683	(12,028)
<u>CASH FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD</u>					
	39,264	58,180	-	97,444	109,472
<u>CASH FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</u>	308,881	26,246	-	335,127	97,444

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021

	TOTAL	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds
<u>CASH FUNDS</u>				
Current Account	331,688	305,442	26,246	-
PayPal Account	2,357	2,357	-	-
Kenya Accounts	1,082	1,082	-	-
<u>TOTAL CASH FUNDS</u>	335,127	308,881	26,246	-

<u>ASSETS RETAINED FOR CHARITY'S OWN USE</u>	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost	Current Value
Rescue Centre	Unrestricted	32,428	18,897
Investment	Unrestricted	7,000	7,000
		39,428	25,897

<u>LIABILITIES</u>		Fund to which asset belongs	Amount Due
Independent Examiner Fees	- 2021	Unrestricted	400
Volunteers Advance Payment		Unrestricted	25,209
			25,609

Signed by two Trustees on behalf of all the Trustees

AJ Costain

 Amanda Costain

Date: 19th July 2022

L Cannan

 Lee Cannan

Date: 19th July 2022

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2021

Independent examiners report to the trustees of The Olive Ridley Project in respect of the period ended 31st December 2021.

This is a report in respect of an examination carried out on the financial statements set out on pages one and two under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the directions given by the Charity Commissioners under sub-section 5(b) of that section.

Responsibilities of trustees and independent examiners

As described in the annual report, the charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

It is our responsibility to:

- 1) examine account under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011
- 2) follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011
- 3) state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of opinion

Our examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination include a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Opinion

No matter has come to our attention in connection with our examination which gives us reasonable cause not to believe that in any material respect:

- 1) proper accounting records have been kept in accordance with Section 137 of the Charities Act 2011, and;
- 2) the financial statements accord with those records.

Segrave & Partners LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
Turnpike House
1208/1210 London Road
Leigh on Sea
Essex
SS9 2UA



Date: 19th July 2022

OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

England & Wales - Charity number 1165905

Accounts



OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

The Olive Ridley Project

Annual Report and Financial Statements

Year ending: 31st December 2020

Charity no: 1165905

Legal and Administrative Information

Trustees	Mark MacDonald Mike Sweet Jannicke C Hallum Matt Shoulders, Treasurer
Ambassadors	Matt Sorum Andy Torbet
Chief Executive / Founder	Dr Martin Stelfox
Senior Project Scientist	Dr Jillian Hudgins
Website and Media Manager	Jannicke C Hallum
Graphic Designer	Susie Gibson
Researcher/Adoption Management	Dr Stephanie Köhnik
Researcher - Spatial Ecology	Rushan Bin Abdul Rahman
Lead Veterinarian Surgeon	Dr Claire Petros
Veterinarian	Dr Amelia Liddell (from September 2020)
Sea Turtle Biologists/Guest Educators	
<i>Maldives</i>	Kristina Loosen (until October 2020) Jo Goodfellow Laura Whitely (Until September 2020) Rosie Brown
<i>Kenya</i>	
Project Manager	Dr Joana Hancock
Project Coordinator	Leah Mainye
<i>Oman</i>	
Sea Turtle Biologist	Jane Lloyd
Project/Field Coordinators	
<i>Maldives</i>	Ibrahim Shameel Risha Ali Rasheed (from December 2020)
<i>Pakistan</i>	Usman Iqbal Asif Baloch
Registered Office	28 Stone Moor Bottom, Padiham, Burnley Lancashire, BB12 7BW
Bank	Lloyd's Bank 8 Royal Parade Plymouth, PL1 1HB
Independent Examiner	Carly Spencer FCCA Segrave & Partners LLP Turnpike House 1208/1210 London Road Leigh on Sea Essex SS9 2UA

The Olive Ridley Project

Trustees' Report

For the year ending 31st December 2020

Structure, governance and management

This Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) is regulated by its constitution who's only voting members are its trustees. The CIO was established by Dr. Martin Stelfox (CEO and founder) in 2013 and then became the CIO on the 7th March 2016.

New trustees are appointed by the existing trustees and serve for three years after which they may put themselves forward for re-appointment. The Charity provides for a minimum of 3 trustees, to a maximum of 7 trustees.

At the quarterly trustees' meetings, the trustees agree the broad strategy and areas of activity for the charity, including consideration of grant making, investment, reserves and risk management policies and performance. The day to day administration of grants and the processing and handling of applications prior to consideration by the trustee is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

The trustees formally approved arrangements complying with the CC30 guide 'The recruitment, appointment and induction process for new charity trustees and how to set a framework for recruitment.' and recruit new trustee(s) for their experience, empathy and knowledge of the charity and to keep the skills and composition of the trustee body and succession planning under review. The trustees have also developed a code of conduct for trustees including formal statements of role and responsibilities and provision for trustee training. New trustees may be sought by open advertisement or through peer to peer dialogue. The ultimate decision on selection is a matter for the trustees.

On appointment, new trustees sign a constitution committing them to giving of their time and expertise. The induction process includes an initial meeting with the trustees, followed by a series of short meetings with the Chief Executive Officer on day to day activities within the charity, current projects and, grant making process and powers and responsibilities of the trustee board. The welcome pack includes a brief history of the charity, copy of the trustee board minutes, a copy of the constitution, 5-year plan and a copy of the Charity Commission's guidance 'The Essential Trustee: What You Need to Know' and 'Charities and Public Benefit'.

All trustees give their time freely and no trustee remuneration was paid in the year. Trustees are required to disclose all relevant interests in accordance with the charity policy and update all policies including, 'Bullying and Harassment', 'Code of Conduct', 'Conflicts of Interest', 'Equal Opportunities', 'Financial Management', 'Health & Safety' and 'Safeguarding Children and Young people'.

Objectives, Mission and Principal Activity

The Olive Ridley Project takes a multidimensional approach to protecting sea turtles and their habitat in the Indian Ocean. We do this through fostering cross-sectoral collaboration and cooperation, public education, research and rehabilitation. Our charitable purposes are as follows:

1. To Promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of the Indian Ocean in particular but not exclusively by:
 - a) The removal of ghost gear from the marine environment reducing the negative effects on coastal communities and marine animals particularly the Olive Ridley sea turtle and
 - b) By promoting the recycling of end of life fishing nets
2. To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of the marine sea turtle but not exclusively the Olive Ridley sea turtle by provisions of talks, workshops, training and research.

3. To promote humane behaviour towards the Olive Ridley sea turtle by providing appropriate care, protection, treatment and security for animals which are in need of care and attention by reason of sickness, maltreatment, poor circumstances or ill usage and to educate the public in matters pertaining to animal welfare in general and the prevention of cruelty and suffering among animals.

* for the purpose of this clause, we define “ghost gear” as either abandoned, lost or discarded fishing gear.

Public Benefit

All trustees follow the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit. By closely following this guideline we ensure the charity stays true to its purposes and focuses resources in direct relation to the charitable purposes.

We focus on building awareness and education surrounding sea turtle conservation in the Indian Ocean region, and in particular in Maldives, Oman, Kenya and Pakistan. We mainly focus on the negative impacts of marine plastics, such as ghost nets, on sensitive habitats and to coastal communities. We achieve this in the following ways:

1. Conducting workshops, informal meetings and seminars with local communities, governments, schools and the public to remove and report ghost gear and promote sea turtle conservation;
2. Hiring infield project coordinators that can disseminate our research findings and promote awareness to local communities;
3. Teaching local fishing communities how to rework ghost gear into other products to generate an alternative income whilst protecting sensitive turtle habitats;
4. Operating a Marine Turtle Rescue Centre and a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre that allow Maldivian nationals and local schools to work alongside qualified professionals to increase personal development and awareness;
5. Establishing relationships with research institutes to advance our research capacity and subsequently increase knowledge within the sea turtle scientific community;
6. Building a citizen science project, specific to sea turtle and ghost net science, that allows people from all backgrounds to contribute to scientific research and develop personal skills;
7. Offering paid internships to Maldivian nationals at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre to build in-country capacity - there is currently no opportunity for veterinary training in Maldives;
8. Providing open access resources such as educational videos and an e-learning platform on our [website](#), with the addition of a Frequently Asked Turtle Questions page and educational blogs. This resource provides information on everything you need to know about sea turtles, including free publications such as our Sea Turtle Code of Conduct and Turtle Entanglement Protocol. Our protocols explain how to behave around foraging, nesting, and hatchling turtles, and what to do when finding an entangled sea turtle and are published in several languages. The aim of the publications is a) to reduce human disturbance, whether it be intentional or accidental, to sea turtles in all of their habitats while still allowing people to have an enjoyable wildlife encounter, and b) to increase the chances of survival for entangled sea turtles;
9. Maintaining very active social media channels and engage with our followers through various messaging platforms;
10. Working with a number of journalists from TV channels/programs, newspapers and magazines to further spread our message about sea turtle conservation; and
11. Contributing to scientific journals to advance the scientific community knowledge on sea turtles and the threats they face.

