





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2022 – 2030

 @thebigbluefoundation
 bigbluefoundation.org
 howard@bigbluefoundation.org

BIG
BLUE
FOUNDATION

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE + PIONEERING SCIENCE

Big Blue Foundation collaborates with indigenous communities to protect marine biodiversity, develop sustainable ecotourism and empower the next generation of conservation advocates.

Great whales are carbon-capture champions, sequestering an average of 33 tons of CO2 during their lifetime, the equivalent of 30,000 trees. Adding that immense benefit to their impact on fishery enhancement and ecotourism, the lifetime value of a single whale is estimated at more than £1,500,000.

Marine Protected Areas can increase the total biomass of marine life by more than 400%, preserve biodiversity and guarantee food security. Our cetacean research projects aim to set aside new protected areas that reflect the conservation, economic and cultural values of nearby communities and contribute to the Global Ocean Alliance goal of protecting at least 30% of the ocean by 2030.

MISSION AND VISION

MISSION

to contribute to a global network of Marine Protected Areas using a replicable data-led methodology that combines scientific research with indigenous knowledge.

VISION

to empower the next generation of marine scientists who will lead the way in the creation of new marine reserves and sustainable ecotourism economies.

OUR PEOPLE



Pedro Lopes MSc
Cabo Verde Project Lead



Dr. Cara Miller Phd
Scientific Advisor



Anice Lopes
Community Liaison Officer



Katia Freire Lopes MSc
Conservation Biologist
Trustee



Ewan Flack
Charities Advisor
Trustee



Catherine Capon
Communications Director
Trustee



Howard Foster
Founder

OUR PARTNERS



NGO



LOCAL COMMUNITY



LOCAL GOVERNMENT



NGO

HOW WE WORK

Big Blue Foundation carries out culturally-integrated research and conservation to protect marine ecosystems that indigenous island communities depend upon. Our method has been field tested during similar initiatives in Cabo Verde, Madagascar, Western Australia, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. Those projects taught us that respectfully marrying traditional knowledge with pioneering science can result in sustainable change.

Oceans produce half of the oxygen we breathe and absorb more CO2 than our atmosphere. They provide food security for almost half the planet's population, enable global transport and world trade, and are a source of employment

for many millions of people. Big Blue Foundation adopts a two stage approach to our work:

STAGE 1

Identify biodiversity hotspots by conducting collaborative research with local stakeholders, including Government, with the goal of creating new marine protected areas

STAGE 2

Provide a supportive learning environment, whereby the next generation of scientists, ecologists and conservation advocates can gain invaluable experience and become leaders in sustainable wildlife tourism

CABO VERDE PROJECT 2022

'Gathering baseline data on cetacean diversity off São Nicolau Island, Cabo Verde to support the sustainable development of the island'

Twenty-four species of cetaceans have been identified in the waters of Cabo Verde. To date, most records come from opportunistic sightings from local fishers at sea and the reports of specimens that have stranded ashore. Hence, very little is known about the cetacean species inhabiting the waters of the Cabo Verde Islands. Though there is a great deal of anecdotal evidence showing high cetacean activity in the waters of São Nicolau. Big Blue Foundation aims to fill key knowledge gaps by collecting baseline data on cetacean diversity, abundance, distribution, habitat use and residency patterns in the survey area. The project will provide training and educational opportunities to local students and other stakeholders, a proven approach to strengthen relationships between the local community, academic institutions and Government. The output from our collaborative research will be used to inform discussions about creating a new Marine Protected Area (MPA), thereby supporting new opportunities for cultural, spiritual, educational and recreational activities. MPAs can enable sustainable ecotourism economies, protect valuable resources that communities rely on and are

important carbon sinks, mitigating climate change. North Atlantic Humpback whales visit Cabo Verde annually between February and late May and this population was listed as endangered in the last status review of the Species in 2016. Southern hemisphere Humpback whales also occur in the archipelago between July and October, making Cabo Verde the only known breeding ground for Humpback whales from both hemispheres in the Atlantic Ocean. The species is only currently studied in Boa Vista island, though during a recce to São Nicolau in May 2021 we learned that Humpbacks are also present in our proposed survey area. Therefore, the data that we can collect about these individuals will be an important addition to the knowledge base about Humpbacks in Cabo Verde. Due to its incomparable landscapes, culture and biodiversity, São Nicolau offers great opportunities for the development of sustainable tourism and be recognised as a distinctive and exclusive tourist destination.



THE FUTURE

Once BBF has gathered adequate baseline data for the first site in Cabo Verde, we aim to replicate this model across a network of areas around the world where cetaceans are thought to be present in high numbers, but scientific data is lacking. Our Scientific Advisor, Dr. Miller has long-established relationships with the Government and local community in Papua New Guinea for example and has identified potential locations where we aim to establish similar projects.



BIG
BLUE
FOUNDATION

www.bigbluefoundation.org