

Report of the Trustees and
Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024
for
Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO

tc accounts · tax · legal · financial planning

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Report of the Trustees
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The trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024. The trustees have adopted the provisions of 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).

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Objectives and aims

The charity aims to bring together the world's major oceanographic institutes to plan joint actions to advance sustained ocean observations for societal benefit. POGO institutes are motivated by a common belief that advancing scientific understanding of the ocean is rooted in making systematic, high quality measurements. They believe that this understanding and its wise use are critical to, and will make a real positive difference in, enabling humanity to develop a sustainable relationship with a healthy, productive and biologically diverse ocean. POGO is further motivated by the shared belief that its vision can only be realised by working together across the world, where we can achieve together what none of us could do alone.

The ocean produces half of the world's oxygen, most of its fresh water and much of its food. It regulates climate and weather, is critical to the cycling of heat, water and carbon. It is the source of huge biodiversity. However, far too little is known about the state and functioning of the ocean. Accordingly, scientifically sound study of the ocean and support and advocacy for such study (and for the conclusions drawn from it) is of vital importance to mankind. POGO seeks to expand international support for ocean observing, through innovation of the ocean observing system, capacity development and outreach/advocacy.

In terms of innovation, POGO members are at the forefront of oceanographic methods and technology development, often in partnership with industry. Thus, POGO is in a critical position to identify the emerging methods and technologies that POGO members are developing and using, and highlighting those that can be expanded and deployed on a global scale to achieve global datasets obtained using comparable methods. POGO also focusses on the affordability issues associated with ocean observing, particularly for developing countries, and is therefore engaged in projects to develop low-cost sensors and systems for coastal ocean observing. The societies and economies of many developing countries rely heavily on the ocean, for example through coastal tourism, trade infrastructure, natural resource extraction, and small-scale and industrial fisheries and aquaculture. However, extreme weather events, sea-level rise, tsunamis, harmful algal blooms and water pollution threaten the world's poorest and most vulnerable coastal and island communities. Ocean observations and information services can be used to improve human health and safety and food security, support livelihoods and small-scale economic activities (artisanal fisheries and aquaculture, coastal tourism), and improve climate resilience and disaster risk reduction.

POGO also recognises that the expertise for conducting ocean observations is not evenly distributed between countries, and therefore the ocean is unevenly observed, with a much higher density of observations conducted in the North Atlantic and North Pacific, than in, for example, the South Atlantic, South Pacific and Indian Oceans. POGO therefore provides professional training opportunities for early-career scientists, mainly from coastal developing countries, to expand the worldwide capacity for conducting sustained ocean observations, data collection, analysis and management, and interpreting the scientific results for the benefit of society.

Many actors, working together internationally, are needed to bring about sustainable management of the oceans that is informed by sound science, underpinned by a comprehensive global ocean measurement system. These include national governments, non-governmental organisations, the wider scientific community, funders of research and monitoring programmes, and individual citizens working individually and collectively. POGO highlights the societal need for ocean observations, as well as the key issues facing global ocean observing, and the obstacles hampering the completion of a global ocean observing system, and brings these issues to the relevant stakeholder groups outlined above.

The objects of the CIO are to advance the science of global ocean observation for the public benefit, in particular (but not exclusively) by:

- i. Advancing education in global ocean observation by identifying areas of further study for developing the science of global ocean observation;
- ii. The promotion of research in global ocean observation for the public benefit and the publication and dissemination of the useful results of such research;
- iii. The provision of scholarships and research fellowships;
- iv. The promotion of innovation and technology in the science of global ocean observation.

In the short term, POGO aims to provide training for early-career scientists, to develop the next generation of scientists and ocean observers, as well as to raise the levels of awareness and education about the importance of the ocean and ocean observing for society. Measures of success include numbers of trainees, numbers of countries having received training, numbers of website visits and downloads of outreach materials, mentions on social media and other statistics.

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The longer-term vision is to develop the capacity of research institutions in developing countries to conduct ocean observations, by (1) integrating the trained scientists and their institutions into the POGO network and having them actively participate in POGO projects, (2) sharing best practices among POGO member institutions, and (3) contributing to the development and dissemination of low-cost instrumentation for coastal ocean observing. Measures of success include numbers of POGO members and numbers of new (developing) countries being added to the network, establishment of new ocean observing systems in those countries, and demonstrated long-term impacts of the training programmes (e.g. >5 years after the training, on institutional capacity and continued knowledge-transfer).

Significant activities

The CIO has been working towards the stated aims and charitable objects in the following ways:

i. **Advancing education in global ocean observation by identifying areas of further study for developing the science of global ocean observation:** this has been achieved by supporting Working Groups on specific topics related to ocean observation, such as the Biological Observations WG, which led a proposal to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development for an "Ocean Biomolecular Observing Network" (OBON).

ii. **The promotion of research in global ocean observation for the public benefit and the publication and dissemination of the useful results of such research:** this has been achieved through POGO's outreach and advocacy initiatives, through printed, on-line and social media and in particular the creation of ocean observing case studies. POGO completed a citizen science project on coastal litter with field work and outreach activities in 6 African countries and Malaysia. POGO also participated in the COP28 Climate Conference, with an exhibition booth and side events in Dubai in Nov-Dec 2023.

iii. **The provision of scholarships and research fellowships:** scholarships and fellowships have been provided to 25 early-career scientists for training/education periods of between 1 and 10 months during this financial year;

iv. **The promotion of innovation and technology in the science of global ocean observation:** this has been conducted mainly through two innovation projects focussing on developing low-cost instrumentation for ocean observing aimed at developing countries and citizen science.

More detailed information on these activities can be found below, under the heading "Achievement and Performance".

Public benefit

The trustees have complied with their duty, as set out in the Charities Act 2011, with regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission.

The CIO has been working towards achieving its charitable objectives, delivering benefit to the wider public through its work to advance sustained ocean observations.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Grantmaking

POGO allocates some of its funds (received from charitable foundations and/or membership dues) to help support ocean observation activities (e.g. through Working Groups) and to provide training for early-career scientists (generally in developing countries). POGO has a set of policies and procedures for allocating such grants, which are summarised below.

POGO issues a call to its members, generally once per year, for proposals for Working Groups, workshops, travel grants, training initiatives and other activities that are directly relevant to POGO's core mission, i.e. sustained, long-term ocean observing systems and shared use of infrastructure, data and information. This includes a template for applicants to complete and submit to the POGO Secretariat. Proposals must be submitted by members of POGO, although participants can be from other institutes if necessary. If a Working Group or other initiative wishes to be funded for a second year, a request for extension must be submitted, using the template provided, by the same deadline as the new proposals. A sub-committee of POGO members (who do not have conflicts of interest) reviews the proposals, according to a number of criteria, e.g. relevance to POGO's Strategy and priority areas; timeliness of proposal; adequacy of proposed deliverables and milestones; adequacy of WG/project membership (including geographic and gender balance). For training initiatives, the expected impact of the training and proposed methods for evaluating success are also taken into account. The Committee then makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees on the proposal(s) to take forward, depending on the available budget. The availability of other funding sources is not a determining factor in the selection process.

POGO and the Nippon Foundation have set up the NF-POGO Alumni Network for the Ocean (NANO) to maximise the benefits to the alumni from the training received and facilitate active contacts among the alumni. Through POGO, the Nippon Foundation funds modest regional and global research projects and public outreach projects. Proposals are received in response to an open call, and funding is renewed for successive years based on performance. The projects are selected according to the following criteria:

- (1) Projects should have an observational/applied focus (not "blue skies" research)
- (2) They should have a societal benefit focus
- (3) They should add value to and build upon existing programmes/projects
- (4) Funding should be used mainly for coordination (but also consumables, field work, modest equipment).
- (5) Projects should be coordinated by NANO alumni but participants can be a mixture of alumni and external scientists. They should be supported by senior mentors and endorsed by the participating institutes' senior management.
- (6) They should include a minimum of two different countries, preferably more.

POGO also offers scholarships/fellowships to individuals, both through the Nippon Foundation grant and using its own funds as well as a grant from the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR). These fellowships all operate following similar procedures, i.e. an announcement and call for applications is made, which is open to anyone who fulfils the country and scientific background/career stage requirements (e.g. Official Development Assistance recipient countries, early-career scientists, but not just those affiliated with POGO member institutions). An impartial committee composed of one or two members of the POGO Secretariat, representatives of any partner organisations and/or other experts from the scientific community (often involved in teaching/supervising students) is assembled to review the applications, based on a set of criteria such as quality of the applicant (education/experience/potential), quality of the training proposal or motivation letter, quality of the host institute (if applicable), relevance to POGO and to the priority areas identified in the call for proposals, and potential for sustained capacity building in the host institute/country. The scores are then totalled, and a number of top-ranked applicants are selected according to the budget available, with consideration given to gender and geographical balance, as well as occasionally other factors such as whether the candidate has received POGO funding previously.

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STRATEGIC REPORT

Achievement and performance

Charitable activities

POGO Communication Strategy:

POGO has continued to increase its visibility through its web presence, social media and representation at international meetings (both virtual and in-person). Specifically, POGO was represented by Secretariat staff, trustees or members, at:

- Eurofleets + Alumni Forum Workshop - on-line (May 2023)
- Deep Ocean Observing Strategy (DOOS) Annual Virtual Meeting (May 2023)
- OCEANS 2023 - in-person (Limerick, Ireland, June 2023)
- AtlantOS-GOOS Workshop on low-cost ocean observing technologies - on-line (June 2023)
- Trends, Reflections, Evolution, and Visions in Ocean Research (TREVOR) Symposium -in person (Plymouth, UK, Aug 2023)
- West Africa Marine Science Symposium (WAMSS) - in person (Accra, Ghana, Aug 2023)
- SCOR Annual Meeting - on-line (Oct 2023)
- UNFCCC Climate Conference COP28 - in person (Nov-Dec 2023)
- IAEA Workshop on capacity building methodology for ocean acidification - on-line (March 2024)
- Various planning meetings and webinars for the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development -virtual.

POGO representatives also contributed to various planning and oversight committees:

- International Quiet Ocean Experiment (IQOE) Leadership Group and Science Committee
- Ocean Info Hub Steering Group
- Ocean Biomolecular Observing Network (OBON) Scientific Advisory Committee and Executive Committee
- Executive Committee for the "Frontiers in Ocean Observing" Oceanography Magazine Supplement
- World Association of Marine Stations Steering Committee
- UN Ocean Decade Vision 2030 Challenge 2 Working Group
- UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development Strategic Communications Group
- University Arts London UNESCO x Climate Academy Judging Panel
- West Africa Marine Science Symposium Organising Committee
- All-Atlantic Floating University Network (@SeaNetwork) Advisory Committee
- Trevor Platt Fund (UK) Committee
- TREVOR Symposium Organising Committee
- NF-POGO Centre of Excellence at OFI Executive Management Committee

Presentations were given on POGO at several of the above events. POGO information packs have also been sent to a number of prospective members.