Risk management

The Trustees have identified the major risks applicable to the charity and believe that appropriate action has been taken to manage and mitigate against these risks. Furthermore, the Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the Charity is exposed, in particular those relating to the operations, reputation and finance of the Olive Ridley Project. The CEO assesses and updates the likelihood and impact of material risks and ensures controls are in place, such as special risk assessments for general fieldwork and working at the rescue centre.

Achievements and Performance 2020

This reporting period is running from April to December 2020 and is a shorter reporting period than previous years. This is for the purpose of aligning our reporting period with the calendar year. All subsequent annual reports will report from January to December of each year. Due to the shorter reporting period, and the reasons described below, our reporting numbers are much lower than previous years for this reporting period.

The reporting period April 2020 - December 2020 was extremely challenging for the Olive Ridley Project (ORP). The Maldives recorded its first Covid-19 case in the first week of March 2020, and within a few days, a state of public health emergency was declared. Border closures were followed by domestic lockdown and inter-island travel restrictions. Then WHO declared a global pandemic on the 11th March 2020 and the Novel Coronavirus took centre stage globally. Oman soon closed its borders too, and Kenya and Pakistan went into lockdown.

As the number of international tourists plummeted, borders were closed, and most countries implemented travel restrictions and lockdowns, many of our partner resorts in the Maldives, Kenya and Oman had to suspend operations. Our rescue centres were forced to operate on a skeleton staff with limited funding, our in-field research activities were suspended everywhere and staff sent home, and our work with the Abdul Rehman Goth fishing community in Pakistan had to be put on hold. Our volunteer programs and expeditions were also suspended.

With most of our staff working from home rather than in the field, we had to go back to the drawing board to come up with new ideas to protect sea turtles and their habitats. Our team's ability to stay connected was critical for ORP to stay on mission during this time. Regular video team meetings and WhatsApp messaging kept (and continues to keep) everyone in touch and up to date. We focused our work on data analyses and scientific writing, developing and planning new projects in Kenya, Maldives, Pakistan, and further developing our educational and outreach programmes. We also explored new avenues to diversify our funding and increased our activity on social media and on our website to reach a wider audience. One project that we are particularly proud of is our new e-learning platform. Our entire team dedicated many hours creating a comprehensive online learning tool dedicated to sea turtles. This free resource quickly became a big hit amongst turtle enthusiasts and allowed us to reach new audiences, as well as continue our education mission - even though we could not meet anyone in person.

Though 2020 has been very difficult in many ways for ORP, as it has for so many other charities, we were lucky to have had an exceptionally successful year ahead of the pandemic outbreak, which resulted in healthy cash and reserve funds. Still, as donations from corporate partners, volunteers and private individuals came to an abrupt halt in April, the Board of Trustees and the CEO immediately implemented strict cost saving measures and made contingency plans to keep the charity running through the crisis and beyond. This included diversifying our income stream, finding new ways to reach individual donors, introducing a new monthly giving program and making plans to bring onboard a fundraising officer.

The whole team has worked exceptionally hard to come up with innovative ideas to keep our projects funded and going - and our message loud - during the reporting period. The support from our corporate sponsors, adopting parents and individual donations were exceptional this year after an initial dip. This valuable support enabled us to continue our work - even through the darkest of times.

Towards the end of the reporting period, our Resident Veterinarian and several of our researchers were back in the field in the Maldives and plans were being made for our return to Kenya. Our partner resort in Oman remains closed and our work there suspended.

Research

Our in-field research efforts were temporarily suspended from March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Many of our researchers were forced to return home until travel restrictions were lifted. However, this allowed us to focus on analysis of our data sets, and on planning new research projects for the future. The good news is that, by the end of the year, most of our team was back in the field and able to continue our research projects.

We continue to raise additional funding for our satellite tagging project, led by ORP researcher, Rushan Bin Abdul Rahman. This research aims to explore movement ecology statistics to determine which points along the tracks of olive ridleys suggest possible foraging behaviour. This can then be correlated with characteristics that are important for sea turtle development (e.g., sea surface temperature, productivity). With this information we will be able to identify what environmental characteristics make habitats suitable for juvenile olive ridley sea turtles in the region. We would like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to Mr. Thorsten Albrecht for providing the initial resources for this tagging project and we are thankful to our corporate sponsors Legend Bracelets for helping raise additional funding for this project.

We are excited to embark on a new project in collaboration with the Centre D'Etude et de Decouverte des Tortues Marines (CEDTM) and Kelonia, L'observatoire des Tortues Marines de La Réunion (KELONIA-RMR). It is hoped that the results will improve our knowledge on the spatial distribution and connectivity of hawksbill sea turtles in the Western Indian Ocean. ORP will provide tissue samples of injured and sick resident hawksbill sea turtles in the Maldives for genetic analyses. We are excited to continue to collect samples in preparation for analyses at the end of 2021.

We submitted two papers for review and published a book chapter, and had two additional papers accepted this year. The first paper, led by ORP researcher [Dr. Stephanie Köhnk](#), documents the presence of *Sangivorous* ectoparasites found on entangled sea turtles in the Maldives. Stephanie hopes to expand this research into the wider Indian Ocean in 2021.

The second paper submission was led by [Dr. Martin Stelfox](#) and Dr. M Martin-Cereceda, exploring a successful example on how to engage researchers and society.

The book chapter, entitled Applications of Photo Identification in Sea Turtle Studies, was published in the book Sea turtle Research and Conservation: Lessons From Working in the Field, edited by Brad Nahill. [Dr Jillian Hudgins'](#) contribution to this chapter firmly cements the use of non-invasive Photo ID as a useful and promising tool in sea turtle research.

This year we had two papers accepted for publication and published, both form part of Dr. Martin Stelfox (CEO and Founder) PhD thesis. This means the PhD is now complete and his entire thesis can be found here:

https://derby.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10545/625352/thesis_final.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

We also assisted the Maldivian government in preparing the Maldivian chapter contribution to the MTSG Annual Regional Report. A Report of the IUCN-SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group.

Published work:

S.G. Dunbar, J. Hudgins, and C. Jean, Applications of Photo Identification in Sea Turtle Studies, in: B. Nahill (Ed.), Sea Turtle Research and Conservation: Lessons From Working In The Field, *Elsevier, Academic Press*, 2021, pp. 45–55.

Hancock, J.H., Choma, J., Mainye, L., Stelfox, M. & Hudgins, J. (2020) [Photo Identification as a Tool to Study Sea Turtle Populations in Kenyan Marine Protected Areas](#). *African Conservation Telegraph*, Vol. 15 No 3.

Lomas, C. (2020) British Chelonia Group "[Conservation and rehabilitation of sea turtles in the Maldives](#)". *Testudo* Vol. 9 No. 2

Stelfox, M., Lett, C., Reid, G., Souch, G. and Sweet, M., 2020. Minimum drift times infer trajectories of ghost nets found in the Maldives. *Marine pollution bulletin*, 154, p.111037.

Stelfox, M., Burian, A., Shanker, K., Rees, A.F., Jean, C., Willson, M.S., Manik, N.A. and Sweet, M., 2020. Tracing the

origin of olive ridley turtles entangled in ghost nets in the Maldives: A phylogeographic assessment of populations at risk. *Biological Conservation*, 245, p.108499.

Umaira Ahmed, Enas Riyaz, Jillian Hudgins, and Martin Stelfox in: Phillott, A.D., and Rees, A.F. (Eds.) (2020). [Sea Turtles in the Middle East and South Asia Region: MTSG Annual Regional Report 2020](#). Report of the IUCN-SSC Marine Turtle Specialist Group, 2019.

Submitted papers:

Title: Exploring a successful example on how to engage researchers and society. - Submitted to Research for All.

Title: Stowaways: marine leeches infecting Olive Ridley Sea Turtles washed into Maldivian waters entangled in ghost nets - "comparative parasitology"

Impact of Ghost Gear in the Indian Ocean

Our ghost gear related research is spearheaded by our CEO Martin Stelfox as part of his PhD. His PhD was fully funded through the University of Derby. However, ORP trustees signed an agreement with the University of Derby to provide the resources to collect DNA samples at the rehabilitation centre and allow access to our connections in the Indian Ocean. ORP's resources are at Martin's disposal provided they meet with our charitable objectives.

This year saw the final submission of Martin's PhD thesis and all thesis chapters were published (see above and previous annual reviews). His entire thesis, entitled 'The Cryptic and Transboundary Nature of Ghost gear in the Maldivian Archipelago' can be found here:

https://derby.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10545/625352/thesis_final.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

We would like to thank the University of Derby for providing lab support and materials required to carry out laboratory research and experiments.

