



Annual Report 2023

Stichting The Ocean and Us
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2023 was a pivotal year for Women4Oceans / The Ocean and Us. We published our book: The Ocean and Us, doubled down campaigning efforts on deep-sea mining, launched our partnership with the WIN-BIG campaign, and changed our name to The Ocean and Us to reflect our broader mission for the ocean.

OVERVIEW

Women4Oceans now The Ocean and Us was founded by ocean advocate Farah Obaidullah and was officially established as a non-profit organization (Stichting Women4Oceans) in the Netherlands on January 10th 2017. In November 2023, we officially changed our name to Stichting The Ocean and Us to reflect our broader mission for the ocean. The Board of Directors can be found at theoceanandus.org

The Ocean and Us is active on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn & Twitter.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is to secure healthy oceans for the sake of human survival and human-wellbeing, and as a moral duty to all living beings. We do advocacy work across a range of pertinent ocean issues, from climate change, overfishing and pollution, to emerging threats such as deep-sea mining. We believe that to accelerate ocean solutions, we must promote the diversity of people working around the world for the ocean.

ACTIVITIES FOR WHICH FUNDING IS USED

- **Campaigning and Advocacy**
- **Communications**
- **Support and Empowerment**
- **Training/Mentoring**
- **Administration**

2023 ACTIVITIES

The Book: The Ocean and Us

'The Ocean and Us' was published through Springer-Nature in February 2023. It is a first of its kind book exploring all the ways our lives interact with the ocean. Topics include the role of fish in the carbon cycle, shipping, overfishing, noise pollution in the ocean, ocean tourism, the aquarium trade, the deep-sea, emerging topics such as the blue economy, gender and the ocean and marine animal welfare.

The Ocean and Us brings together the expertise of over 35 ocean specialists in 32 informative and inspiring chapters, each written in easy to follow language.

The book has been well received with many podcasts, interviews and features done to date. It now sits in several universities in different countries. The Ocean and Us was also on display at the Frankfurt Book Fair (the world's largest book fair). Order [here](#).

Deep-Sea Mining

In 2023 we secured two small grants (from Earth/Percent and Patagonia) to continue our campaigning to stop deep-sea mining from starting.

We launched a [petition](#) targeting the Dutch government. This petition collected over 341,000 signatures in under two months. It was the largest petition on this issue at the time. The petition was handed over to the Dutch Parliament in April.

Farah attended the International Seabed Authority (ISA) Assembly meeting in Kingston in July.

Farah lobbied politicians, government officials, fisheries associations, joined various [panel discussions](#) and delivered talks on the perils of deep-sea mining.

Farah was appointed ambassador for the **Stop Ecocide Campaign** in The Netherlands as an ocean advocate fighting deep-sea mining.

High Seas Treaty

In March 2023 the treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction (High Seas Treaty) was finally agreed. Farah attended the final two weeks of negotiations in New York on behalf of TOAU, as well as the planning meeting of the High Seas Alliance in Brussels.

Since the negotiations formally began in 2018, The Ocean and Us has [raise the significance](#)* of this treaty including the importance of lifting the [feminine perspective](#) in these negotiations. Farah attended these negotiations on behalf of TOAU at the UN headquarters on two separate occasions: In [2019 for the third meeting](#) of governments for this treaty as well as the final negotiations. The Ocean and Us is a member of the High Seas Alliance (HSA). You can read Farah's closing quote on the [HSA media release](#).

* video of my talk at the UN in 2019 from 40.10 min

Women4Oceans

Women4Oceans focuses on the intersection between gender, equality and ocean health. W4O advocates for a system change where harnessing our diverse perspectives will ensure change on the water happens quickly and fairly.

Women4Oceans comprises a directory where women can be found by search term (e.g. ocean policy, plastics, fisheries etc.), name, city and country. This facilitates collaboration and makes ocean women around the world more visible.

In 2023, the **EU co-funded WIN-BIG project** kicked off. This project is about elevating women in the blue economy. The kickoff meeting was held in Aveiro, Portugal. Farah attended on behalf of TOAU.

As part of WIN-BIG TOAU provided names and profiles of women working to address the ocean plastic crisis.

TOAU contributed to the development of the [WIN-BIG survey](#).

TOAU directory continues to grow with 545 professional ocean women in the directory.

TOAU was commissioned to develop and deliver a workshop on Gender Inclusion for Global Fishing Watch. The project continued into 2024.

Memberships

In 2023 The Ocean and Us became a member of 1% for the Planet.

TOAU is a member of the following alliances & platforms: The High Seas Alliance, The Deep-Sea Conservation Coalition, The Waterbear Network, Aquatic Life Institute and EU4Ocean.

Public Appearances and Speaking Engagements

Speaking events include:

- Talk on deep-sea mining for the European Court of Auditors, Luxembourg
- Talk on The Ocean and Us and deep-sea mining at the EU Blue Schools event in Den Helder
- Talk on deep-sea mining for the Grandparents for Climate, online
- Talk show on deep-sea mining with Pakhuis de Zwijger & ABN AMRO, Amsterdam
- Panel discussion at ChangeNOW conference in Paris
- Key-note on the High Seas, gender, deep-sea mining and The Ocean and Us at the University of Milano in Venice
- Panel discussion on deep-sea mining organised by University of Colorado, Boulder, online
- Panel discussion on the High Seas and deep-sea mining organised by Team Malizia at the Ocean Race, The Hague
- Panel discussion on the High Seas and deep-sea mining at Indigenous People Liberation Day, Amsterdam
- Talk for the Women in Energy Conference, The Hague

- Panel discussion at Impact Fest, The Hague
- Talk for Resurgence & Ecologist Magazine, UK, online
- Panel discussion on deep-sea mining following screenings of Deep-Rising

Radio & podcasts (not limited to): BNN Vara, BBC Radio 5 Live, KALW San Francisco, Talk Radio Europe, LitHub Keen on Podcast, Seacontrol podcast.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

In 2023, TOAU secured two small grants from EarthPercent and Patagonia. As part of the EU co-funded WIN-BIG project TOAU received the first installment for our contribution to the project. In addition, TOAU received a limited number of donations from individuals. This money together with personal funds from Farah Obaidullah was used to execute activities including advocacy, events, travel, and communications. The Ocean and Us maintains its ANBI (tax deductible) status.

Amounts in Euro:

Income		Expenses	
Donations	1665	Administration costs	220
Grant	43703	Expenses	4345
		Fees	30492
Total	45368		35057