The second interactive POGO Annual Report has been published, covering the period Sept 2022 to August 2023. This was released in December 2023 and printed copies distributed at the POGO Annual Meeting in January 2024.

The POGO website has continued to be developed and updated with more information on how our members contribute to GOOS, new additions to the interactive timeline of POGO's history, and additions to the ocean observing case studies page. POGO maintains an active social media presence on Twitter (@POGO_Ocean), Facebook (/POGO.Ocean/), Instagram (/pogo_ocean) and LinkedIn (/pogo_ocean), as well as a minor presence on YouTube. Social media continues to be an excellent means to share news and information with an interested and interactive audience. In addition, the secretariat runs or shares responsibility for the following Twitter accounts: Ocean Training Partnership, NANO Network, and OBON.

Object 1: Advancing education in global ocean observation by identifying areas of further study for developing the science of global ocean observation:

Progress has been achieved by providing grants for Working Groups (WGs), through the Ocean Biomolecular Observing Network (OBON), endorsed by the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, the POGO and SCOR-sponsored International Quiet Ocean Experiment (IQOE), and the continuation of a Nippon Foundation-POGO Alumni Network for the Ocean (NANO) Global Project.

Ocean Biomolecular Observing Network:

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POGO is the lead organisation for OBON, a UN Ocean Decade programme endorsed in June 2021, which aims to utilise biomolecular technologies to monitor, research and understand life in the sea at every trophic level and scale, how life varies in response to climate and anthropogenic impacts, including fisheries, and how these changes impact society. This high-level objective is broken down into the following four more detailed objectives:

- " To build a coastal-to-open ocean multi-omics biodiversity observing system over the Ocean Decade.
- " To develop and transfer capacity so as to initiate additional marine biomolecular observation activities through training programs combined with funded equipment programs supported by development/aid agencies and philanthropy.
- " To enhance marine ecosystem models (including new modelling based on machine learning) by adding biomolecular components so the models can utilize data collected from the coordinated molecular observations and generate 4D multi-omic biodiversity seascapes.
- " To address pressing scientific, management, and policy questions linked to the state and dynamics of life in the ocean, including exploited resources and those affected by other pressures.

This year POGO has continued to support the development of OBON, through Secretariat support, as well as the provision of salary for a part-time Programme Assistant (July-Nov 2023) and financial support for a hybrid meeting of the OBON Science Advisory Council (SAC) and OBON projects in Sept 2023 (mostly funded by a grant from the Richard Lounsbery Foundation).

Highlights:

- " Further development of SAC, with new members appointed from USA and Japan.
- " Establishment of a smaller Executive Committee in July 2023, which has been meeting every two weeks.
- " Endorsement of another 4 UN Decade Projects (see <https://www.oceandecade.org/actions/ocean-biomolecular-observing-network-obon/>)
- " Project meetings held in virtual mode in April 2023 and in hybrid mode in Plymouth, UK (Sept 23).
- " Satellite event accepted for the UN Ocean Decade Conference in collaboration with the Marine Life 2030 programme
- " OBON Strategy finalised in March 2023.
- " New website under development and newsletters issued in Aug and Nov 2023.

International Quiet Ocean Experiment (IQOE)

Funding (10K GBP) allocated by POGO in 2020 to support the development of the Ocean Sound Essential Ocean Variable Implementation Plan

POGO and SCOR have been co-sponsoring the International Quiet Ocean Experiment (IQOE) since 2011, with seed funding from the Sloan Foundation and subsequent support for activities provided by the Richard Lounsbery Foundation. IQOE is an international scientific programme to promote research, observations, and modelling to improve understanding of ocean soundscapes and effects of sound on marine organisms. IQOE is nearing the end of its 10-year life span and the IQOE Science Committee (SC) has been focussing this year on assessing IQOE's progress against the original objectives, as well as discussing what IQOE should aim to achieve in its last 2-3 years, and what the project's legacy should be.

Highlights:

- o The IQOE SC met on 26-27 April 2023, at WHOI, USA, chaired by Peter Tyack. All 10 SC members participated either in person or remotely. Meeting participants reviewed ongoing IQOE activities, evaluated the progress of IQOE after 8 years, and planned for the coming year. The meeting concluded with a discussion of future activities of IQOE. Participants agreed that IQOE has provided a unique framework for developing international cooperation on ocean acoustics and bioacoustics, and has built a foundation that will be important for the next several years of IQOE implementation (see IQOE self-appraisal).
- o Following the development of the Ocean Sound Essential Ocean Variable (EOV) Specification Sheet by a POGO-IQOE Working Group and its acceptance by the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), IQOE was given the responsibility for the implementation of this EOV. A committee was formed in 2020 to write an Implementation Plan for the Ocean Sound EOV, with support from POGO and SCOR. During 2022-23, the Implementation Plan was made publicly available for community review and underwent several rounds of editing and internal review, before approval by POGO and SCOR. The Plan was published in November 2023.
- o Following the Virtual IQOE Workshop on Low-Cost, Self-contained Underwater Acoustic Recording Systems in Dec 2021, a Working Group has been established on Low-Cost Hydrophones for Research, Education and Citizen Science, chaired by Lucille Chapuis (University of Bristol, UK). The WG has met several times on-line and has been exploring possible sources of funding for the low-cost hydrophone development. They also put out a call for tender to companies interested in producing such a hydrophone commercially.

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o Global Library of Underwater Biological Sounds (GLUBS): GLUBS is a project of the IQOE WG on Acoustic Measurement of Ocean Biodiversity Hotspots, led by Miles Parsons (AIMS, Australia). The GLUBS mission is to develop and merge novel technologies with existing bioacoustics resources to make the exploration of biological sounds more accessible to researchers, managers, educators, and enthusiasts. A two-day workshop, funded by the Lounsbery Foundation, was held at WHOI in April 2023 to discuss plans to develop an integrated platform to facilitate building reference dictionaries and machine learning training databases for as many identified and unidentified underwater sounds as possible. A news release about GLUBS was issued in April 2023, which was picked up and reported on by media worldwide. A GLUBS-inspired Research Focus has been opened in Frontiers in Remote Sensing, with a manuscript submission deadline of 24 November 2023.

WG on Building Capacity in Ocean Acidification Monitoring in the Gulf of Guinea (BIOTTA)

Grant (10K EUR) awarded to the University of Ghana to lead the WG and support capacity building workshop; funding has leveraged 100K USD from the Ocean Foundation to purchase equipment to set up the monitoring stations.

The BIOTTA working group was set up to equip graduate students, early career ocean scientists and other marine science professionals in the GoG region with skills on sustainable OA data acquisition to expand our understanding of the threats, risks and impacts to marine ecosystems and chart pathways for sustainable management of marine resources at risk to ocean acidification (OA) in the GoG region. This working group hopes to also bridge national, regional and international data gaps in ocean acidification.

BIOTTA aims to complement global efforts such as the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON) and the International Ocean Carbon Coordination Project (IOCCP) by convening a series of virtual regional workshops and webinars to train young and professional scientists in setting up and maintaining OA observation systems in the GoG and other African coastal waters.

The BIOTTA working group objectives are to:

- o Develop a coordinated network for observing OA in the GoG
- o Develop capabilities to undertake analysis of seawater OA parameters using low-cost, readily available and easy-to-use equipment.
- o Map OA hotspots in BIOTTA member countries for long-term OA monitoring.
- o Initiate OA monitoring activities in BIOTTA member countries after successful mapping of hotspots in these countries, making use of OA observation kits developed by GOA-ON and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).
- o Integrate into global OA observing networks, such as GOA-ON, with the goal to share and make data available to the global ocean observing community.

Highlights:

" 100K USD obtained from The Ocean Foundation (TOF) to purchase equipment to set up the monitoring stations. Surveys have been completed by the OA kit beneficiaries (in Benin, Cameroon and Nigeria) and orders for equipment and consumables have been placed.

" The Ocean Foundation has continued to fund a Coordinator at the University of Ghana to support BIOTTA.

" Regular on-line meetings have been held between representatives of GOA-ON, TOF, IOC-UNESCO, and IAEA, to discuss and coordinate ongoing and planned OA activities in the GoG/West Africa region, in particular coordinating the BIOTTA training events with others planned in the region.

" The BIOTTA PI has been working with a colleague in Liberia on the establishment of a GOA-ON Sub-Hub for West Africa.

Action for Sustainable Ocean Acidification Research (ASOAR)

Grant (9.936 K EUR) awarded to Plymouth Marine Laboratory to lead the WG and host a hybrid workshop.

Ocean acidification (OA) is a global issue, with the driver being global emissions of carbon dioxide. However, regional and local seawater conditions affect the rate of acidification, making it more difficult to predict local impacts and consequences of OA. Coordinated monitoring efforts are required to gather informative and scale-able data on the progress of OA and to support positive action for protecting the marine environment. Over recent years the Global Ocean Acidification Observing Network (GOA-ON), a network set up to establish universal principles for monitoring OA, bring together data access, and to share and exchange knowledge, has formed regional 'hubs' to allow specific regions to coordinate activities, data and projects.

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The UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development has endorsed a 10-year programme of coordinated OA research proposed by GOA-ON. The Ocean Acidification Research for Sustainability (OARS) programme sets out 7 outcomes that need to be delivered by the global OA community (see <http://www.goa-on.org/oars/overview.php>.) A large part of this delivery will be through activities and engagements planned and executed through the GOA-ON regional hubs. The Action for Sustainable Ocean Acidification Research (ASOAR) POGO working group will consider how the North-East Atlantic hub will deliver on the outcomes of OARS. The working group also includes participation from other regional hubs to ensure the benefits of the group discussions are disseminated beyond the NE Atlantic region and facilitate cross-hub collaborations and interactions.