Applying Research to Practice

Ghost gear has been widely recognised as a major source of entanglement for sea turtles around the world, which is why we continue to collect data on ghost gear and sea turtle entanglement events. Through Dr Stepfox's research, we are now able to make informed decisions about how best to tackle the issue to reduce the amount of ghost gear and minimise its impact on sea turtles. Dr Stepfox continues to represent ORP at the Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI) and has expanded ORP's involvement by joining the Define Best Practice and Inform Policy working group in addition to the Build Evidence working group. ORP has also become members of the NGO Tuna Forum and currently sit on three working groups: Bycatch Mitigation, Data and Transparency and Well-Managed FAD Guidance. The aim of this involvement is to ensure ghost gear and ghost fishing are brought into the conversation of global tuna fisheries at the policy level. We hope our experience and expertise will help guide stakeholders to make informed decisions on the issue and ensure it remains firmly on the agenda.

New Project Plans

This year we are excited to have signed an MoU with the International Pole and Line Foundation (IPNLF). Through this collaboration we hope to build upon ORPs existing network of citizen scientists and biologists, and IPNLF relationship with Maldivian Pole and Line fishers, to develop a large scale ghost gear recovery project that incentivises fishers and other stakeholders. This project has been funded through the Joanna Toole Foundation and Satlink and started its first pilot project in Gemanafushi in Gaafu Alifu Atoll. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, this project is advancing slower than we had hoped. However, we are aiming to continue this work once the travel restrictions are lifted in 2021. We also aim to educate the fishers on best practices for when they encounter entangled sea turtles when out fishing within the EEZ of the Maldives.

Sea Turtle Population & Habitats in the Indian Ocean

The need to conserve sea turtles in the Indian Ocean region has been recognized by the signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and their Habitats of the

Indian Ocean and South-East Asia (IOSEA Marine Turtle MoU) and by policies implemented by individual countries in the region. However, to inform conservation policy, robust assessments of population abundance, distribution, and trends over time are necessary.

Obtaining such information can be both expensive and logistically challenging, particularly for nations with limited capacity and resources. The evaluation of the conservation status of nesting and foraging sea turtle populations in the Republic of Maldives and the Indian Ocean has been hindered by lack of data for all species. Our photographic identification project aims to start to fill the gap in scientific knowledge by providing detailed information on the abundance, population growth rate, and apparent survival of hawksbill sea turtles (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) and green sea turtles (*Chelonia mydas*) in the Maldives, Oman Musandam Region and Diani Chale Marine National Park and Reserve (DCMNPR) on Kenya's south eastern coast.

Research Methods

The lack of baseline abundance data may prevent the detection of either a growth in population numbers due to protection or a decline due to anthropogenic impacts. It is therefore important to collect information that can now form a new baseline in order to monitor their status and abundance to propose management actions at a local scale. Here we contribute robust estimates of abundance, population growth, and apparent survival of hawksbill turtles that can be used to inform conservation action in the Maldives, Oman Musandam Region and Eastern Kenya.

To do so, we use Capture-Mark-Recapture (CMR) methods that have previously been used on other taxa. Sea turtles can be individually identified based on the arrangement of scutes on the sides of their faces. These natural markings are stable over the long term, allowing us to use non-invasive CMR methods.

Photographic identification (Photo ID) is a non-invasive technique used to identify individual animals in a population and track them over time from natural marks on the body. For sea turtles, it relies on capturing photographs of the unique patterns of scales on the animal's face. Photo ID can be used as a non-invasive alternative to tagging and data may be analysed through Capture-Mark-Recapture (CMR) methods. This technique allows researchers to conduct longitudinal studies of individuals, yielding information about home range, survival rate, migration patterns, and life cycle. It also provides the opportunity to gather information on populations that are less studied, such as juveniles and males. Data collection involves no handling or harassment of animals and causes no harm to animals.

We collect sightings data for both nesting and foraging green (*Chelonia mydas*) and hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) sea turtles in Kenya, Maldives, and Oman. Olive ridley (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), and leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) sea turtles are present in these countries; however, greens and hawksbills are the most abundant in the regions where our teams operate.

We use the Internet of Turtles (IoT) platform to analyse all turtle sightings from Maldives, Kenya, and Oman. This new conservation tool has the potential to greatly improve and facilitate data collection for sea turtles by using photo identification data. The IoT platform combines data analytics with individual animal tracking. IoT uses computer vision to compare new IDs to the existing database and Wildbook to store metadata.

ORP began collecting new and historical photographs of foraging and nesting turtles from the Maldives in 2014. We have a seven-year data set for some atolls. We started collecting Photo ID data from Kenya in 2018 and Oman in 2019, and, though it is too soon to analyse these data using CMR, we hope to replicate our Maldivian population studies in these countries as well. This project aims to help fill the gaps in scientific knowledge by providing detailed information on the abundance, distribution, population growth rate, apparent survival, and nesting frequency of hawksbill and green sea turtles.

External Parasites & Epibionts of Sea Turtles in the Maldives

We continued the investigation of external parasites and epibionts of sea turtles found in the Maldives to improve our understanding of the health of the population. Parasite and epibiont loads can be a good indicator for the general health of the population and therefore its resilience to external stressors such as climate change or other

alterations of the habitat. A publication discussing the findings of blood-sucking leeches on olive ridley turtles entangled in ghost nets was submitted for publication and is currently under review.

To continue data collection on parasites in the Maldives, a partnership discussion with the EPA was initiated and a Memorandum of Understanding is currently being prepared to be signed by both parties. The EPA will support our sample collection when possible, while I will identify a specific number of marine invertebrates from present samples for them.

Sea Turtle Behaviour – Lhaviyani Atoll, Maldives

Data on sea turtle behaviour in Lhaviyani Atoll collected in 2018 was presented as an oral presentation under the title "Swimming with turtles - The behaviour of sea turtles in proximity to tourist resorts in the Maldives" at the International Marine Conservation Congress 6 held online in August 2020 and at the Third Maldives Marine Science Symposium held online in December 2020. The accompanying paper is currently in preparation.

ORP's current Sea Turtle Biologist in Lhaviyani Atoll, Emily Mundy, has been trained to continue the behaviour data collection. We will use the unique and unexpected case of the Covid-19 pandemic and the following closure of many tourist resorts in the atoll to compare the behaviour of the same individuals under very different circumstances (very variable number of human interactions).

Maldives

Sea Turtle Rescue & Rehabilitation

As a result of restrictions on boat travel and hugely reduced tourism due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there were far fewer opportunities to find and rescue entangled turtles in the reporting period than in previous years. Hence, the number of stranded turtles, as well as our patient intake during this (shorter) period has been substantially reduced.

In the reporting period we recorded a total of 38 stranded sea turtles in the Maldives: 29 olive ridleys, 7 hawksbills and 2 green turtles. 89.5% of these were found entangled in ghost gear and other marine debris and 10.5% were found floating. 60.5% were unharmed and could be released immediately, 31.6% were found injured and transferred to rescue centres around the country, and 7.9% were found dead.

We treat injured sea turtles rescued from across the Maldives at our two facilities in Baa and North Malé atolls. Most of our turtle patients have been found entangled in ghost gear or other marine debris. However, we also have patients who have been found floating, sick, injured from boat strikes or fishing hooks, and some that we suspect have been kept as pets.

Marine Turtle Rescue Centre

In the fourth year of operations, the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre at Coco Palm Dhuni Kolhu has gone from strength to strength with a fully functioning veterinary clinic that houses an X-ray machine, an ultrasound machine and full surgical facilities. All patients undergo basic laboratory testing on arrival. This involves a blood test for cytology and, when required, a bacterial culture so that any antibiotic treatment can be sensitive to, and directly target, the underlying infection. We continually improve our facilities through fundraising for new equipment in order to meet our aim of gold standard veterinary care of sea turtles.

Unfortunately, we were in the middle of transitioning resident veterinarians at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre in Maldives when the Covid-19 pandemic hit and were unable to get our new vet on site before the borders closed. This, in combination with resort closures and inter-island travel restrictions, meant that we were unable to fully operate our rescue centre in the Maldives - or have volunteers help with daily operations. However, thanks to the hard work of Sea Turtle Biologist Rosie Brown and intern Eman Shareef, under the close guidance of our vets Dr. Claire Petros and Dr. Amelia Liddell, we were able to continue to treat existing patients at our Marine Turtle Rescue

Centre in Baa Atoll, and we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to our partners Coco Collection Dhuni Kolhu for making this possible. Dr Amalie Liddell was finally able to join the Rescue Centre in September.

