



## PONANT & RespectOcean: a commitment renewed to protect marine ecosystems



*Aurélie Dubois, Managing Director RespectOcean, Claude Fromageot, President RespectOcean, Hervé Gastinel, CEO of PONANT, Wassim Daoud, Head of CSR and Sustainable Development at PONANT*

Invited to speak at the One Ocean Summit, CEO of PONANT Hervé Gastinel reaffirmed the company's commitment to the oceans alongside the French association RespectOcean and highlighted two flagship initiatives: launch of the Marine Biodiversity & Economy programme and another edition of the Ocean pitch challenge® competition.

### **Mobilised for the Ocean**

Preservation of marine ecosystems is at the heart of PONANT's commitment as a company founded by sailors which is mobilised to promote sustainable and responsible tourism. Involved alongside local communities and scientists, PONANT is also heavily invested in the economic dimension by supporting positive impact innovation for the oceans.

Hervé Gastinel was invited to the One Ocean Summit, organised as part of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union with United Nations support. The CEO of PONANT stressed the challenges of a sustainable partnership with RespectOcean: *"We are at the forefront of our industry when it comes to deploying solutions that minimise our ships' ecological footprint and help protect marine biodiversity. We want to persevere on this path and inspire other stakeholders. With the Ocean pitch challenge® the aim is to incentivise innovation that helps protect marine and coastal ecosystems. In partnering the Marine Biodiversity and Economy initiative we want to demonstrate that to preserve our oceans companies are part of the solution".*

### **A stakeholder collective to speed up adoption of new practices**

A supporter of RespectOcean since 2019, PONANT is continuing and strengthening its collaboration with the association which recently welcomed Wassim Daoud, Head of CSR, to its Board of Directors. PONANT has also made a long-term commitment as partner to the new Marine Biodiversity and Economy programme launched with official support from the French Ministry of the Sea.

The programme's mission is to federate companies engaged in protecting marine and coastal ecosystems. Its goal is to develop and share experience and encourage initiatives for an economic development that also protects marine biodiversity. With this partnership, PONANT is putting its money on the value of collective voluntary actions, working towards a sustainable blue economy that respects the wealth of life in the oceans and the vital role they play for the planet and all its inhabitants.

## PONANT fully behind new edition of the Ocean pitch challenge® competition

The call for applications to the second international Ocean pitch challenge® has just been launched. Unique in the marine world, the competition is co-organised by American NGO Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA) and RespectOcean. It aims to identify, support and promote economically viable solutions to protect the ocean and its marine and coastal ecosystems.

Those with solutions that will have a positive impact on the ocean have until 10 March to submit their [application](#). Ten finalists will benefit from bespoke support and coaching in pitch technique to refine their skills and ability to raise money for their solution from investors. During the Grand Finale in May, the jury will reward the top three most successful projects. Three special prizes will also be awarded, including a “solution for marine biodiversity” special prize in partnership with the French Office for Biodiversity, OFB (Office Français de la Biodiversité).

Among projects recognised at the first edition, we can cite FinX, a revolutionary propeller-less boat engine inspired by dolphins; Agriloops, which develops aquaponic shrimp farms in a salty environment; and Seaproven which specialises in in situ data collection using a fleet of autonomous boats.

As it did last year, PONANT supports the competition by inviting the winner to join a cruise on one of its ships, during which a talk will be arranged on board to present their winning project to guests.

The graphic is a promotional poster for the Ocean Pitch Challenge 2022 Edition. It features a background of a blue ocean with white waves crashing against a rocky shore under a cloudy sky. In the top left corner, the logos for SOA (Sustainable Ocean Alliance) and RESPECTOCEAN are displayed. The main title 'OCEAN PITCH CHALLENGE' is written in large, bold, green letters, with '2022 EDITION' in a smaller, white font on a blue banner below it. To the right, a white box contains the text 'APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN' in bold black letters, followed by the hashtag '#OceanPitchChallenge2022'. Below this, a calendar icon with a red checkmark is shown, and the text 'APPLY BEFORE MARCH 10, 2022' and 'More on www.respectocean.com' is displayed. A red and white megaphone icon is positioned to the right of the application box. At the bottom, a row of logos for partners and supporters is shown, including biomim expo, NewCorp, changeN, WE DEMAIN, PONANT, CAMPUS MER, Les Echos PLANETE, OFB, pollutec, and the French Ministry of the Sea and Ministry of Ecological and Solidarity Transition.

## ABOUT RESPECTOCEAN

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Set up in 2013 by Raphaëla Le Gouvello, RespectOcean became an association under the 1901 law in September 2018, attaining general interest status in March 2020. It is a network of companies and organisations committed to sustainable economic development for the protection, preservation and enhancement of the ocean and its ecosystems.

Members of the network bring innovations and solutions that contribute to protecting the ocean or embody efforts being put in place to reduce the impact of their business activities.

At the beginning of 2022, after little more than three years of official existence, RespectOcean had 80 members.

Based in France, the association brings together a wide variety of stakeholders, the common denominator being their determination to reduce the impact of their activities on marine and coastal ecosystems and/or contribute to maintaining them in good health. The association's key missions are to help promote these solutions and innovations, encourage synergies between projects and contribute to the rise of a sustainable economy for the ocean. For more information: <http://www.respectocean.com/>

## ABOUT PONANT

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Founded in 1988 by French Merchant Navy officers, PONANT offers a new style of cruises under the French flag with its own concept of sea travel and commitment to promoting sustainable and responsible tourism. Centred around sailing to exceptional and unusual destinations aboard refined design yachts, where lifestyle and excellent cuisine take pride of place, the promise of a voyage with PONANT is that it will be truly unique and authentic. For more information: [www.ponant.com](http://www.ponant.com)

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