Highlights:

- A hybrid meeting was held in March 2023 at PML, UK, to review and build on the draft implementation plans (Outcome White Papers) produced by the OARS outcome champions, to identify the activities and engagements that can be delivered for the Atlantic region and more broadly.
- Over two days, the Workshop participants discussed the OARS implementation plans (Outcome White Papers) to assess the needs and align these with the known OA activities both in the Atlantic and more globally, and made recommendations for delivering action for the Atlantic region, and more broadly.
- The Workshop outputs were (1) Documented action plan for participants to take back to their hubs as ways to move the OARS outcomes forward, and (2) Documented action plan for cross-hub activities with suggested funding routes and recommendations on how these activities can be delivered.

Gulf of Mexico Oceanographic and Meteorological Observation Group

Grant (10K EUR) awarded to CICESE, Mexico, to lead the WG and host a workshop.

Monitoring is key to numerical modelling efforts for predicting hurricanes and frontal systems, assessing and sustaining ecosystem health and function, managing marine resources, optimising restoration efforts and assessing anthropogenic impacts from climate change, eutrophication, loss of biodiversity, deoxygenation, acidification, overfishing and sea level rise. However, when in situ monitoring efforts are examined at a basin or ocean level, they can vary widely, particularly when multiple surrounding countries are involved. This is due to differences in the extent of sustained government funding, the presence/absence of agencies tasked with data collection, curation, storage and distribution, and dissimilarities in human and infrastructure capacities.

The Gulf of Mexico (GoM) covers about 1.6 million km² and is surrounded by Mexico, the United States, and Cuba. Historically, most of the continuous in situ monitoring efforts have been limited to coastal areas and US waters, with the notable exception of moorings within the deep water region of the Mexican EEZ and Yucatan Channel as well as government-mandated environmental monitoring of oil exploration and exploitation leases in the southern Gulf (which is not currently public). Recently, the capacity to monitor Mexican waters was expanded through the execution of the CIGOM (Gulf of Mexico Research Consortium) project, which was funded by the National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT) and the Ministry of Energy (SENER) Hydrocarbon Fund so to build scientific capacity toward oil spill preparedness.

The goals of the Gulf of Mexico Oceanographic and Meteorological Observation Group funded by POGO are to (1) survey existing monitoring efforts and gauge their permanence through time, (2) evaluate the spatial and temporal scales over which they operate, (3) detect key data gaps and compare current measurements with the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) essential ocean variables and essential climate variables, (4) prioritise monitoring data needs and identify agencies or sectors that would benefit, and (5) outline a plan for engagement entities responsible for monitoring efforts, stakeholders and users of information. The scope of the survey will focus on the continental shelves and deep water region of the Gulf of Mexico, and the work group will include participants from the US, Mexico and Cuba.

An up-to-date assessment of the ocean monitoring efforts currently in place throughout the GoM will provide the basis for advising government agencies regarding their availability and conditions of use, prioritising the most pressing data needs, and working toward a basin-wide integrated ocean observing system that could be linked to global efforts.

Highlights:

" The GMOMOG met in Ensenada, Mexico, from 26 - 27 April 2023 to survey existing monitoring efforts and gauge their permanence through time, evaluate the spatial and temporal scales over which they operate, detect critical data gaps, and categorize present-day measurements to GOOS Essential Ocean Variables and Essential Climate Variables.

" The workgroup defined monitoring as recurrent and structured observations of oceanographic or meteorological variables focused on ongoing in situ measurements. It also decided to focus the survey and gap analysis on the shelves and deep-water region and current, meteorological, and sea-level stations near or on the coast.

" Twenty-seven in-person and four remote participants affiliated to Mexican (CICESE, UABC, UNAM, IMN-UNAM, Cuban (INSMET), and USA (GCOOS, TAMU, UM, USF) institutions presented summaries of ongoing ocean observations in the Gulf of Mexico.

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" A detailed survey of fixed stations (including moorings) that provide public data was compiled and variables were classified as GOOS Essential Variables. The operation of these stations was confirmed between February and April. A total of 284 stations were identified Gulf-wide, with the majority operating in US waters. Most of the measurements made at these stations were meteorological, hydrographic, sea levels, and currents, and that analysis indicates ocean physics makes up most of the ongoing observational efforts.

" The GMOMOG is preparing a detailed report of their survey and the recommendations for expanding fixed stations to the central and southern Gulf of Mexico, as well as identifying agencies or sectors that would benefit.

CEODOS Chile: A consortium for surveying the coastal ocean in the eastern South Pacific

Grant (10K EUR) awarded to COPAS, University of Concepcion, Chile, to lead the WG and host 2 workshops.

The CEODOS program (co-coordinated by the COPAS center) is a new Chilean initiative that will follow the present and future status of the biological pump along the entire coast of Chile every 5 years.

The first expedition, in the frame of TARA MICROBIOME (a 2-year campaign covering South America and Africa) was held in 2021. Genomics and biogeochemical samples will be analysed and results integrated into AI algorithms in order to get a better understanding and prediction capacity of the future of carbon sequestration in the eastern south Pacific.

POGO is funding two bilateral workshops for data analysis in Concepcion (Chile) and Banyuls sur Mer (France) that will allow integrating data of several biomes generated by this expedition.

Main milestones of the CEODOS Chile / ATLANTECO working group include but are not restricted to:

- Integration of data bases of the Pacific leg TARA MICROBIOME expedition: deliverable to be a joint publication
- Development of indicators of carbon productivity along the Chilean coast (to be achieved by the end of 2023)
- Long term data acquisition coordination for ocean observatory policies at key points of the Chilean coast (2024)
- Report on Ocean monitoring and governance for Chilean government (2023)
- TARA Microbiome special issue (2024)
- Indicators for key planktonic areas: first prototype to be achieved in Magallanes area South of Chile (2023)
- Organization of CEODOS II expedition along the Chilean coast (to be carried out in 2026).

Coastal Marine Heatwaves Interdisciplinary Research group (CMHIR)

Grant (10K EUR) awarded to the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) to organise a workshop at the University of Concepcion, Chile and produce a peer-reviewed publication

Marine heatwaves (MHWs) have become an urgent issue regarding climate risks due to their proliferation in frequency, duration, magnitude, and spatial extent. These phenomena have a strong impact not only at the global and regional level (e.g., substantial events in the Northeast Pacific (2013-15), Mediterranean Sea (2003) and Tasman Sea (2015/16 and 2017/18)), but also at the local level. In this sense, MHWs have become an increasingly serious threat not just from the perspective of pelagic and benthic ecology on the continental shelf but also for coastal aquaculture and fisheries, as demonstrated by many reports of fisheries closures from around the world caused by MHWs. It is noteworthy that estuaries, in particular, represent environments with high productivity and biodiversity that sustain important economic activities like aquaculture and fisheries.

While our understanding about the causes, impacts, duration and extension of MHWs has increased significantly during the last 10 years, this information has largely come from large scale studies of the global or regional oceans. This large-scale perspective is informed by climate models and remote sensing as the main data sources, which are unable to spatially resolve smaller coastal systems such as estuaries and bays. To gain insight into the coastal response to MHWs, this group proposes a different approach, combining in-situ observations, remote sensing and high-resolution modelling in the coastal zone. The geographic intercomparison will contribute to a better understanding about the impact of MHWs on the global coastal areas and the potential implications under climate change scenarios.

The WG aims to develop an active collaboration and coordination to establish a communication that allows us to highlight the importance and necessity of studying the implications and consequences of MHWs in coastal areas. So far, the impact of MHWs in coastal areas has been evaluated in few recent papers; however, our WG is multidisciplinary, including coastal ecologists, coastal modellers and climate scientists. Hence, the distinctive feature of this group is its special focus on the shallow continental shelf and its interdisciplinarity. We plan to keep an active communication and coordinate our respective research efforts so that we can generate intercomparison, taking advantage of the interesting geographic diversity (Canada, North America's east and west coasts, South America's west coast, Australia's southeast coast, Mediterranean Sea, Antarctica's glacial embayments).

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Highlights:

The Coastal Marine Heatwave Interdisciplinary Research group (CMHIR, <https://coastalmhw.org/>) successfully organized the Workshop: Marine heatwaves dynamics and impacts on coastal and estuarine ecosystems. This event was held at the University of Concepción (Chile) and lasted for 3 days (9-11 April 2024). This activity gathered 42 attendees in person and 76 on-line, from 14 countries (Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, France, Germany, Italy, Peru, South Africa, Spain, and UK). The workshop generated an active discussion on the impact of marine heatwaves on ecosystems, communities, and organisms. By combining online and in-person talks, this workshop shared with academics, students, and the community the different aspects of marine heatwaves, covering topics like global and regional events, drivers, and local impacts. Moreover, the experts presented studies focused on the consequences of these marine extreme events on seaweeds (kelps), phytoplankton, zooplankton, and benthic organisms. The event included an internal POGO WG meeting.

SOOS Symposium

Grant (8.2K EUR) awarded to the Institute of Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS) to support early-career scientists from developing countries to attend the inaugural Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS) Symposium

The Southern Ocean Observing System (SOOS) hosted its inaugural SOOS Symposium, "Southern Ocean in a Changing World", from the 14th to 18th of August 2023 in Hobart, Australia. The Symposium was attended by 300 scientists from 25 nations for a week of plenary presentations, parallel sessions and workshops covering a wide spectrum of Southern Ocean research. In light of the escalating climate crisis, a community statement calling for an urgent expansion of Southern Ocean observations was released. Funding support from POGO and the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR) allowed SOOS to provide travel scholarships to eight early career researchers from developing countries to assist with their travel to attend the SOOS Symposium.

NANO Global Project "A global study of productivity, deoxygenation and ocean acidification at selected coastal sites":

Research grants awarded to 18 participating institutions in the following countries: Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Nigeria, Senegal, Thailand, Togo and Tunisia.

The NANO global project has three major components:

- Promote in situ and remotely sensed observations of the ocean at selected coastal sites in order to contribute to the global effort of monitoring the levels of ocean acidification and deoxygenation;
- Provide opportunities to the project participants for: i) capacity building to strengthen their efforts to monitor levels of acidification and oxygenation; ii) join larger observation networks of ocean acidification and deoxygenation;
- Organize workshops and webinars dedicated to share experiences in i) monitoring levels of productivity, acidification and oxygenation; ii) training on marine data management; iii) compare results from fieldwork and produce a biogeographic distribution of the stations.

Field work was conducted in 2023-24 in all countries, for a set of variables (e.g., temperature, chlorophyll-a, pigments, bio-optical variables, conductivity, nutrients, total alkalinity, pH, dissolved oxygen, phytoplankton) varying from station to station. The budget was allocated depending on the local sampling costs, so as to enable each country to sample on a bimonthly basis (up to a maximum of 3K EUR per station).