Since opening we have treated a total of 131 injured turtles, out of which 76 were successfully released back into the ocean by us or other rescue centres. 44 individuals died or were dead on arrival. The rest remains in residence at the Olive Ridley Project Rescue and Rehabilitation Centres and other facilities. 77% of the patients have been olive ridley turtles and 80% of these were ghost net and marine debris entanglement victims.

Between April 2020 and December 2020, we admitted 6 new patients and treated 15 individuals. The majority of the turtle patients (67%) were admitted due to ghost net (abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear) entanglement injuries. We treated two of the five species of sea turtle found in the Maldives, (4 olive ridley turtles (*Lepidochelys olivacea*) and 2 hawksbills (*Eretmochelys imbricata*).

Of the 15 turtles treated, two underwent surgery to remove badly damaged flippers and three had exploratory and wound repair surgeries. Other injuries included one ingestion of a fishing hook and one was found floating for unknown reasons.

Most of the turtle patients (67%) were juveniles, 33% were adults. 17% of the turtle patients were female, 17% male and the rest were too young to determine their sex.

2 of the 6 turtles were successfully released, 2 unfortunately succumbed to their injuries, and 2 remained current patients at the ORP rescue centre.

The average time spent at the rescue centre for the turtles was 124 days, not including current patients. Our longest resident patient is a male adult olive ridley turtle called Heidi. He arrived with severely damaged right and left front flippers after being entangled in a ghost net in April 2018. His left flipper had to be amputated and the right flipper has limited movement as his elbow is fused. He is not releasable. He is taken on regular sea swims to keep him active and give him some mental stimulation. He has been with us more than 2.5 years whilst we look for a forever home for him in an aquarium.

In previous years, the turtles have arrived quite consistently throughout the year, with peak admissions during the North-East monsoon season in the Maldives (December - March), when the wind and currents flow in from the north east. This period coincides with the nesting season for olive ridley turtles on India's eastern shore, which may explain why we are seeing so many entangled olive ridleys during this time. This year we admitted no new patients between March and June and only one patient in July. This does not mean that there were no entangled turtles; it is rather a result of restrictions on boat travel due to the Covid-19 pandemic and far fewer opportunities to find and rescue entangled turtles than in previous years. Maldives began welcoming tourists again in July and resorts gradually started opening in the autumn and we started seeing a steady increase in turtle patient admissions through November and December.

OceanCare kindly funded another year of Dr Claire Petros as Lead Veterinarian for ORP. She oversees the rescue centre and veterinarians, making sure we follow best veterinarian practices and provide the best possible veterinary care. In addition, she focuses on public relations, increasing awareness of the project both in the UK and internationally, and helping raise funds for the charity. She was unable to visit the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre in the Maldives during the reporting period due to travel restrictions caused by the Covid-19 outbreak.

We would like to thank Coco Collection for hosting the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre and our team, even through the closure of the resort for 4 months. We would also like to thank OceanCare for providing funding for medical equipment and a lead veterinarian, as well as extra funding for veterinary services in this challenging year.

Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre

The Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre at One & Only Reethi Rah in North Malé Atoll opened in October 2019. This facility has one large tank and can accommodate up to two patients, depending on size, and provides non-medical long-term rehabilitation without veterinary care, freeing up tank space for critically injured patients at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre.

When Covid-19 broke out and Maldives shut down, we had two patients in residence: Azura and Eve, both olive ridley ghost net victims. Even though the resort closed down temporarily, our Sea Turtle Biologist, Laura Whitely, stayed on site to look after the patients until we could release Eve and transfer Azura to the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre in Baa Atoll in August. Azura remains in our care.

The Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre at One & Only was closed from August until late December, but is now operational again.

We would like to thank One & Only Reethi Rah for hosting the Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre and our team.

Sea Turtle Population & Habitat Studies - Maldives

Little historical data exist on marine turtle populations in the Maldives, which makes it difficult to study trends or evaluate the effectiveness of conservation measures put in place by the government. Surveys carried out by the Ministry of Fishery and Agriculture between 1988 and 2008, although incomplete, revealed that the number of nests (for both hawksbill and green turtles) was declining, while the harvest of eggs remained high (Ali and Shimal, 2016). Two government programs, run by the Marine Research Centre, came into effect in 2015: The National Marine Turtle Nesting Survey Programme and TurtleWatch Maldives.

The only compiled reports about the sea turtles of Maldives are the *Marine Research Bulletin* published from Marine Research Center in 2000 (Frazier et al. 1984, Zahir 2000) and an update to this report by Ali and Shimal in 2016. Frazier et al. (1984) estimated that hundreds of hawksbills nested annually and that foraging hawksbills were present in “large numbers”, particularly in the northern atolls, South Male’ atoll, and Ari atoll. For the 2008 IUCN assessment, a nesting population of 460-767 females per year was calculated based on data collected from 1983-1995, (Frazier et al., 1984; Zahir & Hafiz, 1997), which represents a ~96% decline from historic (1870) numbers (MTSG, 2007). They also reported that adult and immature green turtles were found throughout the archipelago in the early 1980s and that “several thousand” green turtles nested every year, which was thought to be a catastrophic decline from historic number. However, the authors noted that data were inadequate to do more than guess about population size.

Ali and Shimal (2016) calculated a 70-80% decrease in nest numbers from Frazier et al.’s 1984 estimate, indicating additional declines in the last 30 years. Frazier et al. (1984) commented, “Some people believe that each island in the Maldives has its own population; this would be consistent with what is known of other island populations, and several distinct feeding populations could be breeding in Maldives.” They also suggested “well organised tagging studies are needed to investigate the dispersal and migratory habits” (of marine turtles in the region). Global hawksbill populations are classified as “Critically Endangered” with a decreasing population trend by the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species (IUCN, 2008). There is no assessment for the Indo-Pacific subpopulation but many populations in the region are depleted, declining or remnants of larger assemblages (MTSG, 2007). The Maldives population is listed as declining though the Maldives is considered one of the most important areas for hawksbills in the Indian Ocean (MTSG, 2007).

The Olive Ridley Project now has four regional database coordinators in Maldives (in Baa, Lhaviyani, Laamu and North Malé atolls) and a main database coordinator. The regional database coordinators collect and process data from their designated areas and feed this into the main database.

Maldives Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

Our research was suspended for most of the reporting period due to the Covid-19 pandemic; the reported numbers are therefore much lower than in previous years. In addition, the total number of turtles reported in the Maldives (n = 26,090) was lower than last year (n = 26,313) due to our data being uploaded to IoT. Several hundred historical files between 2012-2015 were either missing or corrupt, resulting in them not being uploaded into the IoT.

As of the end of December 2020 the database currently stands at 26,090 sightings including 18,315 hawksbill turtles, and 7,775 green turtles.

The total number of identified turtles in the National Database stands at 4, 810 individual turtles (1,055 green turtles and 3,755 hawksbill turtles).

We have collected photos from ~50% of the country (photos from over 690 reefs) and involved over 360 individual submitters. Most submitters were marine biologists stationed at resorts, guests, dive guides, and guest house operators. We now have staff stationed in four atolls (Baa, Lhaviyani, North Male, and Laamu), which has greatly increased the amount of data coming from these four atolls.

As with previous years, the majority of sighted turtles were juvenile hawksbills in the 45-50 straight carapace length size. Hawksbills are more common in all atolls for which we have data except Lhaviyani, where green turtles are much more common. Both hawksbill and green turtles show extremely high site fidelity (they stay on their home reefs for long periods of time).

Turtle Nesting – Maldives

ORP is continuing to collect data on sea turtle nesting mainly from Baa, Laamu and Lhaviyani atolls, where ORP's Sea Turtle Biologists monitor the nests. We are encouraging other biologists in the country to report any nesting incidences, for example from South Malé, Noonu, Raa or Haa Daalhu Atoll.

In total we recorded 46 true nests and 33 false crawls during the reporting period. We counted 1,398 hatchlings to date, with 86 % hatching success in all nests that have hatched and could be examined post-hatching (N = 18). The average time of incubation was 59 days. A manuscript describing the finding of a hatchling with polycephaly and other congenital malformations during nest content analysis has been prepared for publication.

In Laamu Atoll, ORP continued to monitor nesting on Gaadhoo, an uninhabited island thought to be one of the most significant green turtle nesting sites in the Maldives. Unfortunately, the nesting beach is subject to illegal poaching. This year we were only able to visit twice, once in September and once in November) due to access restrictions relating to the Covid-19 pandemic. A total of ten nests and four false crawls were recorded; 20% of these nests showed signs of poaching activity.

We plan to use the data we collect to justify government protection for Gaadhoo, and to help prevent proposed development which could have detrimental impacts on the turtle nesting beach. Long-term, we hope to establish a ranger programme to consistently monitor the nesting turtle population and deter poachers. Various funding options have been sought out to kickstart the ranger programme (e.g., Hans-Schiemenz-Fonds from the *German Society for Herpetology and Reptile Care*). ORP is also working closely with Blue Marine Foundation to help create a network of protected areas (including Gaadhoo) in Laamu.

Internship Program

ORP's Internship Program for Maldivian nationals is critical in achieving our goal to build local capacity in the Maldives; there are currently no other veterinarian training facilities available in the country. The interns work at the Rescue Centre for a three-month period and play an integral part in the daily running of the Rescue Centre. They receive a stipend, food, and accommodations during the internship.

The interns are taught basic turtle medical care and husbandry and help educate both guests and the school groups that visit the Rescue Centre. Once their internship is complete, they become turtle ambassadors for the project and continue to spread awareness of the project's work and goals in the Maldives.

This year we hosted 2 interns, who both extended their internship to help us continue running the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre during the Covid-19 outbreak. Eman Shareef was a great help to Sea Turtle Biologist Rosie Brown during the closure of the resort; she stayed for a total of 6 months. She was followed by Ali Jinaad, who stayed for 4 months.

Volunteer Programs

We run three volunteer programs in Maldives, however, all three were suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic for the duration of the reporting period.

Volunteering at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre

The Rescue Centre welcomes anyone who is interested in sea turtle conservation and husbandry to volunteer. The volunteers help us care for the turtle patients and run the Rescue Centre. We launched The Rescue Centre Volunteer Program in 2017 and it has been very successful, running at near 100% capacity. The program was fully booked for all of 2020, but, due to the pandemic, the program was suspended and all volunteers offered to rebook in 2021. Most volunteers did so and we hope to restart the program early next year.

Volunteer Research Assistant Sea Turtle Expedition

Haa Alif Atoll is situated in the far north of Maldives where very little scientific work has been done. The lack of data in this region is what scientists call a “black hole”. We aim to fill this gap so that we can accurately interpret sea turtle population and movements in the Maldives. Due to its remote location, Haa Alif Atoll has very few resources to conduct dedicated sea turtle research or run marine conservation projects. In addition to our research, we drive community projects, working with the local schools, our local partner Island Development and Environmental Awareness Society (IDEAS), and with members of the community to help tackle common issues affecting marine habitats for turtles.

This project is sustained through the generous contributions of our expedition volunteers and brings economic benefits to the island of Kelaa in the form of ecotourism.

We cancelled all planned research expeditions in the reporting period.

Visiting Veterinarian Program at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre

The ORP Visiting Veterinarian Program, launched in 2019, provides a unique opportunity for qualified veterinarians specialising in exotic medicine from around the world to obtain hands on experience working with wild sea turtles. The program was suspended for 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Confirmed visiting vets have been offered to rebook for next year.

Kenya

Sea Turtle Population & Habitat Studies – Diani Chale Marine National Park & Reserve

The main aim of the project here is to build a monitoring program to identify sea turtle foraging and aggregation hotspots in the Diani Chale Marine National Park and Reserve (DCMNPR), which will inform a site management plan currently being developed.

Olive Ridley Project has been running a sea turtle ID Program in Kenya since December 2018, focusing its work in the Diani-Chale Marine National Park and Reserve. The reserve is located approximately 25 km south of Mombasa, and includes a linear fringing reef that extends 25 Km between Tiwi (4°12'36"S; 39°37.06"E) in the north, to Chale Island off Gazi Bay (04°27'807"S; 39°32.158E) in the south.

Based at Diani Marine Education Centre (MEC), the ORP Kenya team, led by a marine biologist, conducts regular scuba diving surveys along the reef, collecting data on sea turtle abundance, distribution and behavior, to identify sea turtle foraging and aggregation hotspots in the reserve. Diving surveys are conducted through the dive centre Diving the Crab, in collaboration with members of the MEC, volunteers, while independent divers are encouraged to submit their photos.

With research activities suspended from April, and our Kenya Project Manager forced to return to and remain in her home country for the rest of the year due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we found several opportunities to develop fun and interesting activities to promote our work and project visibility abroad, namely in Europe. This included meetings and collaborations with Portuguese conservation organizations or initiatives, such as Plasticus Maritimus, with whom we collaborated on an educational program about ghost gear and plastic pollution, and Sea Shepherd - Portugal, promoting awareness about the impact of ghost gear in turtles in the Iberian Peninsula. We also teamed up with Pico Sport Diving and Whale-Watching Centre in the Azores islands to assist filming crews making documentaries about marine biodiversity and conservation. Other outreach efforts resulted in a small article published on [SCB's African Conservation Telegraph](#), a successful blog post, and regular social media presence.

Kenya Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

ORP has established the first facial ID database for Kenya along with MEC, featuring turtles identified by the team in DCMNRPR. Our field work in Kenya was suspended in April 2020 due to the Covid-19 outbreak. In-water activities were allowed again in June, but since our Project Manager had to remain in Europe and Diving the Crab was shut down until October, the sea turtle photo ID program relied on photo submissions from local divers and the Diani Turtle Watch's by-catch Program for the remainder of the year. A total of 103 photos were submitted, representing 68 individual greens (19 new) and 14 hawksbills (6 new).

To date, ORP in Kenya has recorded 2,303 sea turtle sightings at the reserve, with 2,028 being green turtles and 478 being hawksbill turtles, corresponding to 478 individual green turtles and 62 individual hawksbill turtles.

We have now uploaded most of our photos to the Internet of Turtles, the global online database for sea turtle sightings. In total, 1521 encounters with nearly 300 individual turtles were added to this platform. As of December 2020, all photos have started to be directly uploaded onto the Internet of Turtles as they are submitted.

We would like to thank MEC and CES for hosting us and for organisational support, and Diving the Crab for logistical support.

Oman

Sea Turtle Population & Habitat Studies – Musandam, Oman

ORP's Musandam, Oman project began in January 2019. It is a multi-faceted project and one part is collecting Turtle ID photos to understand the populations of the turtles in this area. So far, most of the turtles sighted are green turtles (82%). Hawksbills are present but less common: Loggerheads have also been sighted.

Oman Sea Turtle Photo-ID Research Results

No research activity took place in Oman during the reporting period due to the closure of our partner resort.

The total number of identified turtles in the Musandam Oman Database stands at 40 individual turtles, including 34 green turtles and 6 hawksbill turtles.

Community Outreach - Oman

The other main focus of our project in the Musandam region of Oman is to work alongside local fishing communities to combat the ghost gear issue in the region.

We now work with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Affairs (MECA) to promote our goals to reduce ghost gear in the region and support their reef clean efforts and participate with regional beach cleans and school visits

with a specific focus on marine environmental education and sea turtles. We are also working with BEAH - the company responsible for managing waste and recycling in Oman.

They have made plans to provide a skip in Dibba Marina for fishermen to dispose of their broken, old or otherwise unusable fishing equipment in a responsible manner. This is to be accompanied with suitable education about ghost gear and its impacts to encourage a positive dialogue with the fishing community. In February 2020 we received permission from MECA to remove ghost gear from coral reefs this will enable independent clean up efforts of divers for the surrounding dive sites.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic we were forced to temporarily suspend our project in Oman in the middle of March 2020, a result governed by financial constraints of our project partners. We hope to restart this project in the next financial year once tourism returns to normality.

Pakistan

Our Pakistan pilot project in Abdul Rehman Goth continues to progress. The project aims to remove ghost gear from the ocean environment and to create value out of waste through the power of community and creative thinking in a circular economy project. Finding new ways to reuse ghost gear depends on the experience and innovative thinking of people from different sectors of economy and so we have explored various initiatives in the past year.

Abdul Rehman Goth (ARG) is a centuries-old fishing village with a population of around 5,000 people and 300 fishing boats. Like so many traditional fishing communities, climate change, industrial fishing and overfishing strongly affect this community. ORP is working on ways to reuse ghost gear recovered in the area to provide an alternative income for the community. So far, volunteers have recovered more than 4.7 tons of ghost gear from the sea and beaches near the village.

Whilst the men of the village may travel for work, the women are more restricted in terms of mobility due to the lack of public transport. The design and sale of ghost net bracelets and dog leashes provide local work; work that can provide a significant addition to the household income of a fisher family.

The many restrictions implemented in Pakistan to contain the spread of Covid-19 virus forced us to temporarily place our circular economy initiatives on hold for several months. In these testing times, the fishing community of Abdul Rehman Goth suffered greatly. The ORP Pakistan team managed to raise PKR 300,000 to provide two-weeks' worth of ration packs for the 150 families from Abdul Rehman Goth who were hit the hardest.