In addition, a NANO-DOAP workshop was held at Plymouth Marine Laboratory (PML), UK from 7 August 2023 to 8 August 2023, back-to-back with the TREVOR Symposium, which most of the NANO participants also attended. The main objective of the workshop was to bring together the participants of the project to work on a manuscript that will present the results of the first interstation analysis. In addition, it was an important opportunity to discuss the progress and future directions of the project.

In a new collaboration with the Ocean Data Network (US-based company involved in the SAGITTA development), POGO and NANO-DOAP are supporting a pilot initiative in Ghana of attaching temperature sensors to fishing nets providing temperature profiles in near-real time. Sensors were installed in two artisanal fishing boats and nets in August 2023 and a portal has been developed for data visualisation. Two extra sensors were brought to Ghana and ODN & the University of Ghana team are planning to install them on semi-industrial trawlers.

Object 2: The promotion of research in global ocean observation for the public benefit and the publication and dissemination of the useful results of such research:

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POGO outreach and advocacy:

Public outreach is normally conducted through participation in international exhibitions, and 2023/24 saw a full return to face-to-face exhibitions, meetings and conferences. During this year, POGO participated in various events both in-person and virtually (see section on Communication Strategy).

All of POGO's brochures, leaflets and other written products are available as digital versions online. POGO has now moved away from printed (paper) materials, with the exception of small quantities of postcards to distribute, otherwise favouring the display of laminated 'hard copies' of leaflets on our booths, and of QR codes on our promotional banners to give mobile device users quick and easy access to digital copies. We are also limiting the production and handing out of branded USB Flash Drives. For the second time, this year an interactive annual report has been produced (<https://pogo-ocean.org/pogo-annual-report/>).

The Secretariat has continued to add to the POGO Case Studies illustrating the socio-economic benefits of ocean observing. A freelance science writer was contracted to work on the project and to interact directly with researchers at POGO institutions. From the call for story ideas previously issued to all POGO members, the third phase of the project focussed on Geohazards, with case studies from India and France. The case studies are designed for use in a variety of settings - website, social media, print, etc - to help those outside the ocean observing community to understand the value of such observations in the wider societal context, and the critical need for GOOS. An Interactive Map on the POGO website (<https://pogo-ocean.org/pogo-member-case-studies/>) links to each example, and to printable PDFs.

This year, POGO has established an Advocacy WG, composed of 8 POGO member institution representatives from around the world. The WG met several times on-line and drafted or contributed to statements for two major international events: the COP28 Climate Conference and the UN Ocean Decade Conference. Both statements were circulated to the POGO membership for signature and shared with other organisations for their endorsement.

NANO Outreach

In addition to conducting time-series coastal ocean observations, the NANO-DOAP project often includes outreach and citizen science activities conducted by the project participants. This year, various outreach activities were organised and delivered by project participants in Argentina, Bangladesh, India, Mexico, and Nigeria.

In a previous year, NANO launched two calls for NANO-DOAP participants and NANO members to submit proposals for outreach activities with the objective of reaching out to the local community, especially school children, to increase their understanding of the importance of the ocean, marine life, resources, and ocean observations. The selected proposals would receive large classroom kits containing 100 foldscopes each, paper microscopes with 140x magnification lenses. NANO-DOAP participants would also receive one portable HD digital microscope to be used at their activities.

In total, 11 proposals were accepted, five of them within the NANO-DOAP call and seven from the call to NANO members. 17 large classroom kits of foldscopes were acquired by NANO and shipped to the participants. Activities took place during 2023 and reached an estimated number of nearly 2000 individuals, mostly secondary and high school students in 10 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Citizen Observations of Local Litter in Coastal ECosysTems (COLLECT) -citizen science project

Project funded by the Richard Lounsbery Foundation, led by Dr. Ana Catarino from the Flanders Marine Institute (Belgium) and Dr. Edem Mahu from the University of Ghana, 100K USD, Jan 2021 - July 2023. Funds provided to the University of Ghana, NIOMR, University of Calabar, CURAT, IRHOB, IMAR and INRH.

The COLLECT project aimed at empowering students to become citizen scientists, by acquiring data on plastic litter distribution on sandy beaches, in West/North-African countries and in one South-East Asian country. In this project, students and school teachers collaborated closely with local experts in Benin, Cabo Verde, Co?te d'Ivoire, Ghana, Morocco, Nigeria and Malaysia. The COLLECT project consisted of training local students (15 - 18 years old) from ten high schools on sampling and analysing macro-, meso- and microplastics in beach sediments, using a quantitative assessment protocol. The project further aimed to measure the impact of the citizen science intervention in ocean literacy, pro environmental behaviour, and wellbeing of the participating students.

All documents and materials resulting from this project are (/will be) open access and available according to the FAIR Principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable). The results and outcomes from COLLECT contribute to expanding knowledge and establishing baseline information on coastal plastic pollution, with citizen science being an enabler of open science, allowing data to be freely available to the public, academics and policymakers. Expected results from the use of the COLLECT protocol globally will further contribute to the identification of hotspots of coastal plastic litter, and bring awareness to local communities on the potential consequences of plastic pollution. The COLLECT project contributes with data suitable to survey plastic litter to the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), in particular to SDG 14, on the sustainable use of the ocean.

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COLLECT has reached over 400 students from ten different schools, of which nearly 240 participants answered a social sciences questionnaire. Students attended two sampling seasons (November/December 2021, March/April 2022), and collected relevant data on litter distribution which will be submitted to The European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet) central beach litter database, operated by EMODnet Chemistry (www.emodnet-chemistry.eu). The initiative impact assessment, led by Marine Severin (PhD student), demonstrated that, in general, the students had a very high baseline for knowledge of the "plastic litter" issue and its impact, and that after participating in the project, their well-being was positively impacted. Students demonstrated also increased pro-environmental behaviours, and the project had a positive impact on their ocean literacy.

The project has currently led to two peer-reviewed papers so far, a methodology paper (Catarino et al 2023, *Frontiers in Marine Science*), and a paper analysing the impact of the project on the well-being and pro-environmental behaviours of the participants (Severin et al 2023, *Frontiers in Psychology*). A third scientific manuscript is currently under preparation, where the data on marine litter distribution and abundance acquired during the project will be analysed. The Data management Plan (DMP) of the project, as well as all sampling procedures are available (open access) and findable using a digital object identifier (DOI, see list below).

All developed educational materials were made available in the project working languages: English, French, Portuguese and Spanish. This included simplified and illustrated sampling procedures and video animations. Letters, information and consent forms are also available in all project working languages. COLLECT was featured in the media of participating countries and a complete list of TV reports, newspaper mentions, blog posts etc is available in the publication Catarino et al 2023, *Frontiers in Marine Science*. The complete list of presentations in scientific conferences (nine posters or oral presentations) and meetings is also available in the same publication.

The final phase of the project consisted of an inter-comparison study of microplastics analysis between participating laboratories in Belgium, UK and Malaysia; production of a short video and poster for distribution to the schools and for POGO to promote and share the results of the project; and a presentation on COLLECT at the West African Marine Science Symposium.

The full list of publications from the project can be found at <https://pogo-ocean.org/innovation-in-ocean-observing/activities/collect-citizen-observation-of-local-litter-in-coastal-ecosystems/>.

South East Asia project for General Regional Awareness of Seagrass by Society (SEAGRASS)

Grant awarded to the Centre for Marine and Coastal Studies (CEMACS) of Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) to cover field trip expenses, production of videos and pamphlets, and expenses for international speakers.

The Straits of Malacca is the second busiest ocean maritime trade route in the world with a passage of over a thousand ships a day transiting its waterways. Naturally, this brings with it a lot of environmental pressure and risks to existing natural habitats. However, there are still very special pockets of marine habitats that possess high diversities of marine life such as shallow seas, intertidal mudflats, uninhabited islands and seagrass beds. We have chosen the Middle Bank (northern Straits of Malacca) - an area of rich seagrass community to study its changing evolution in an evolving climatic and anthropogenic influence. As the only extensive and established seagrass area in the northern Straits of Malacca, Middle Bank seagrass meadow serves as nursery ground for many commercially important fish and mollusc species. Small-scale fisheries using artisanal fishing gears are also done by local coastal communities at the seagrass meadow as their livelihood. Apart from physical uses for societal and economic importance, CEMACS has been working closely with Penang State Government to gazette this area as ecologically important, serving as a carbon sink (complementing adjacent mangrove area) to mitigate climate change and offset the state's carbon emission.

The proximity of the Middle Bank to a World Heritage Site can be exploited to drive awareness and education on the value of these marine habitats to the general public. We hope this will encourage the local government and agencies to set up a marine protected area for research, monitoring and education. Awareness and education programmes will be deliberated by the cooperative partners in the project where this may later be promoted to other relevant areas of the region and our global partners.

In this year's engagement activities, CEMACS conducted the Marine Field Course: Biodiversity & Conservation for a group of college students from Kolej Yayasan UEM, Selangor (23 - 26 Feb 2024). The students were introduced to ecological techniques, microscopy skills, aquaculture basics and introduced to the seagrass ecosystem. The group of 35 students was exposed to the seagrass ecosystem and learnt how transect lines are used along with quadrats to measure and monitor the life forms in this habitat.

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Exploring the island's seagrass meadows becomes an educational adventure, where students can witness firsthand the significance of these ecosystems in supporting marine life. Students learnt about the various species inhabiting the seagrass bed, the intricate web of ecological relationships, and the critical role seagrasses play in maintaining a healthy marine environment. This experiential learning opportunity not only broadens students' understanding of marine ecosystems but also fosters an appreciation for the need to preserve and protect these habitats. Moreover, the visit provides a chance for students to actively participate in local conservation efforts, contributing to the sustainable management of Pulau Gazumbo's marine resources.

Collaborations with other organisations:

West Africa Marine Science Symposium (WAMSS)

The Symposium took place in Ghana from 18 to 20 August 2023, with 163 participants from 18 countries - both within the region and overseas. It was an Ocean Decade endorsed activity that brought together marine and coastal experts, storytellers, youth, government bodies, non-governmental organisations, funders, and National Geographic Society Explorers from and working in West Africa in order to: Foster critical knowledge exchange and cross-pollinate perspectives on the challenges and opportunities in the region; share successes and lessons learned with practitioners across sectors as well as the broader public; and engage early-career professionals and youth to inspire and equip the next generation of marine and coastal scientists, managers, and conservationists with key knowledge and skills. WAMSS highlighted career paths and funding opportunities, offered grant writing workshops, and forged critical connections, identifying successful marine research and conservation models.