Once restrictions were lifted, the team got back to work immediately with the aim to improve the dog leash design from 2019. The new design incorporates a 100% recycled material (excluding the clip) and uses more robust clips in its design. This change in design improves the user experience and quality of the leash.

As import and export restrictions eased, the first batch of new dog leashes were exported to the UK to be sold via the ORP website. The launch was successful and we have already placed our second batch order with the community.

All leashes are strength tested to 60 kg to ensure safety. Each leash uses 880 sq feet / 82 sq metres of ghost net, that would otherwise be polluting local beaches, and waste materials that would otherwise be sent to a landfill. We are currently selling the Ghost Leash online and continue to expand our product range in 2021.

All profits from the sales of Ghost Leashes and ghost net bracelets go back to the community and we hope to provide a valuable and additional income to the fishing community of ARG (1000 PKR / £5 per ghost leash and 500 PKR / £2.50 per bracelet). We are looking forward to replicating this initiative into more villages as we move into 2021. This reporting year a total of 42 dog leashes and 140 ghost net bracelets have been sold generating a total alternative income of PKR 119,000 (Approx. £540) for the community.

In December 2020, the ORP team made a visit to Astola Island, Pakistan's first Marine Protected Area, located off the coast of Balochistan. Astola is a nesting beach and the ORP team discovered over 800 green turtle nests on the

north-eastern beach of Astola Island. However, the large number of ghost nets found on the nesting site was a cause for the concern and the team is planning a cleanup visit to the island.

Education & Outreach

Education is a big part of ORP's mission and an important aspect of our multifaceted approach to protecting sea turtles and their habitats. We believe education is a powerful tool to increase awareness, engage people and stimulate action. We usually educate school children, local communities, boat crews, divers, fishermen, tourists, resort staff, and biologists, face to face and in-person, but all that had to change this year.

Instead, we created an [e-learning platform](#) on our website with free courses and resources, for both sea turtle lovers in general and the more science minded, about everything sea turtles. We hope this free knowledge sharing hub will be an important environmental education resource to help guide aspiring young scientists and supplement existing educational tools for remote learning and school projects.

In the reporting period, 249 students enrolled in our free courses and 33 graduated.

Conferences And Talks

World wide travel restrictions did not stop the global scientific community from exchanging ideas and discussing results and findings in 2020 - using the world wide web. We presented our findings at various events, including the International Marine Conservation Congress 6 and the Third Maldives Marine Science Symposium. ORP Researcher Dr Stephanie Köhnik presented her findings on sea turtle behaviour in proximity to tourist resorts in one of the more northern atolls of the Maldives, and ORP Sea Turtle Biologist Jo Goodfellow discussed nesting beach monitoring on Gaadhoo island in Laamu Atoll. The online format might have been new for every attendee, but great questions and comments after each presentation still highlighted the importance of interaction with the scientific community.

In October 2020, ORP took part in Scuba.Digital, an online dive show. We gave a total of five different talks in the session "Ocean's Drop", covering topics such as sea turtle biology, conservation and rehabilitation, as well as presenting ORP's work. Presentations were made in both English and Spanish to reach a wider audience.

Scuba.Digital had 800 attendees from all parts around the world and 200 exhibitors including 30 dive resorts, 27 liveaboard operators, 22 dive centres & liveaboards, 23 travel agents and consultants, 7 manufacturers, 6 magazines, 5 diving agencies, 5 conservation organisations, and loads more. 150 stage and session presentations covered a huge variation of topics.

Educational Festivals

Laamafaru Festival, Maldives

Laamafaru Festival is a joint venture between our partner resort, Six Senses Laamu, and the Laamu community. Launched as Laamu Turtle Festival in 2016, the festival was rebranded as Laamafaru Festival in 2019 with a broader scope to focus on the entire marine ecosystem.

This year Six Senses Laamu launched the #LaamafaruFestival2020 social media campaign. Throughout December, educational photos and videos - created by the Laamu community, for the Laamu community - were shared on social media. The community shared knowledge about Laamu's marine ecosystems and ideas to help better protect them. ORP created a short video about ghost nets in the Maldives and encouraged the community to report incidences of entangled turtles.

Collaborations

Coco Collection

Our partnership with Coco Collection Resorts continues. Our Marine Turtle Rescue Centre is located on Coco Dhuni Kolhu in Baa Atoll. We would like to thank Coco Collection for all their support and for hosting the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre, our staff, volunteers and interns.

Prodivers, Kuredu, Lhaviyani Atoll, Maldives

We continued our partnership with Prodivers, a German dive centre operator in Maldives, to work together to advance the research of sea turtles in the Maldives and provide educational outreach to international guests and Maldivian nationals. We would like to thank Prodivers for their support.

Six Senses Laamu, Laamu Atoll, Maldives

We continue our partnership with Six Senses Laamu, a resort in Laamu Atoll, Maldives, to work together to advance the research of sea turtles in Laamu Atoll and provide educational outreach to international guests and Maldivian nationals. Here we work closely with 2 other not-for-profit organisations and resort staff under the umbrella Maldives Underwater Initiative, with the ultimate goal of creating a network of locally managed marine protected areas, in consultation with the community. We would like to thank Six Senses Laamu for their support.

One & Only Reethi Rah, North Male Atoll, Maldives

One & Only Reethi Rah, North Malé Atoll, is our third resort partnership in Maldives. In addition to advancing research of sea turtles in North Malé Atoll, we have also opened a Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Centre here for turtle patients in need of long-term rehabilitation without veterinary care. This frees up tank space at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre to allow admittance of more injured turtles that require veterinary attention. Additionally, neighbouring resorts in a resort-dense atoll have a local point to send injured turtles. If required, ORP will arrange for injured turtles to be sent to our turtle veterinarian for further care.

The Sands At Nomad, Diani Beach, Kenya

Our base in Kenya, The Sands at Nomad, is located on Diani Beach, Eastern Kenya. Here we work closely with the Conservation Education Society, being based out of their Marine Education Centre on Diani Beach, and Diving the Crab dive centre. In addition, we collaborate with Diani Turtle Watch (Diani), Jumba Turtle Patrol (Mtwapa, Mombasa), Reefolution (Shimoni/ Kisite Marine Park) and Local Ocean Conservation (Watamu). Our partnership with the Sands at Nomad was temporarily suspended in April 2020 due the Covid-19 pandemic.

Six Senses Zighy Bay, Oman

Our partner resort in Oman is Six Senses Zighy Bay in the Musandam area. Together we work on making the region less of a ghost gear hotspot and advancing the knowledge of the local sea turtle population using the Turtle Photo-ID method. We would like to thank Six Senses Zighy Bay for their support and for hosting us. Our partnership with the Six Senses Zighy Bay was temporarily suspended in April 2020 due the Covid-19 pandemic.

GGGI

We continue to be an integral part of the Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI). The GGGI is a cross-sectoral alliance committed to driving solutions to the problem of abandoned, lost and discarded fishing gear worldwide. ORP sits on two working groups: The first is Define Best Practice and Inform Policy, which allows us to bring valuable information through working with coastal communities in Pakistan and the Maldives. The second working group is Build Evidence, which helps guide the development of the global datportal on ghost gear and identify research gaps in ghost gear.

NGO Tuna Forum

The NGO Tuna Forum brings together NGOs and other individuals and organizations that work comprehensively on global tuna sustainability issues. ORP currently sits on three working groups: Bycatch Mitigation, Data and Transparency and Well-Managed FAD Guidance. The aim of this involvement is to ensure ghost gear and ghost fishing are brought into the conversation of global tuna fisheries at the policy level. We hope our experience and expertise will help guide stakeholders to make informed decisions on the issue and ensure it remains firmly on the agenda.

International Pole & Line Foundation

IPNLF works to develop, support and promote socially and environmentally responsible pole-and-line and handline tuna fisheries around the world. Our collaboration aims to develop a large scale ghost gear recovery project in the Maldives that incentivises fishers and other stakeholders.

International Sea Turtle Symposium

We regularly attend international symposiums including the ISTS. We also co-organised the sea turtle photo-ID workshop to develop standard protocols and new methods of analyses. However, this year the conference was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The conference has been rescheduled for 2021.

IDEAS

We hope to continue our partnership with IDEAS (Island Development and Environmental Awareness Society) of Kela'a to conduct sea turtle research expeditions in Haa Alif Atoll once the Covid-19 pandemic is over. IDEAS works for the development of Ha. Kela'a in all aspects and areas such as Education & Training, Healthcare, Social Development, Environmental Awareness and Conservation, Sports & Recreation, Youth Development, Women Empowerment and Human Rights.

MUI

MUI (Maldives Underwater Initiative) is a marine conservation initiative from Six Senses Laamu, Maldives, which unites the resort and its 3 NGO partners under one central banner, with the aim to consolidate shared research, science communication, community education and outreach goals. The NGO's are Olive Ridley Project, Manta Trust and Blue Marine Foundation.

Indus Scuba

Indus Scuba is a dive centre based in Karachi, Pakistan. They provide invaluable logistical and equipment support for ghost gear recovery dives in the region and also sponsored the PADI Open Water Certification of 3 ORP team members, adapting the training to Urdu no less.

Conservation Education Society

The Conservation Education Society believes that, through education, empowerment and collaboration, everyone, big or small, can play a role in preserving our natural world. CES was officially established in March 2019 and operates out of the Marine Education Centre in Diani, Kenya. CES regularly organizes educational events which ORP participates in and contributes to, as well as provide administrative and logistical support.

Marine Education Centre

MEC is located within Sands at Nomad and opened its doors in September 2018 as a free, public resource for marine education, and a base for marine organisations working in the area. We collaborate in joint activities related to field work, such as marine biodiversity inventorying, habitat mapping, sea turtle ID, training and guest education. Since 2018 it has also served as ORP's physical headquarters, providing a working space and environment where ORP interact with other organisations and individuals on a daily basis.

Dividing The Crab

Widely recognised as the best dive centre in both Diani and in Kenya, Diving the Crab (DTC) is one of the main sponsors of the Marine Education Centre. DTC is also very supportive of marine biodiversity related activities in Diani, including ORP's in-water work. Since ORP first arrived in Kenya, DTC has been instrumental in providing logistical support allowing ORP to conduct in-water surveys and explore Diani's reefs, as well as actively participated in guest education, in-water surveys, ghost nest reporting and removal, and staff training.

D.M. Tours.

D.M.Tours is Diani's leading tour agency, tailoring high quality traveling experiences for the most demanding adventurers. D.M. Tours has become one of ORP's most helpful supporters, by facilitating logistics to conduct in-water surveys during Covid-19 times, and by submitting regular sea turtle sightings along Diani Beach.

Local Ocean Conservation

Local Ocean Conservation (LOC) is a private, not-for-profit organisation committed to the protection of Kenya's marine environment. LOC's flagship programme is Watamu Turtle Watch; started by local residents in 1997 to protect nesting sea turtles, it now sits under LOC along with Diani Turtle Watch, Bycatch Release, Beach Profiling and a specialist Rehabilitation Centre for sick and injured sea turtles. ORP's team of veterinarians regularly advises the team at the Rehabilitation Centre.

Diani Turtle Watch

DTW, a turtle conservation monitoring group, surveys the beach to spot any turtle nesting activities, mortality and turtle stranding cases throughout the day. DTW collaborates with ORP by sharing photos of by-caught turtles and stranded turtles for ID purposes, enriching our database and assisting with information about the threats that affect the turtles feeding off Diani's reef.

Global Online Community

A major part of our strategy to increase awareness about the plight of sea turtles and the deadly consequences of ghost gear is digital/social media presence. We continue to grow our web and social media channels to keep the public engaged with new content and regular updates. Our website now includes an online learning platform with free courses and resources about all things sea turtle and sea turtle conservation. Our sea turtle protocols have been translated into multiple languages, and our Sea Turtle FAQ pages are extremely popular, with thousands of visitors every month.

Our digital community of supporters and followers span the globe, the biggest audiences being in the US, the UK, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Australia, Canada, Singapore, Philippines, and Malaysia, in the age range 18-34. Our website has slightly more male than female visitors, but our social media channels have more female than male followers.

Website:

Our website traffic increased tremendously in the reporting period. On average we had 18,00 visitors per month, up from 2,847 in the same period the previous year (an increase of 532%) and 34,375 page views per month (an increase of 415% on the same period the previous year). Most of the traffic increase was driven by our Sea Turtle FAQ pages, and in particular by our articles about barnacles on sea turtles and sea turtle diets.

Facebook:

Facebook is our main social media channel, but is fast losing ground to Instagram when it comes to reach and engagement. In the reporting period we saw 5.5% growth (+ 1,023) in followers to a total of 19.8K. We also have a lot of interactions with the public through Facebook Messenger. Our largest audience is 25-34 year olds in the US, Maldives, UK, India and Australia.

Instagram:

We have been very active on Instagram this year, and it has become an important channel for interacting with the public. The number of followers has grown from 9,500 to 11,202 during the reporting period (+18%). Our largest audience is 25-35 year olds in the UK, US, Maldives, India and Australia. The reach and engagement on Instagram is outpacing that of Facebook.

Twitter:

Our use of Twitter has been less active than Facebook and Instagram, but we increased our followers to a total of around 1,400.

YouTube:

We do not actively use YouTube other than to host videos for publishing in other channels. Yet our YouTube Channel grew from approximately 900 to 1,100 subscribers and we had 88.3K views in the reporting period (+70% compared to the previous year). The largest audience is males aged 55+ in the US, India, Indonesia, Brazil, and Japan.

Fundraising

ORP is funded mainly through donations and grants.

Private Donations

Private donations are largely generated online, through our symbolic turtle adoption programs, monthly giving program and one-time gifts, and by volunteers at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre. Our online donations increased by 24% compared to the same period in the previous year, however, our volunteer income was zero due to the volunteer programs being suspended for the whole reporting period.

We would like to thank everyone who adopted and donated for supporting our work during this difficult time - their generosity has been incredible and they are the reason we can continue to do what we do. We had an exceptional year for sea turtle adoptions and a phenomenal response to our Giving Tuesday campaign. Many supporters did birthday fundraisers for us and we received several generous gifts. We would also like to thank our commercial partner, Legend Bracelets, for helping us promote the turtle adoption program - it has made a big difference.

OceanCare

OceanCare is a Swiss charity committed to marine wildlife protection. Since 2011 they have had a Special Consultative Status on marine issues with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. OceanCare provides critical funding for medical equipment at the Marine Turtle Rescue Centre and our lead veterinarian. They also donated extra this year to help with the running of the Rescue Centre during the lockdown. We would like to thank OceanCare for their generous and continued support.

Special Thanks

We would also like to extend a special thank you to our long time supporter, Thorsten Albrecht, and our resort partners Six Senses Laamu and Coco Collection, for their unwavering support. We are truly grateful.

Commercial Participators

In order to diversify our fundraising income, the Charity formed several new partnerships with carefully selected Commercial Participators in the financial year. In addition to our existing relationships, we partnered with:

- Redhan Limited, a trademark of White Cowrie Pvt Ltd, Maldives. The overriding mission of the company is to combat the environmental crisis through products that are good for the people and the planet. ORP receives 5% of the sale of each Biodegradable Turtle in Turquoise Phone case;
- Excelsior Maldives Private Limited, a company that creates, designs and manufacture jewelry and art objects in a responsible way. Excelsior Maldives is the sole owner of the Brand Gonzague Zurstrassenr. ORP receives 20% of the sale of each product;
- Fewcher Ltd, registered in Hong Kong SAR, owns YOKKA, which is a registered UK and USA brand of premium and Eco friendly yoga and wellness mats and accessories. ORP receives 1% per product sold.
- Silver Goat Media, a privately owned media company in the US. ORP received 100% of net proceeds per sale of the book “The Adventures of Olive The Sea Turtle”, estimated at an average of \$2.30, depending on the sales price and shipping costs. The book is co-written by ORP CEO and Founder Dr Martin Stelfox.

Plans & Objectives for 2021

Our plans and objectives for 2021 remain pretty much the same as our plans for 2020, as much could not be achieved due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In line with our charitable objectives, we will continue to protect sea turtles and their habitats through a multi-faceted approach of scientific research, rehabilitation and rescue, and educational and community outreach, and ghost gear recovery and repurposing. We will focus on extending our reach in the Indian Ocean and beyond, by establishing new partnerships which will allow us to expand our research areas. Furthermore, we will aim to open new turtle rehabilitation centres.

Our priority for 2021 will be to keep the charity afloat through the continuous Covid-19 pandemic. We plan to continue initiating new partnerships and collaborations and diversifying our funding to rely less on the tourism industry. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for a diversified income stream and expanding our supporter base. Commercial partnerships with suitable organisations will ensure the sustainability of the charity and we will continue to explore new options.

As soon as we are able to, we will resume our existing partnerships that were suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and we will continuously monitor the global pandemic and its impact with our project partners. Once we can restart our regular infield activities, we will continue to identify research gaps in the Indian Ocean in sea turtle conservation and biology and strive to fill these gaps. We also aim to increase our data collection on ghost gear and turtle entanglements in the wider Indian Ocean through collaboration with other organisations and individuals, and by attending regional workshops. We are also working on our 5 year strategy which we are hoping will be published in 2021. This strategy will build on our previous 5 year plan (2015-2020) and will set out a roadmap for us to achieve our goals.