The symposium was chaired by POGO trustee Dr. Edem Mahu, organised by University of Ghana and supported by National Geographic Society, POGO, NEWF and COESSING. The POGO Secretariat was represented in-person by Scientific Coordinator, Dr Lilian Krug, who delivered a talk on opportunities for capacity development in ocean observations. The audience for her presentation also included participants of the Coastal Ocean Environment Summer School In Nigeria and Ghana (COESSING) training, which overlapped with the Symposium.

Trends, Reflections, Evolution, and Visions in Ocean Research (TREVOR) Symposium

This international symposium was hosted by the Plymouth Marine Laboratory and attended by some 140 participants from around the globe. The symposium was organised as a celebration of the scientific life of Prof. Trevor Platt, former Executive Director of POGO. Prof. Nick Owens, Chair of POGO, delivered the keynote lecture on "The Ocean as a Common Weal". The oral sessions were organised around a series of themes - physical and biological interactions; marine optics and ocean colour; physiological ecology of marine phytoplankton; water quality and human health; and size and ecosystem structure of aquatic communities - reflecting the broad scientific interests of Prof. Platt. There were also three networking sessions that dealt with capacity building and sustaining it; the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals relevant for water; and the concluding session that examined lessons learned and the way forward. The symposium also included two poster sessions.

The symposium was organised with capacity building very much at the heart of it, and was designed as a continuation of the preceding online and in-person training course on Satellite-Based Tools for Investigating Aquatic Ecosystems. Students and Early Career Researchers were prominent in the agenda as speakers, session co-chairs and poster presenters. Support from POGO, and the juxtaposition of a NANO meeting at PML just prior to the symposium were instrumental in significantly enhancing developing-country participation in the event.

The organising committee included Sophie Seeyave and Lilian Krug from the POGO Secretariat, and Dr Shubha Sathyendranath, former POGO Executive Director, along with many TPSF members from around the world.

The success of the symposium is a testament to what can be achieved when many like-minded organisations come together and work jointly towards a common goal, with many volunteers working tirelessly to achieve that goal. The feedback from the participants was uniformly positive, and by popular demand, the organisers are considering the possibility of organising a similar event three years from now.

Object 3: The provision of scholarships and research fellowships:

Scholarships and fellowships have been provided to 25 early-career scientists for training/education periods of between 3 and 10 months during this financial year. These consisted of:

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- **Scholarships for 10 scholars from 10 countries to attend the Nippon Foundation-POGO Centre of Excellence in Observational Oceanography** hosted by the Alfred Wegener Institute (a POGO member institute) in Germany. The delayed 2022-23 programme was conducted between June 2023 and April 2024, with a graduation and closing ceremony held in Berlin on 25 April 2024 to mark the end of the 10-year programme hosted by the AWI, ahead of its relocation to Canada. The postgraduate-level training consisted of 1- to 2-week modules on all aspects of observational oceanography (e.g. physical, chemical, biological, remote sensing, modelling) as well as key skills (scientific writing, presentation skills, scientific communication, research ethics) and a 3-month individual research project. The scholars were from Argentina, Brazil, India, Lebanon, Madagascar, the Philippines, Portugal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania. Associated with the 2022-23 grant was an additional Regional Training Programme in Togo (hosted by former NF-POGO CoF scholar Essowe Panassa) in Nov 2023, which provided training to 20 early-career scientists from Togo, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Benin, Senegal, and Liberia. The 12-day training included lectures, hands on exercises and a field trip to Port of Lomé focusing on Marine pollution, Numerical modelling of pollutants/microplastics transport, Statistics for marine pollution and biogeochemical data analyses, and Monitoring of EOVs and microplastics at the sea surface and on a sandy beach. Fieldwork took place at Port of Lomé, with an entire day of activities which covered measurement of EOVs from a boat and micro and macroplastics sampling on the beach.

- **5 Visiting Fellowships awarded to early-career scientists from developing countries to spend up to 3 months at another research institute** receiving individual training and supervision on a research topic of their choice. All 5 fellows selected in 2023 were able to complete or initiate their fellowships during this financial year. The fellows were from Algeria, Brazil, Colombia, and India, and visited research institutes in Australia, France, Germany, and Japan.

- **10 Shipboard Training fellowships on-board research ships** to receive hands-on training in sampling and analysis techniques, and in some cases an additional one-month stay at the host research institute prior to the cruise and a further month after the cruise to analyse the data and interpret the results. Fellows were from Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Cabo Verde, India, and Morocco, and the host institutes were in Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, and Spain.

The feedback on these programmes was overwhelmingly positive, not only from the scholars and fellows, but also from the host supervisors and parent supervisors, who commented on the networking and collaborations as well as the cultural exchanges facilitated by the programmes, and the enhanced skills and knowledge the fellows bring back to their home institutes and pass on to their peers.

This year, one grant was awarded to 1 member institution to support the following training programme:

Training course on "Ocean Observations for Coastal Applications" (Feb 2024)

Grant (8,865 EUR) awarded to Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)

The ITCOocean (a UNESCO Category-II Centre) at INCOIS, Hyderabad, India hosted a POGO-funded international training program 'Ocean Observations for Coastal Applications' during 29 Jan-7 Feb, 2024. The gender-balanced pool of 30 participants belonged to 11 countries. This was the first professional training ever for at least two young researchers from outside the host country.

The training was coordinated by POGO-alumni Dr. Nimit Kumar with the support of regional POGO partners including Dr. Subrata Sarker (SUST, Bangladesh) who is also a POGO-CoF alumni and Coordinator of the NANO-DOAP project, and POGO member Prof. Aileen Tan (CEMACS, Malaysia). The training featured invited talk by Dr. Eric Raes who leads OceanOmics project of Minderoo Foundation, which is part of the POGO-led endorsed Ocean Decade action OBON.

With the support extended by INCOIS, the trainees participated in the first ever in-person regional ocean decade conference IO-Con 2024, organized by DCC-IOR during 1-3 Feb 2024. The participation of the trainees was not limited to attendance but was also in the form of invited speakers and panellists. This provided a unique opportunity to introduce them to the UN Ocean Decade as well as ECOP's vital inputs to the Vision 2030 process, which leads to the global conference at Barcelona, Spain in April 2024. The trainees also participated in a side-event dedicated to ECOPs.

Followed by the theory and conference, the trainees were taken to eastern port city of Visakhapatnam, along with another batch of international trainees which provided not only a hands-on field campaign experience but also wider international networking opportunities beyond the pool of this training.

In addition, grants were awarded to two institutes in 2020 and 2021, respectively, for training courses which were delayed due to Covid-19 restrictions in China, and finally conducted in 2023:

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Training course on "Subsurface Mooring Design, Recovery and Deployment"

Grant (7K EUR) awarded to Institute of Oceanology, Chinese Academy of Sciences (IOCAS) (payment of 75% made in 2020, balance paid in 2023)

POGO member, the Institute of Oceanology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (IOCAS), successfully hosted a Training Course on Subsurface Mooring Observation in Qingdao from July 16 to July 22. 60 trainees from 22 countries/regions around the world, as well as renowned experts and early career scientists, participated in the training.

During the training, a series of highly professional lectures relating to ocean observations and research were presented. Scientists from IOCAS provided trainees with detailed instructions on the design, deployment, and recovery process of subsurface mooring observations, and also the data processing, analysis methods, and scientific interpretations of both subsurface mooring data and other in-situ observations in ocean circulation, internal waves, and climate research. IOCAS also organised field training for all trainees on the deployment and recovery of subsurface mooring, which was conducted on a scientific research vessel in the surrounding waters of Qingdao.

It was noted that this is the beginning of concerted efforts by IOCAS, in collaboration with scientists from all over the world, to support long-term subsurface ocean observations in open oceans, which is the key for ocean and climate community to understand the climate variability better and to gain sustainable development of the ocean. IOCAS will continue to host such training courses in the future to promote global ocean observing research, and warmly welcomes cooperation and support from research institutions or universities worldwide.

Training course on "Principles and Applications of BGC-Argo"

Grant (8K EUR) awarded to Second Institute of Oceanography (both payments made in 2023)

The International Training Course on "Principles and Applications of BGC-Argo", hosted by POGO member, Second Institute of Oceanography, Ministry of Natural Resources (SIO/MNR), and funded by the State Key Laboratory of Satellite Ocean Environment Dynamics (SOED) and POGO, was successfully held in Hangzhou, China, from 15th to 20th November, 2023.

The training course lasted for 6 days, with a total of 19 trainees. Among them, 9 international trainees came from seven countries in Asia and Africa, including Bangladesh, Egypt, India, Malaysia, Morocco, Philippines, and Saudi Arabia. The remaining 10 domestic trainees were from Chinese universities and research institutions, such as Ocean University of China, East China Normal University, Xiamen University, and the National Marine Technology Center.

The lectures were delivered by six instructors, covering various aspects of the emerging ocean biogeochemical observation platform, BGC-Argo, including an introduction to the Argo program, BGC-Argo float principles, BGC-Argo data quality control, and applications in marine ecosystem dynamics, biogeochemistry, remote sensing, and numerical ocean modelling. Besides, lectures also included hands-on exercises on BGC-Argo data downloading, visualization, processing, and analysis.

On the final day, trainees showcased their research plans for utilizing BGC-Argo data in future. The instructors not only provided specific guidance and suggestions for their research plans, but also committed to assisting them in ongoing BGC-Argo-related studies after the training. The successful organization of this training course has contributed to the development of observational and research capabilities in BGC-Argo for developing countries in Asia and Africa. Furthermore, it fostered collaboration and communication among four POGO members: MBARI, NOAA, Xiamen University, and SIO. This achievement establishes a foundation for future in-depth scientific cooperation and mutual advancement in global ocean observation research.

SOLAS Summer School

Grant (7K EUR) awarded to GEOMAR, 1.5K EUR left over from virtual summer school in 2022 used to support one trainee to attend in-person summer school

The 9th Surface Ocean Lower Atmosphere Study (SOLAS) summer school brought 66 young researchers and 30 lecturers, practical demonstrators, and organisers to the Ocean Science Center Mindelo (OSCM) on the island of São Vicente, Cabo Verde. The summer school is a well-established activity of SOLAS, which gives participants the opportunity to expand their knowledge in the fundamentals of ocean and atmosphere sciences and trains practical methods of experimentation, remote sensing, modelling and science communication. The participants - master and doctoral students as well as recent postdocs - came from 25 countries and various fields of oceanography and atmospheric science. The lecturers were experts on SOLAS science from around the world.

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Object 4: The promotion of innovation and technology in the science of global ocean observation:

This has been conducted mainly through two innovation projects focussing on developing low-cost instrumentation for ocean observing aimed at developing countries and citizen science. These both address the issue that, despite a high-level political endorsement, there are few international initiatives to make more observations possible in coastal areas with little resources. In particular, the ability to access user-friendly, low-cost instrumentation is still a limiting factor in coastal ocean observing, since most marine observation equipment is difficult to deploy, costly to operate and requires specific technical skills. On the other hand, recent technological advancements have allowed novel improvements in sensors, platforms and communication that will enable a step change in coastal ocean observing philosophy.

Open Access Marine Observation Devices" (OpenMODs):

Grant awarded to National Institute of Oceanography and Applied Geophysics (OGS) and Alfred Wegener Institute (AWI); in 2023/24 payment made only to OGS.

Supported by POGO since 2018-19, this project has the overarching goal "to devise ocean sensors and monitoring devices, globally available to all and not just to a privileged few". The main objective was to realize a prototype of a versatile low-cost ocean observing platform ready to be tested and equipped with a variety of sensors, to consolidate and enlarge the potential user community and to narrow the data and knowledge gaps between "advanced" and "developing" countries. Its potential is not limited to developing countries, but it can be advantageous in all those applications that require a high temporal and spatial coverage of observations. The implementation of the prototype has followed three main lines: the platform, the sensors and the communication systems.

During the first phase of the project, the participants agreed that the platform would:

- operate with minimum modifications as moored system, drifting buoy or manually deployed equipment;
- include essential sensors and operate in dual mode as a self-recording system or real-time autonomous system;
- include a low-cost low-power embedded system to acquire, control, process, store and (in case) transmit data;
- employ low-cost materials (e.g. plastic pipes for domestic use for the instrument housing);
- be assembled on-site by trained non-professional operators or for educational purposes.

Furthermore, the communication system would:

- use the most popular low-cost/no transmission cost communication systems;
- enable the timely communication of the relevant data and control flags and its delivery on the web;
- be ready to exploit the present and future opportunities and facilities offered by the Internet of Things technologies.

It was agreed that the resulting platform would then be tested and used as educational equipment in a conceptual framework of science, technology and practice transfer and dissemination to local user communities.

The OpenMODs 3.0 project has been successfully concluded. A number of workshops have been held to define user requirements and needs, to expand engagement and exploitation of the platform, to ensure timely dissemination of news and views produced by the OpenMODs community, and to overcome technical problems related to the platform. Five platforms were realized and equipped with localization/data transmission and CTD. They were used within two NF-POGO CofE training modules at the AWI (Helgoland) in 2022 and 2023.

Several products (video, instructions, handbook and file useful for the creation of some platform parts) were generated and made available to the community (<https://www.awi.de/en/about-us/sites/helgoland/translate-to-english-openmod.html>).

Social AGITation for Temperature Analysis" (SAGITTA):

The project aims to implement a citizen science approach for consistent and regular temperature profile data collection in the coastal ocean. This requires distribution of cheap and simple temperature-depth (TD) probes among the general public. Though suitable equipment is present on the market, it is very expensive (5,000-9,000 USD per probe) and relatively complex for users without specialised training. Therefore the project aims to create a low-cost TD probe, simple smartphone application and web portal to make this idea possible. The probe should be inexpensive (about 100 USD), yet scientifically reliable. The smartphone app will be used for probe control, instant data visualization and data transmission to the web. The web portal is necessary for data storage, access and dissemination; it will also be useful for training and outreach.

Since 2022, the project has been significantly disrupted by the war in Ukraine and the associated sanctions imposed on Russia and difficulty in collaborating with Russian scientists. The POGO Secretariat has discussed with the team leader solutions to continue the project, including transferring the project leadership to another alumnus.

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US-based Ocean Data Network (ODN) have been contracted to develop a database that will receive data via the smartphone app, which has already been developed. Communications have resumed with the hardware/software programmer, who is now located in Israel, and trials at sea are being planned so that test data can be sent to ODN for further developing the database.

Financial review

Principal funding sources

The principal sources of funding are:

- membership dues: these are used to cover all operational costs of the charity as well as some grants and fellowships
- grants from charitable foundations and other organisations, notably the Nippon Foundation, which supports POGO's capacity development programme, the Lounsbery Foundation, which has supported POGO's "COLLECT" citizen science project, and the Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research (SCOR), which co-funds the POGO-SCOR visiting fellowship programme.

Reserves policy

POGO's reserves policy was adopted in Jan 2020. The target minimum Operating Reserve Fund is 12 months of average operating costs. The calculation of average monthly operating costs includes all recurring, predictable expenses such as salaries and benefits, insurance, office, travel, communications, projects, Working Groups and capacity development programmes. Depreciation, in-kind, and other non-cash expenses are not included in the calculation. The calculation of average monthly expenses also excludes one-time or unusual, capital purchases.

The Operating Reserve is intended to provide an internal source of funds for situations such as a sudden increase in expenses, one-time unbudgeted expenses, unanticipated loss in funding, or uninsured losses.

Operating Reserves are not intended to replace a permanent loss of funds or eliminate an ongoing budget gap. It is the intention of POGO for Operating Reserves to be used and replenished within a reasonably short period of time. The Operating Reserve Fund is defined as a fund set aside by action of the Board of Trustees. The minimum amount to be set aside as Operating Reserve will be established in an amount sufficient to maintain ongoing operations and programmes for a set period of time, measured in months. The Operating Reserve serves a dynamic role and will be reviewed and adjusted in response to both internal and external changes.

The amount of the Operating Reserve Fund target minimum will be calculated each year after approval of the annual budget, reported to the Finance Committee/Board of Trustees, and included in the regular financial reports. The Operating Reserve will be funded with surplus unrestricted operating funds. The Board of Trustees may from time to time direct that a specific source of revenue be set aside for Operating Reserve.

The main contingencies allowed for by the Reserves Policy, are:

- POGO having to relocate the office, in case the agreement in place with the current Secretariat host(s) is terminated by either party. The provision in the contract is for 6 months' notice, which would mean any costs incurred would have to be met at relatively short notice. Costs could include redundancy and other compensation that POGO may be required by law to pay the staff (e.g. related to the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) -TUPE; legal costs; potential increased salary costs related to employment by a different host, etc. If POGO were to start employing the Secretariat staff itself there would be additional costs related to HR/IT and other services, office rental etc.
- Other emergencies including legal costs, insurance excess, or uninsured losses.
- Loss of income: This is a potential threat caused by fluctuations in membership, or by some members being unable to pay their dues in a given year. In addition, the Nippon Foundation grant is only renewed from one year to the next, so if it is not renewed we would potentially receive very little notice of this (in this case the project would not go ahead, but additional funds from POGO could potentially be needed to cover staff costs, to which NF contributes £40,000 per annum).

The amount of reserves currently held is projected to be very slightly lower than the amount stated in the reserves policy, taking into account commitments that have been made to fund Working Groups and projects, but which have not yet taken place.

The balance held as unrestricted funds at 31 March 2024 was £323,761 of which £323,761 are considered 'free' reserves. This level of reserves is broadly consistent with our policy of holding one years' operating costs, excluding Nippon related projects.

Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO

Report of the Trustees
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

STRATEGIC REPORT

Financial and risk management objectives and policies

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. The trustees recognise that risks can arise not only from the charity's activities but also from failure to act or exploit opportunities. The trustees do not consider that all risks should be avoided. They are not averse to taking reasonable risks as part of their strategy to achieve the charity's objectives. However, they wish to be made aware of the major risks the charity faces so that they can plan how to manage those risks and mitigate their effects. The trustees have therefore appointed the Chair and CEO to review major risks and make recommendations to the trustees as to how to manage them. The trustees expect all members, staff and volunteers when engaging in any activity to consider the risks it poses and to act in accordance with any recommendations made for risk management. The trustees expect that staff and volunteers will not engage in significant types of activity which are not similar to activities the trustees are already aware of, without first having made to the trustees a proper proposal for the charity engaging in such activity, including an analysis of the risks such activity might pose to the charity. The trustees have the same expectation in relation to significant increases in activities already pursued by the charity or significant changes in the way those activities are pursued.

Risk management will be conducted according to the following steps: (1) identify the risks, (2) assess the risks, (3) evaluate what action needs to be taken, (4) monitoring and assessment.

The trustees have developed and approved a risk management policy and a risk register to identify and assess the potential risks and develop strategies to manage them. The risk register is reviewed monthly by the Chair and CEO, and twice per year by the Board as a whole. Given the charity is relatively young, it has not had a great deal of time to develop a mature 'risk appetite' approach. It is the intention of the charity for Trustees to engage in 'risk appetite' training with a view to developing a measured approach to risk.

Future plans

During the coming period the organisation will work towards its aims in respect of education for developing the science of global ocean observation, developing the science as well as publishing and disseminating the results of research undertaken. The CIO will continue to provide scholarships and research fellowships in accordance with its objects, using funds from membership dues as well as grants from the Nippon Foundation, the Lounsbery Foundation and SCOR. Specifically, POGO will:

- Expand its global footprint and benefit from in-kind support from member institutions by establishing Regional and Thematic Secretariat Nodes in other parts of the world, funded entirely by the host institutions (in China to begin with);
- Initiate and support new activities as a UN Decade Implementing Partner and continue to support OBON;
- Continue to fund Working Groups such as the BIOTTA, BEACON, CEODOS-Chile, CMHIR and projects such as AtlantOS and COLaB ;
- Continue global research projects for NF-POGO alumni;
- Initiate Phase IV of the NF-POGO Centre of Excellence hosted by the Ocean Frontier Institute and other partners in Canada; and provide Visiting Fellowships and Shipboard Training Fellowships for early-career researchers;
- Hold exhibition stands and give presentations at major international conferences (UNFCCC COP29, CBD COP16); continue the POGO Advocacy Working Group to craft POGO's messaging for specific policy meetings;
- Increase its visibility and outreach impact, through the development of new outreach materials, case studies on the societal benefits of ocean observation.
- Conduct an External Review of POGO and plan a response/follow-up to the recommendations received.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

The Charitable Incorporated Organisation ("the CIO") is governed by its constitution in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. The CIO is based on the association model.

Recruitment and appointment of new trustees

Trustees are selected from the membership organisations and are appointed by the decision of the members of the CIO at the annual general meeting (with the exception of two trustees elected by the trustees themselves to improve regional and/or gender balance and/or to fill gaps in expertise). Each appointment is for a term of two years (renewable once), ending at the close of the meeting of the board of trustees immediately after an AGM.