In addition to resuming our ghost gear and sea turtle population analyses in the Maldives, we hope to glean information about what makes habitat suitable for juvenile olive ridleys so that we can determine juvenile foraging sites in the Indian Ocean. This project, led by ORP researcher, Rushan Bin Abdul Rahman, will use satellite tags attached to rescued juvenile olive ridleys. Movement ecology statistics will then be used to determine which points along their track suggest possible foraging behaviour, this can then be correlated with characteristics that are important for sea turtle development (e.g., sea surface temperature, productivity). With this information we will be able to identify what environmental characteristics make habitats suitable for juvenile olive ridley sea turtles in the region. We would like to take this opportunity to extend our gratitude to Mr. Thorsten Albrecht for providing the resources for this tagging project to start and to our corporate sponsors Legend Bracelets for additional funding.

Following the success of the Turtle Photo ID program in Kenya, established and maintained since 2018, 2020 was mostly a dormant time with only ad hoc turtle reports coming in from citizen scientists. However, in 2021 we have received additional funding to keep this project operational for 6 months into 2021. During these 6 months we have hired a Kenyan marine biologist to lead the project locally, aiming to ensure ongoing efforts to monitor and characterise the sea turtle aggregations at Diani-Chale Management Area using photo ID, and extend our survey areas to Tiwi reef in collaboration with Coconut Beach Lodge and the Tiwi Turtle Police, as well as Kisite-Mpunguti National Marine Park and Reserve with the help of the NGO Reefolution.

Other extensions to our project include a planned partnership with the new conservation group Tiwi Turtle Police and the KWS to lead the efforts to document and assess the causes of sea turtle strandings in the Diani area. If funding is secured, this collaboration will have ORP overseeing a small rescue centre in Coconut Beach Lodge, and work alongside a veterinarian that will conduct necropsies on stranded individuals. Also, ORP is establishing partnerships with Kenyan research institutions such as Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) and Pwani University (Kilifi), to assist in the supervision of Kenyan students recruited from national universities to study threats such as drowning from incidental captures in artisanal fisheries, boat/jet ski strikes, ingestion of microplastics, parasite infestations, and/or internal and external tumours.

In terms of project sustainability, there are plans underway to develop partnerships with at least two resorts to support the project through the Corporate Social Responsibility.

Unfortunately our plans to work with the BBC in October 2020 were cancelled and the documentary has been put on hold until further notice. However we have plans to assist with short documentaries in 2021 and we are excited to report on them next year.

2020 saw the launch of our Ghost Leash project developed by the Abdul Rehman Goth (ARG) community in Pakistan. We will be working towards providing a stable alternative income for the community by marketing our leashes and connecting with wholesalers. Focusing on local issues specific to a community is a more effective way to create lasting change than initiatives taking a more general or wider approach. This philosophy has been a great success in ARG and we intend to expand our fisher community and circular economy projects to other fishing communities in the Pakistan.

Finally we will continue to enrich our online learning platform with new and exciting content through 2021 and beyond and continue to stay at the forefront of online resources in sea turtle biology and conservation.

Financial Review

The Olive Ridley Project is committed to minimising administrative costs and increasing revenue to maximise the reach of its conservation and research programmes.

Income this financial year reached £51, 847 and was predominantly achieved through donations and grants.

To achieve our objectives, we rely on senior staff, veterinarians, researchers and project coordinators to work as consultants within the charity. Consultants are solely funded through donations and grants.

We have an end of year deficit of £12,028.

Reserves Policy

The Charity trustees are responsible for ensuring the organisation has enough unrestricted reserves to safeguard the charity's core activities in periods of fluctuating income and operate on a skeleton staff for 3 months. Skeleton staff includes the CEO, senior staff and veterinarian scientists. Due to the age of the charity this was not possible for the first two years of operation, but by the end of the third year, the trustees implemented a reserve plan into the financial planning for the year 2019/20 of operational costs of £10,800

Free reserves as of 31st December 2020 were £39,264

The trustees are satisfied with the current level of free reserves; however, the trustees will aim to increase this level in the financial year 2021, in line with an increase in charitable expenditure. The reserve plan established by the

trustees aims to increase the unrestricted reserves to cover 6 months of operational costs in the next 3 years. Due to the reduction in income as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic and the shorter financial year, the charity has not been able to increase the reserve plan funds in the reporting period.

Restricted reserves are £58,180. These are in relation to grants received from other organisations or private donations for specific projects and purposes.

Statement of Trustee's Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the trustees have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable Law). The financial statements are required by law to give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of the financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by the trustees on 19 April 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



Jannicke C Hallum
Trustee



Matthew Shoulders
Trustee/Treasurer

REGISTERED NUMBER: 1165905

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

SEGRAVE & PARTNERS LLP
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THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT

**RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds	TOTAL DECEMBER 2020	TOTAL MARCH 2020
<u>RECEIPTS</u>					
Donations	24,684	20,350	-	45,033	145,665
Grants	-	1,616	-	1,616	
Sales	337	-	-	337	-
Volunteers Rescue Centre	4,861	-	-	4,861	45,279
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>	29,881	21,966	-	51,847	190,944
<u>PAYMENTS</u>					
Expedition Costs	-	-	-	-	13,544
Bank Charges	952	-	-	952	1,447
Wages and Consultants	21,316	4,555	-	25,871	31,859
Research	8,789	11,280	-	20,069	41,899
Veterinary Services	-	12,130	-	12,130	6,263
Expenses	1,118	-	-	1,118	1,503
Equipment	1,171	7	-	1,178	1,393
Travel Costs	500	-	-	500	12,134
Medical Supplies	89	-	-	89	852
Independent Examination	952	-	-	952	-
Insurance	-	-	-	-	1,382
Marketing	973	-	-	973	900
Sundries	-	-	-	-	296
Tee-Shirts	43	-	-	43	3,499
<u>TOTAL PAYMENTS</u>	35,904	27,972	-	63,876	116,971
<u>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) OF RECEIPTS</u>					
<u>OVER PAYMENTS</u>	(6,022)	(6,006)	-	(12,028)	73,973
<u>TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS</u>	(6,300)	6,300	-	-	-
<u>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AFTER TRANSFERS</u>	(12,322)	294	-	(12,028)	73,973
<u>CASH FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD</u>	51,586	57,886	-	109,472	35,499
<u>CASH FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</u>	39,264	58,180	-	97,444	109,472

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

	TOTAL	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Endowment Funds
<u>CASH FUNDS</u>				
Current Account	97,444	39,264	58,180	-
<u>TOTAL CASH FUNDS</u>	97,444	39,264	58,180	-

<u>ASSETS RETAINED FOR CHARITY'S OWN USE</u>	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost	Current Value
Rescue Centre	Unrestricted	32,428	20,997

<u>LIABILITIES</u>		Fund to which asset belongs	Amount Due
Independent Examiner Fees	- 2021	Unrestricted	400
			400

Signed by two Trustees on behalf of all the Trustees



.....
 Jannicke C Hallum

Date: 6th April 2021



M shoulders (Apr 8, 2021 10:04 GMT+1)

.....
 Matthew Shoulders CGMA

Date: 6th April 2021

THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

Independent examiners report to the trustees of The Olive Ridley Project in respect of the period ended 31st December 2020.

This is a report in respect of an examination carried out on the financial statements set out on pages one and two under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 and in accordance with the directions given by the Charity Commissioners under sub-section 5(b) of that section.

Responsibilities of trustees and independent examiners

As described in the annual report, the charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements. It is our responsibility to carry out procedures designed to enable us to report our opinion.

It is our responsibility to:

- 1) examine account under Section 145 of the Charities Act 2011
- 2) follow the procedures laid down in the general directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011
- 3) state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of opinion

Our examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination include a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a "true and fair view" and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Opinion

No matter has come to our attention in connection with our examination which gives us reasonable cause not to believe that in any material respect:

- 1) proper accounting records have been kept in accordance with Section 137 of the Charities Act 2011, and;
- 2) the financial statements accord with those records.

Segrave & Partners LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
Turnpike House
1208/1210 London Road
Leigh on Sea
Essex
SS9 2UA


Carly Spencer (Apr 8, 2021 09:30 GMT+1)

Date: 6th April 2021










Updated December 2020 Accts & IRE

Final Audit Report

2021-04-08

Created:	2021-04-08
By:	Carly Spencer (carly.spencer@segrave.co.uk)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAACnovRmEPA-qg208ujvr2bKDMb-0Wdnq6

"Updated December 2020 Accts & IRE" History

-  Document created by Carly Spencer (carly.spencer@segrave.co.uk)
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THE OLIVE RIDLEY PROJECT
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT ON THE ACCOUNTS
PERIOD ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2020

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Basis of opinion

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Date: 6th April 2021