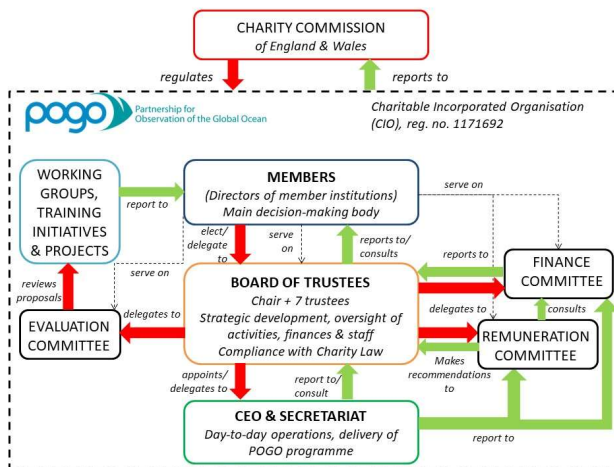
**Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO**

**Report of the Trustees
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024**

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Organisational structure

Membership of the CIO is open to any oceanographic research institution, educational department or organisation from any part of the world that is interested in furthering the purposes of the CIO. The affairs of the CIO are managed by a Board of Trustees, elected by the members. The day to day operations of the CIO are delegated by the trustees to the CEO and Secretariat. Financial matters are delegated to a Financial Committee, which reports to the Board of Trustees. Oversight of staff performance and salaries is delegated to a Remuneration Committee, which makes recommendations regarding salaries to the Board of Trustees, following consultation with the Finance Committee. At least one trustee serves on these Committees. The governance structure is summarised in the following diagram.



Induction and training of new trustees

The charity trustees make available to each new trustee a copy of the CIO's constitution and any amendments made to it, as well as a copy of the CIO's latest trustees' annual report and statement of accounts, and the Charity Commission's guidance documents on the role of the trustee. All trustees have previous knowledge of the activities of POGO and are given guidance on their responsibilities as a trustee. Trustees are also invited to training courses on governance, which the charity pays for. These have been attended virtually since 2020, and the trustees found the virtual training mode to be very effective.

Induction and training of new trustees

The charity trustees make available to each new trustee a copy of the CIO's constitution and any amendments made to it, as well as a copy of the CIO's latest trustees' annual report and statement of accounts, and the Charity Commission's guidance documents on the role of the trustee. All trustees have previous knowledge of the activities of POGO and are given guidance on their responsibilities as a trustee. Trustees are also invited to training courses on governance, which the charity pays for. These have been attended virtually in 2020, 2021 and 2022, and the trustees found the virtual training mode to be very effective.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number

CE010344 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number

1171692

Registered office

Plymouth Marine Laboratory
Prospect Place
The Hoe
Plymouth
Devon
PL1 3DH

Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO

Report of the Trustees
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

Trustees

Captain F A Arias-Isaza (Chair from 25.01.24)
Prof. Fei Chai (appointed 28.01.2024)
Dr F P Chavez (reappointed 26.01.2024)
Professor T S Hwai
Dr. Edem Mahu (resigned 27.01.2024)
Dr J Mees (resigned 27.01.2024)
Prof N Owens (Chair to 24.01.24)
Dr C G Paniagua Chavez
Dr. Olivier Pringault (appointed 28.01.2024)
Dr. Yara Rodrigues (appointed 28.01.2024)

Auditors

TC Group
Statutory Auditors
Harscombe House
1 Darklake View
Plymouth
Devon
PL6 7TL

COMMENCEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

The CIO was formed in February 2017 to take on the activities of a Canadian Society with the same name. The process for transferring operations to the CIO took longer than initially anticipated and operations began in the CIO in July 2018.

GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

The Board of Trustees have had due regard to the principals of recommended practices as set out by the "Charity Governance Code" and have applied these wherever practical and in decision making.

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law, Charities Act 2011 and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Charity law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, 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 Charity SORP;
- 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.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity 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 auditors are 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 auditors are aware of that information.

AUDITORS

The auditors, TC Group, will be proposed for re-appointment at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting.

Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO

Report of the Trustees
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

Report of the trustees, incorporating a strategic report, approved by order of the board of trustees, on 7 January 2025 and signed on the board's behalf by:

Captain F A Arias-Isaza - Trustee

Report of the Independent Auditors to the Trustees of
Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean CIO (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditors' responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report, other than the financial statements and our Report of the Independent Auditors thereon.

Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to take advantage of the small companies exemption from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report or in preparing the Report of the Trustees.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Report of the Independent Auditors to the Trustees of
Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO

Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a Report of the Independent Auditors that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud, is detailed below.

The objectives of our audit, in respect to fraud, are: to identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements due to fraud; to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the assessed risks of material misstatement due to fraud, through designing and implementing appropriate responses; and to respond appropriately to fraud or suspected fraud identified during the audit. However, the primary responsibility for the prevention and detection of fraud rests with both those charged with governance of the entity and its management.

Our approach was as follows:

-We identified areas of laws and regulations that could reasonably be expected to have a material effect on the financial statements from our general commercial and sector experience, and through discussion with the directors and other management (as required by auditing standards), and discussed with the directors and other management the policies and procedures regarding compliance with laws and regulations;

-We identified the following areas as those most likely to have such an effect: health and safety; General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR); fraud; bribery and corruption and employment law. Auditing standards limit the required audit procedures to identify non-compliance with these laws and regulations to enquiry of the trustees and other management and inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any.

-We considered the legal and regulatory frameworks directly applicable to the financial statements reporting framework (FRS 102 and the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011) and the relevant tax compliance regulations in the UK;

-We considered the nature of the group's operations, the control environment and business performance, including the key drivers for management's remuneration;

-We communicated identified laws and regulations throughout our team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit;

-We considered the procedures and controls that the group has established to address risks identified, or that otherwise prevent, deter and detect fraud; and how senior management monitors those programmes and controls.

Based on this understanding we designed our audit procedures to identify non-compliance with such laws and regulations. Where the risk was considered to be higher, we performed audit procedures to address each identified fraud risk. These procedures included: testing manual journals; reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation; performing analytical procedures; and enquiring of management, and were designed to provide reasonable assurance that the financial statements were free from fraud or error.

Owing to the inherent limitations of an audit, there is an unavoidable risk that we may not have detected some material misstatements in the financial statements, even though we have properly planned and performed our audit in accordance with auditing standards. For example, the further removed non-compliance with laws and regulations (irregularities) is from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, the less likely the inherently limited procedures required by auditing standards would identify it. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation. We are not responsible for preventing non-compliance and cannot be expected to detect non-compliance with all laws and regulations.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our Report of the Independent Auditors.

Report of the Independent Auditors to the Trustees of
Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Neil Stevens ACA FCCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of TC Group
Statutory Auditors

Office: Plymouth

Date: 16 January 2025

**Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO**

**Statement of Financial Activities
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024**

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.3.24 Total funds £	31.3.23 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Charitable activities	3				
Centre of Excellence		-	441,568	441,568	581,239
Subscriptions		230,776	-	230,776	231,465
Fellowship programme		-	-	-	21,365
Investment income	2	3,087	-	3,087	370
Total		233,863	441,568	675,431	834,439
EXPENDITURE ON					
Charitable activities	4				
Centre of Excellence		-	343,492	343,492	436,643
NANO activities		-	113,894	113,894	66,264
Shipboard training		-	26,828	26,828	64,777
POGO activities		257,408	4,391	261,799	263,529
Fellowship programme		20,174	-	20,174	21,365
Citizen Observation of Local Litter in Coastal ECosysTems		-	12,322	12,322	13,582
Total		277,582	500,927	778,509	866,160
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(43,719)	(59,359)	(103,078)	(31,721)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		367,480	223,519	590,999	622,720
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		323,761	164,160	487,921	590,999

The notes form part of these financial statements

Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO

Statement of Financial Position
31 March 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted fund £	Restricted funds £	31.3.24 Total funds £	31.3.23 Total funds £
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	9	9,454	-	9,454	7,336
Cash at bank		<u>386,269</u>	<u>498,916</u>	<u>885,184</u>	<u>1,301,116</u>
		395,723	498,916	894,638	1,308,452
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	10	(71,961)	(334,756)	(406,717)	(717,453)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>323,762</u>	<u>164,160</u>	<u>487,921</u>	<u>590,999</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>323,762</u>	<u>164,160</u>	<u>487,921</u>	<u>590,999</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>323,762</u>	<u>164,160</u>	<u>487,921</u>	<u>590,999</u>
FUNDS	11				
Unrestricted funds				323,761	367,480
Restricted funds				<u>164,160</u>	<u>223,519</u>
TOTAL FUNDS				<u>487,921</u>	<u>590,999</u>

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

.....
Captain F A Arias-Isaza - Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO

Statement of Cash Flows
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

	Notes	31.3.24 £	31.3.23 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Cash generated from operations	1	<u>(419,019)</u>	<u>(167,986)</u>
Net cash used in operating activities		<u>(419,019)</u>	<u>(167,986)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest received		<u>3,087</u>	<u>370</u>
Net cash provided by investing activities		<u>3,087</u>	<u>370</u>
		<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the reporting period		(415,932)	(167,616)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		<u>1,301,116</u>	<u>1,468,732</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		<u><u>885,184</u></u>	<u><u>1,301,116</u></u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO

Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

1. RECONCILIATION OF NET EXPENDITURE TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	31.3.24	31.3.23
	£	£
Net expenditure for the reporting period (as per the Statement of Financial Activities)	(103,078)	(31,721)
Adjustments for:		
Interest received	(3,087)	(370)
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(2,118)	3,920
Decrease in creditors	(310,736)	(139,815)
Net cash used in operations	<u>(419,019)</u>	<u>(167,986)</u>

2. ANALYSIS OF CHANGES IN NET FUNDS

	At 1.4.23	Cash flow	At 31.3.24
	£	£	£
Net cash			
Cash at bank	<u>1,301,116</u>	<u>(415,932)</u>	<u>885,184</u>
	<u>1,301,116</u>	<u>(415,932)</u>	<u>885,184</u>
Total	<u>1,301,116</u>	<u>(415,932)</u>	<u>885,184</u>

The notes form part of these financial statements

Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO

Notes to the Financial Statements
For The Year Ended 31 March 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'. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.

The trustees consider there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. These financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis. The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and rounded to the nearest £1.

The significant accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all years presented unless stated otherwise.

Income

The charity receives annual subscriptions from its members in alignment with the financial year. Any subscriptions billed in advance are deferred and recognised in the following financial period.

All other 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 and accrued as an expense.

Allocation and apportionment of costs

All costs that can be directly associated with a charitable activity have been attributed to the activity.

Support costs are those that assist the work of the charity but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Governance costs involving the public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice include costs relating to statutory examinations and legal fees.

Finance costs include all expenses incurred for operation of the charity's bank accounts as well and the total foreign exchange gain or loss the charity has achieved or suffered in the financial period.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation 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.

Foreign currencies

Assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the rates of exchange ruling at the statement of financial position date.

Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES - continued

Foreign currencies

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the average rate of exchange ruling for the year. Resulting exchange differences are taken into account in arriving at the operating result.

Donated goods

Donated goods are provided in the form of office space with Plymouth Marine Laboratory. The relationship remains healthy and the trustees feel this service will be provided for the foreseeable future.

2. INVESTMENT INCOME

	31.3.24	31.3.23
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>3,087</u>	<u>370</u>

3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	31.3.24	31.3.23
	£	£
Grants	441,568	581,239
Subscriptions	230,776	231,465
SCOR income	<u>-</u>	<u>21,365</u>
	<u>672,344</u>	<u>834,069</u>

Grants received, included in the above, are as follows:

	31.3.24	31.3.23
	£	£
Nippon Foundation	<u>441,568</u>	<u>581,209</u>

4. CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES COSTS

	Direct Costs £	Grant funding of activities (see note 5) £	Support costs (see note 6) £	Totals £
Centre of Excellence	335,413	8,079	-	343,492
NANO activities	25,258	88,636	-	113,894
Shipboard training	4,839	21,989	-	26,828
POGO activities	30,959	54,925	175,915	261,799
Fellowship programme	-	20,174	-	20,174
Citizen Observation of Local Litter in Coastal ECosysTems	-	12,322		12,322
	<u>396,469</u>	<u>206,125</u>	<u>175,915</u>	<u>778,509</u>

Partnership for Observation of the
Global Ocean CIO
T/A POGO

Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

5. GRANTS PAYABLE

The total amount awarded to institutions was £60,598 (2023: £440,854), those institutions are listed below:

Alfred-Wegener Institute
Institute of Oceanology, Chinese Academy of Sciences
Hangzhou shallow-sea technology Co. LTD
Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale
University of Tasmania
Plymouth Marine Laboratory
Instituto Nacional de Investigação Pesqueira
Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services
Ensenada Center for Scientific Research and Higher Education
University of Kara
Dalhousie University
Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee
Centre for Marine and Coastal Studies
Shahjalal University of Science & Technology

Grants paid to the Alfred-Wegener Institute are for the provision of the Centre of Excellence, which provides scholarship training to improve the global knowledge regarding ocean observation. Additionally, small grant was paid for the provision of Open Access Marine Observation Devices (OpenMODS), which helps provide access to important ocean data to less developed countries.

Grants paid to the Istituto Nazionale di Oceanografia e di Geofisica Sperimentale are for the provision of Open Access Marine Observation Devices (OpenMODS), which helps provide access to important ocean data to less developed countries.

Grants paid to the Instituto Nacional de Investigação Pesqueira are for regional training workshops on observing the coastal and marginal seas in the western Indian Ocean.

Grants paid to the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services are to conduct the training programme on 'Ocean Observations to Societal Applications'

Grants paid to the Plymouth Marine Laboratory are for participants travel and subsistence costs for Action for Sustainable Ocean Acidification Research (ASOAR) and project costs in relation to Citizen Observation of Local Litter in Coastal ECosysTems.

Grants paid to the Ensenada Center for Scientific Research and Higher Education are for the Gulf of Mexico Oceanographic and Meteorological Observation Group (GMOMOG).

Grants paid to the Shahjalal University of Science & Technology are for the regional training program in Bangladesh.

Grants paid to the Vlaams Instituut voor de Zee are for project costs in relation to Citizen Observation of Local Litter in Coastal ECosysTems.

Grants paid to the Centre for Marine and Coastal Studies are for project costs in relation to Citizen Observation of Local Litter in Coastal ECosysTems.

Grants paid to the University of Kara are for the reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs for trainees and instructors, including catering and field trips.

Grants paid to the Dalhousie University are for the provision of start up costs for the Centre

Grants paid to individuals are for the reimbursement of travel expenses, workshops and equipment to allow less developed countries access to the best training courses and events to improve global knowledge of ocean.

The total amount awarded to individuals was £145,525 (2023: £165,281) and the number of individual beneficiaries was 62 (2023: 51).

Partnership for Observation of the
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Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

6. SUPPORT COSTS

	Management £	Finance £	Governance costs £	Totals £
POGO activities	<u>165,493</u>	<u>894</u>	<u>9,528</u>	<u>175,915</u>

7. NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)

Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):

	31.3.24 £	31.3.23 £
Auditors' remuneration	5,720	5,408
Auditors' remuneration for non audit work	3,808	3,347
Foreign Exchange (gain)/loss	<u>33,168</u>	<u>(40,875)</u>

8. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

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

Trustees' expenses

During the year there were expenses of £875 paid to trustees. (2023 - £6,468)
This related to 6 trustees travel expenses to attend meetings held throughout the year.

9. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.24 £	31.3.23 £
Trade debtors	8,656	6,334
Prepayments	<u>798</u>	<u>1,002</u>
	<u>9,454</u>	<u>7,336</u>

**Partnership for Observation of the
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**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024**

10. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	31.3.24	31.3.23
	£	£
Trade creditors	322,344	1,789
Other creditors	1,050	2,850
Accruals and deferred income	-	441,569
Accrued expenses	83,323	271,245
	<u>406,717</u>	<u>717,453</u>

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.4.23 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	367,480	(43,719)	323,761
Restricted funds			
Nippon Foundation Grant	211,197	(47,037)	164,160
Richard Lounsbery Foundation	12,322	(12,322)	-
	<u>223,519</u>	<u>(59,359)</u>	<u>164,160</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>590,999</u>	<u>(103,078)</u>	<u>487,921</u>

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	233,863	(277,582)	(43,719)
Restricted funds			
Nippon Foundation Grant	441,568	(488,605)	(47,037)
Richard Lounsbery Foundation	-	(12,322)	(12,322)
	<u>441,568</u>	<u>(500,927)</u>	<u>(59,359)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>675,431</u>	<u>(778,509)</u>	<u>(103,078)</u>

Comparatives for movement in funds

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.23 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	397,038	(29,558)	367,480
Restricted funds			
Nippon Foundation Grant	199,840	11,357	211,197
Richard Lounsbery Foundation	<u>25,842</u>	<u>(13,520)</u>	<u>12,322</u>
	<u>225,682</u>	<u>(2,163)</u>	<u>223,519</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>622,720</u>	<u>(31,721)</u>	<u>590,999</u>

**Partnership for Observation of the
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**Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024**

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	231,835	(261,393)	(29,558)
Restricted funds			
Nippon Foundation Grant	581,239	(569,882)	11,357
Richard Lounsbery Foundation	-	(13,520)	(13,520)
SCOR fellowship			
	<u>21,365</u>	<u>(21,365)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>602,604</u>	<u>(604,767)</u>	<u>(2,163)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>834,439</u>	<u>(866,160)</u>	<u>(31,721)</u>

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

	At 1.4.22 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.3.24 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	397,038	(72,277)	323,761
Restricted funds			
Nippon Foundation Grant	199,840	(35,680)	164,160
Richard Lounsbery Foundation	<u>25,842</u>	<u>(25,842)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>225,682</u>	<u>(61,522)</u>	<u>164,160</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>622,720</u>	<u>(134,799)</u>	<u>487,921</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 £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	465,698	(538,975)	(72,277)
Restricted funds			
Nippon Foundation Grant	1,022,807	(1,058,487)	(35,680)
Richard Lounsbery Foundation	-	(25,842)	(25,842)
SCOR fellowship			
	<u>21,365</u>	<u>(21,365)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>1,044,172</u>	<u>(1,105,694)</u>	<u>(61,522)</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>1,509,870</u>	<u>(1,644,669)</u>	<u>(134,799)</u>

Partnership for Observation of the
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Notes to the Financial Statements - continued
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

11. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued

NIPPON Foundation Fund - Activities related to the delivery of the Centre of Excellence, the Global NANO project and Shipboard Training and outreach programme. During the period, residual funds from prior years were agreed to be repaid to the grant provider and are therefore included in the funds movement for the period.

Richard Lounsbery Foundation Fund - Activities related to the delivery of the Citizen Observation of Local Litter in Coastal Ecosystems programme.

Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research - Activities related to the promotion of training and capacity building leading towards a global observation scheme for the oceans.

12. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

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

13. OTHER DISCLOSURES

During the period Plymouth Marine Laboratories gave POGO free use of office space in lieu of membership fees. This has been reflected in the accounts at a value of £4,750 (2023: £3,943), being the membership fees that would have been paid without the agreement.

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Detailed Statement of Financial Activities
For The Year Ended 31 March 2024

	31.3.24 £	31.3.23 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	3,087	370
Charitable activities		
Subscriptions	230,776	231,465
SCOR income	-	21,365
Grants	<u>441,568</u>	<u>581,239</u>
	<u>672,344</u>	<u>834,069</u>
Total incoming resources	675,431	834,439
EXPENDITURE		
Charitable activities		
Insurance	448	934
Events and associated travel	22,836	35,181
Outreach materials	2,557	12,671
Website development	5,104	2,125
Project administration	75,691	66,592
Foreign exchange (gain)/loss	33,167	(40,875)
Residual grant returns	256,666	-
Grants to institutions	60,599	440,854
Grants to individuals	<u>145,526</u>	<u>165,281</u>
	602,594	682,763
Support costs		
Management		
Trustees' expenses	875	6,468
Office rent	4,750	3,943
Annual Meetings	6,569	3,991
Postage and stationery	95	272
Travel	5,722	11,157
Staff training	1,094	458
Subscriptions	1,956	3,134
Contribution to key management personnel	<u>144,432</u>	<u>144,209</u>
	165,493	173,632
Finance		
Bank charges	894	1,010
Governance costs		
Auditors' remuneration	5,720	5,408
Auditors' remuneration for non audit work	<u>3,808</u>	<u>3,347</u>
	<u>9,528</u>	<u>8,755</u>
Total resources expended	<u>778,509</u>	<u>866,160</u>
Net expenditure	<u>(103,078)</u>	<u>(31,721)</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements