

WILDAID®

IMPACT REPORT

2025/2026


THE BIGGEST OPPORTUNITY FOR
CHANGE ON EARTH IS
US™

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mission

To inspire and empower the world to protect wildlife and vital habitats from critical threats.

LEADING THE WORLD IN BEHAVIOR CHANGE









LETTER FROM OUR CEO

Dear Friends,

Two years into my role as CEO, I write to you about hope in action.

WildAid's strategy turns 20 — and this milestone report tells the story of two decades spent proving a single, core truth: just as human behavior poses the greatest threat to wildlife, changing human behavior is wildlife's most effective protection. Twenty years ago, that was a stand few would take. Today, it has helped WildAid become one of the world's leading behavior change organizations protecting endangered wildlife and vital habitats — and it fills every page that follows.

Our approach sounds simple. It isn't. We run two seemingly disparate strategies so that no one is out of reach. The first is norm-shifting campaigns: we borrow the tools the world's biggest brands spend billions on, from advertising to storytelling to messengers people trust, and use them to change what people actually want. The second is marine enforcement, where our team — carrying more than 200 years of collective law enforcement experience — helps governments build systems that detect illegal activity on the water and ensure the consequences stick. Some people are ready to change. Others need convincing. A few never will. We built two strategies because behavioral science shows you need both to move an entire population — and to make the change last.

As you read, you will notice something new this year: every story names the specific behavior we set out to change. It is the question we ask before every campaign or patrol begins — and the standard we invite you to hold us to.

This report shows both strategies at full power. In China, "The Answer Is Earth" — starring WildAid Ambassador Zhang Linghe, one of China's most popular young actors and, remarkably, a trained electrical engineer — is on track to become the most-viewed climate documentary in history, turning the world's largest clean energy transition into a story over a billion people can embrace.

In Tanzania, home to nearly half the world's remaining wild lions, we completed the first-ever national study of urban wild meat consumption — the demand that fills the savanna with deadly snares — and are turning that evidence into a campaign to take wild meat off the menu and snares out of Tanzania's wild places. In Cameroon, the market itself now testifies that behavior change works: as demand dries up, pangolin scale prices have plummeted by as much as 75%,

undercutting poaching profits. And across the Eastern Tropical Pacific, we are helping four nations build a unified enforcement model across one of the largest marine conservation corridors in the world — a regional model so powerful it is reverberating around the world, spurring our work from the Philippines, where coordinated patrols cut illegal fishing by roughly 90% in a matter of days, to Chile's Rapa Nui, where the community itself is leading the watch over its ocean treasures.

None of this is WildAid working alone — that is the point. Conservation Is a Team Sport™ is more than a motto: it is how we work, alongside hundreds of partners — governments, coastal communities, scientists, celebrities, creative agencies — and you. Your generosity is multiplied by our pro bono media model, which turns every dollar you give into hundreds of dollars in donated reach each year. That is what small but mighty means: your generosity, multiplied.

Twenty years of behavior change is worth celebrating. But what moves me most is not what we have proven — it is what that proof unlocks. The next 20 years will demand change on the scale of entire ecosystems, and we now know, beyond doubt, how change happens: one norm, one family, one fishing community, one nation at a time.

The biggest opportunity for change on Earth is us.
Thank you for being an essential part of our team.

With urgent optimism for the wild,



Meaghan Brosnan
Chief Executive Officer





WILDAID'S CORE TRUTH:

Just as human behavior poses the greatest threat to wildlife, changing human behavior can be wildlife's most effective protection.

THREATS


HABITAT
DESTRUCTION
SYSTEMIC
CLIMATE CHANGE
ILLEGAL WILDLIFE
CONSUMPTION AND
TRAFFICKING

TWO STRATEGIES. ONE GOAL.

We reach the world through two complementary strategies. Together, they reach everyone whose choices shape wildlife's fate — from the person ready to change today to the one who never will. We work on both sides of the equation — campaigns and enforcement — with one goal: to protect wildlife and vital habitats.



STRATEGY #1

NORM-SHIFTING CAMPAIGNS

We are a world leader in using the tools the world's most successful global brands invest billions in — advertising, storytelling, trusted messengers and massive media visibility — to change what millions of people want, value and do. This is how we reach those ready to change, and those who need some convincing.

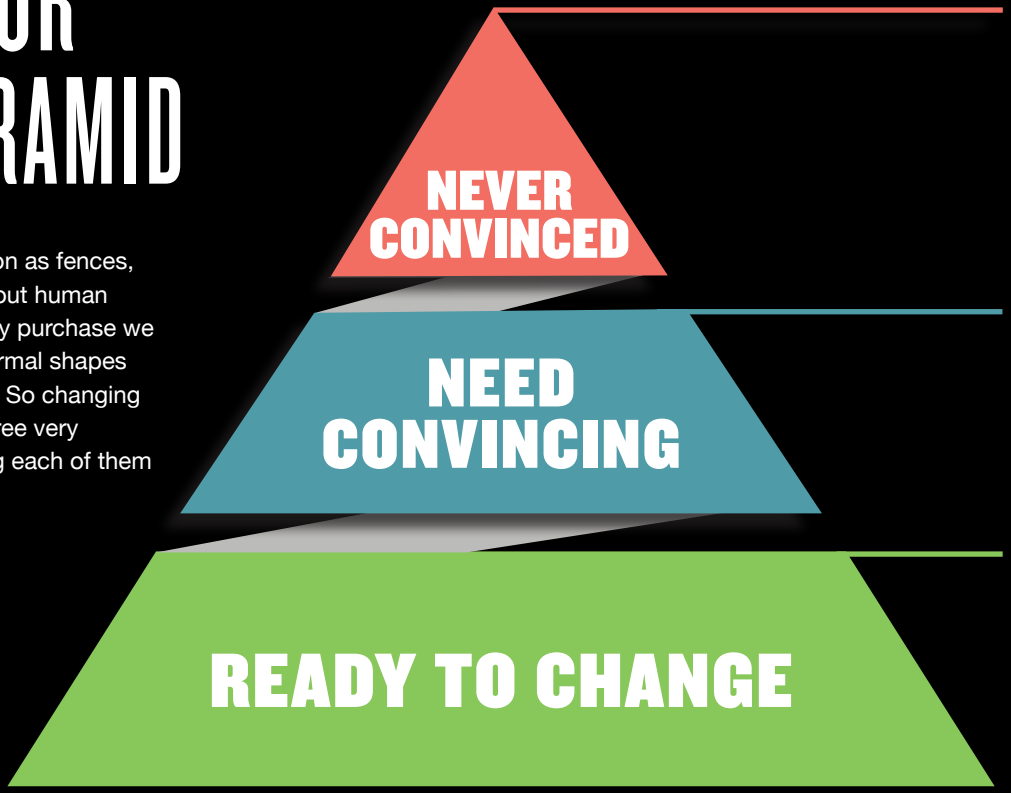
STRATEGY #2

MARINE ENFORCEMENT LEADERSHIP

We help nations detect, deter and stop illegal activity on the ocean — real consequences, real deterrence, the rule of law. Our Marine Team brings more than 200 years of collective law enforcement experience to governments around the world — strengthening institutions, training officers, and building durable systems that protect ocean wildlife and habitats for the long term. This is how we reach those who need convincing — and those who never will be.

THE BEHAVIOR CHANGE PYRAMID

People tend to think of conservation as fences, patrols and fines. In reality, it is about human activity: every action we take, every purchase we make, everything we accept as normal shapes the fate of wildlife and wild places. So changing wildlife's future means reaching three very different audiences — and meeting each of them where they are.



Some will never change — so we help nations and coastal communities enforce the law: patrols on the water, poachers intercepted and cases that stick. Real consequences protect wildlife from the few no message can reach.

They are moved by social norms, by the people around them — and by fair, visible enforcement. Our campaigns keep working until the old behavior feels wrong.

They just need information and a clear call to action. Once they see what an action costs wildlife, they choose differently.

True conservation only succeeds when all three audiences are reached. That is why WildAid works on both sides of the equation — campaigns and enforcement — grounded in decades of behavioral science and more than 20 years in the field.

OUR IMPACT

$290M
leveraged in donated media this year.

34%
drop in shark fin consumption among urban Thais — keeping millions of servings off the table every year.

75%
drop in the urban price of giant pangolin scales in Cameroon — when demand dries up, poaching stops paying.

13 years
WildAid has earned Charity Navigator's highest possible 4-star rating for 13 consecutive years.

90%
drop in illegal fishing within days of coordinated patrols in the southern Philippines.

16
illegal longline vessels caught in a single operation across the Eastern Tropical Pacific.

1st
marine protected areas created in São Tomé and Príncipe's history — two created, six more on the way.

17
illegal fishing vessels seized in Mexico's Yucatán, along with the clandestine sea cucumber camps that supplied them.

Most-Viewed
climate documentary in history — the title that "The Answer Is Earth," starring WildAid Ambassador Zhang Linghe, is on track to claim.

75%
of Cameroonian restaurants that were serving pangolin meat in five major cities and towns have now pledged never to serve it again.

88%
of urban Thais now recognize sharks' importance to the ocean — a dramatic rise in under a decade.

450
spotted seals now thrive at China's only seal breeding ground, thanks to rangers who never stopped patrolling.





HOPE IN ACTION:

WILDAID LEADERSHIP ON THE GLOBAL STAGE

WildAid's leaders spent the past year carrying one message to the world's most influential stages: behavior change works.

In November 2025, CEO Meaghan Brosnan stepped onto the TEDx stage at MIT in Cambridge with proof: WildAid's campaigns helped make ivory unacceptable to millions of consumers in China and across Asia, collapsing demand for one of the world's most destructive wildlife products. Her challenge to the audience: the same playbook that shifted cultural norms around ivory can power climate action. When people change, everything changes.

One month later, in Beijing, President and Chief Programs Officer John Baker celebrated a milestone two decades in the making: 20 years of WildAid in China. Standing with more than 200 guests and two of WildAid's most stalwart and committed ambassadors — Yao Ming and Huang Xuan — John honored the partners who carried "Conservation Through Communication" from an untested idea to a national movement. Yao Ming put those two decades simply: of all the organizations he has supported, "WildAid is the only one I've walked alongside for 20 years."

“Individual action — just people changing how they move, eat, and power their homes — could cut global emissions by up to 8%. That’s equivalent to every car on Earth being off the road — forever.”

— Meaghan Brosnan, WildAid CEO, speaking on the TEDx stage at MIT, Cambridge, Massachusetts





In June 2026, Senior Marine Program Director Chris Wilcox led WildAid’s leadership presence at the 11th Our Ocean Conference in Mombasa, Kenya, meeting with world leaders in the ocean-protection community. It marked the third consecutive year WildAid has stood at the center of the world’s premier ocean gathering. Chris’s message emphasized that protecting the ocean requires more than laws and protected area declarations. It requires effective enforcement — which is why WildAid partners with governments and coastal communities to create marine enforcement systems that detect illegal activity, deter violations, and protect ocean ecosystems, fisheries and coastal livelihoods.

From Cambridge to Beijing to Mombasa, the world is asking how change happens at scale. WildAid’s leaders answered with the conviction that has powered this work from the beginning: the greatest untapped force on the planet is not a technology or a treaty. It is billions of individual choices, waiting to change. The biggest opportunity for change on Earth is us.

WHERE WE WORK





CONSERVATION IS A TEAM SPORT™

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE

A small team with a bold idea changed what the world wants — and gave iconic wildlife and wild places a future.



"We call this behavior change at scale. And it works."

— Meaghan Brosnan, Chief Executive Officer



Twenty years ago, WildAid made a bet that ran against the grain of conventional conservation. While much of the field built fences and chased poachers after the damage was done, we asked a different question: what if we could reach people first and change the choices that put wildlife at risk before a single shot was fired or a single net was cast?

The bet had a name: **Conservation Through Communication**. Experts called it novel; skeptics called it naive. Twenty years later, its results fill every page of this report.

The insight is simple enough to fit on a billboard. Every threat to wildlife begins as a human decision: to buy the ivory carving, to order the bowl of shark fin soup, to fill the prescription that calls for pangolin scales, to drag the illegal net across the reef. Demand creates the market, and the market drives the killing. Reverse that logic, and hope appears: reduce what people want, and you reduce what dies for it. We said it then, and we have proven it since — when the buying stops, the killing can too.







TWO STRATEGIES. NO ONE LEFT BEHIND

Norm-Shifting Campaigns use the tools the world's best-loved brands invest billions in — advertising, storytelling, trusted messengers and massive media visibility — to change what people want, value and do. Marine Enforcement Leadership builds durable systems that detect, deter and stop illegal activity on the water, backed by more than 200 collective years of law enforcement experience. Together, they reach everyone: those ready to change, those who need convincing — and those who never will. These are the two levers of our core strategy: behavioral science tells us we must pull both to reach entire populations and make lasting change.

SMALL BUT MIGHTY AGENTS OF CHANGE

WildAid has never had the budget of the world's largest conservation groups. We have something rarer: leverage. More than $200 million a year in donated media — this year, a record $300 million — multiplies every dollar our donors give into reach no budget could buy. That scale makes every result on these pages possible. No other nonprofit on Earth turns donations into influence this efficiently.

CONSERVATION IS A TEAM SPORT™

WildAid never works alone. In every country where we work, hundreds of partners carry out the mission: governments and coastal communities, ad agencies and media companies, celebrities, athletes, scientists, and world leaders. Trusted local voices deliver the message; local institutions keep the protection in place long after the campaign ends. If you are reading this report, you are on the team too.

THE NEXT 20 YEARS

Twenty years ago, changing human behavior to save wildlife was an unproven idea. Today, it is our movement — carried by hundreds of partners and hundreds of millions of people who changed what they buy, what they serve and what they will accept. The threats remain real, and the work is scaling to entire ecosystems. We have learned how change happens, and we know where it begins: the biggest opportunity for change on Earth is us.

WILDAID'S HISTORIC BEHAVIOR CHANGE MILESTONES

WHAT FOLLOWS IS 20 YEARS OF PROOF.

NORM-SHIFTING CAMPAIGNS

ONE IDEA, PROVEN AGAIN AND AGAIN



THE SHARK FIN CAMPAIGN

2006-PRESENT

THE BEHAVIOR CHANGED:
Turning a status symbol into a social taboo.

When we began, 3 in 4 people in China did not know shark fin soup came from sharks — and 1 in 5 believed the fins grew back. Within three years, awareness of shark finning climbed from under 30% to over 80%. By 2013, China had banned the dish from official banquets; today, consumption in China is down roughly 80%, with younger generations leading the rejection. In follow-up surveys, 85% of consumers said they had stopped eating shark fin — and 65% credited our campaign. In Thailand, our campaigns keep more than 8 million bowls a year off the table.



THE IVORY CAMPAIGN

2010s

THE BEHAVIOR CHANGED:
Making the world's largest ivory market finally say no.

By pairing trusted public figures with a relentless, unmistakable message about the cost of ivory to beloved and endangered elephants, we treated protecting elephants like a consumer brand. In 2012, the ivory trade was killing 20,000 elephants every year. Backed by $175 million in donated media placements, WildAid filled China's public spaces — billboards, subways, airports, TV, social media — with faces people trusted repeating the message. Within two years, 90% of people who saw the ads said they would not buy ivory. Within four years, ivory smuggling dropped 80%. And by year five, China shut down every ivory carving factory and banned its domestic ivory trade — closing the biggest ivory market on Earth. Culture shifted. Policy followed.



THE MANTA CAMPAIGN

2013-2016

THE BEHAVIOR CHANGED:
Ending the consumption of manta gill plates, sold as a health tonic.

Applying the same playbook to a lesser-known crisis, WildAid set out to end demand for peng yu sai, the dried gill plates of manta and mobula rays sold as a health tonic. In Guangzhou — the megacity of southern China that was the heart of the trade, the campaign reached nearly everyone — 79% of residents had seen our PSAs and billboards — and moved them to act. By 2016, 97% said they were willing to stop buying gill plates, and two-thirds of surveyed consumers had already stopped or cut back, most crediting our campaign. As demand fell, the market followed: gill-plate stocks in Guangzhou dropped 63% in just two years — thousands of rays left in the ocean — and the ripple traveled the supply chain, with traders as far away as Sri Lanka reporting prices too low to bother selling.



THE CLIMATE CAMPAIGNS IN CHINA

2015-PRESENT

THE BEHAVIOR CHANGED:
Making sustainable everyday choices — what we eat and the plastics we use — the new social norm.

The same playbook that changed what China buys is now changing how China lives. Since 2015, our climate campaigns — fronted by superstar ambassador Wang Yibo and carried by our EarthAid platform — have made sustainable living a badge of pride for a new generation. The results are behavior change at national scale: 30 million people have made more sustainable dietary choices, and 72 million have reduced their dependence on single-use plastics. The model travels, too: a 2023 U.S. pilot leveraged $30 million in pro bono media to inspire climate conversations among friends and families across the nation. Different threat, same truth: everyday action starts the movement.



THE PANGOLIN CAMPAIGN

2016-PRESENT

THE BEHAVIOR CHANGED:
Refusing to buy the world's most trafficked mammal.

Demand for pangolin products in China has fallen 70% since 2016, and illegal seizures have collapsed by nearly 99% — from 44 tons a year to under 100 kilograms. Behind those numbers: "Defenders of the Hidden," our documentary campaign with ambassador Wang Yibo, seen more than a billion times; the Chinese government placing much stricter controls on the medicinal use of pangolin scales; and — an ocean away in Cameroon — hundreds of restaurants publicly pledging to keep pangolin off the menu. The world's most trafficked mammal is becoming the world's most defended.

MARINE ENFORCEMENT LEADERSHIP

THE GLOBAL GOLD STANDARD

MAKING THE PROMISE OF OCEAN PROTECTION REAL

Most people picture wildlife on land. Yet 80% of all life on Earth lives in the ocean. WildAid protects the homes and the highways all ocean life needs to survive — and no other nonprofit designs and applies marine enforcement the way we do.



THE GALÁPAGOS: WHERE WILDAID BEGAN

2004

THE BEHAVIOR CHANGED: Ending widespread shark finning — and making the world's most famous marine park a regional enforcement leader.

It began where hammerheads school by the hundreds — and where shark finning was gutting a national treasure. With Ecuador's Navy and park rangers, WildAid built one of the world's first fully integrated marine enforcement systems: patrol vessels, radar, training and the legal muscle to make cases stick. Today, 100% of vessels entering the reserve are monitored, prosecutions are up 84%, shark finning has all but disappeared — and the islands hold the densest shark population on Earth.



PALAU: THE RANGER ACADEMY

2014

THE BEHAVIOR CHANGED: Turning island rangers into a professional ocean enforcement force.

Palau imagined a nation-sized ocean refuge — and asked WildAid to help enforce it. From two reef areas in 2014, we grew to strengthen the national network behind all 29. The breakthrough was people: with The Nature Conservancy, we helped create Palau's first conservation academy, training rangers to patrol, cite and prosecute. Train an ocean ranger and you safeguard sustainable fisheries for generations. And today, academy graduates train the classes that follow them. Palauans teaching Palauans.



THE BLUEPRINT FOR MARINE PROTECTION™

2019

LAUNCHED AND TRADEMARKED A POWERFUL MARINE ENFORCEMENT MODEL

As the world raced to declare marine protected areas, WildAid took up the harder challenge: actually protecting them. Drawing on 15 years at sea, we refined our Galápagos-era law enforcement chain into five core components — strong laws, trained people, watchful technology, sanctions that stick and communities that believe — and trademarked the Blueprint for Marine Protection™: a model for assessing any marine protected area, finding enforcement gaps and building a plan to close them. A proven system that scales, from a single reef to a national network.



EXPANDED REGIONAL LEADERSHIP ACROSS THE EASTERN TROPICAL PACIFIC

2020-2025

THE BEHAVIOR CHANGED: Four nations enforcing as one to protect one of the world's largest marine conservation corridors.

Ocean wildlife crosses borders; enforcement never has. So, at the invitation of Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia, WildAid helped connect four separate systems into one regional network: 13 monitoring centers strengthened or equipped, more than 1,100 enforcement personnel trained together, intelligence shared across borders, and joint patrols now planned and run by the nations themselves.



AWARDED THE EARTHSHOT PRIZE

2023

GLOBAL RECOGNITION FOR WILDAID'S MARINE ENFORCEMENT MODEL

In November 2023, HRH Prince William and The Earthshot Prize named WildAid's Marine Program winner of the Revive Our Oceans category — recognizing our enforcement model as one of the solutions most likely to repair our planet: cost-effective, replicable and built to scale.



FIVE YEARS OF GROWTH LIKE NO OTHER

2021-2026

THE BEHAVIOR CHANGED: Nations and coastal communities investing their own resources to protect their waters.

WildAid's model works for large governments and small coastal communities alike — so the world came calling. In five years, our partnerships grew from 20 marine areas in eight countries to more than 110 across 23 — this year alone, we trained 2,500 enforcement personnel, helping safeguard more than 2 million square kilometers of reefs, mangroves and seagrass. Partners report more interceptions, safer patrols and sustained drops in illegal activity.



NORM-SHIFTING CAMPAIGNS


WHEN THE BUYING STOPS,
THE KILLING CAN, TOO.


WILDAID
DON'T BE A VILLAIN
TO WILDLIFE






MAKE CA




ME BUSHMEAT

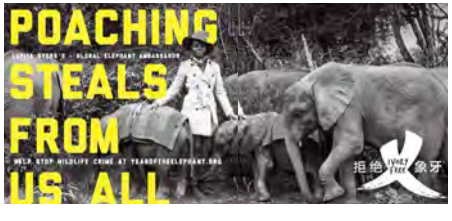

EXPENSIVE
COST-EFFECTIVE










POACHING
STEALS
FROM
US ALL


CLIMATE ACTION COUNTS
WER IS YOURS!


Take your
food from
expiring
to inspiring.
NICE
WORK
WILDAID





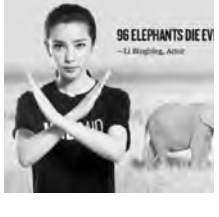



WILDAID
WILDAID
#ฉลองไม่ฉลาม


别为小物件
付出大代价


MY NAME IS NORMAN
I #JOINTHEHERD


WILDAID
SỮA MẸ YÊU THƯƠNG
SAO VƯƠNG
TỘI ÁC


96 ELEPHANTS DIE EV




WILDAID



THE ANSWER IS EARTH:

Inspiring a Nation to Power the Clean Energy Future

Featuring WildAid Ambassador Zhang Linghe, an A-List Chinese Actor

WHY THIS MATTERS

Every animal WildAid fights for — from elephants, rhinos and lions on the savanna to sea turtles, sharks and mantas in the ocean — faces the same relentless threat: a warming planet.

And no nation will have a bigger impact on wildlife's future than China. China is the world's largest greenhouse gas emitter, responsible for 25% of global emissions — and, at the same time, far and away the world's largest builder of wind and solar power. With its electricity demand projected to double by 2050, global climate goals depend on the continued ambition of 1.4 billion people to make the clean energy transition a reality.

Through its "Dual Carbon" goals, China has pledged to peak its carbon emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060; its newest five-year plan targets a 7% to 10% reduction in overall emissions between 2026 and 2035. But pledges become windmills, solar farms and clean air only when leaders have strong public support. Mobilizing more than a billion people to choose clean energy is not just part of climate action — it is climate action.

THE CHALLENGE

For many people, the benefits of the clean energy revolution are hard to see. Wind turbines stand far offshore and solar fields spread across distant land areas; few people feel the transition in their daily lives, their jobs, or their children's futures. Without that personal connection, public support stays quiet — and progress slows. And because the transition runs through so many hands — national ministries, provincial and municipal governments, industries, and companies — real momentum takes public demand that no stakeholder can ignore.





BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

Inspiring greater public support for — and active participation in — China's green energy transition.

OUR SOLUTION

We chose a trusted, knowledgeable storyteller to make the energy transition personal and appealing: WildAid Ambassador Zhang Linghe, one of China's most popular young actors — and a trained electrical engineer. He is the perfect voice to show audiences that green energy already powers their daily lives.

We partnered with Warner Bros. Discovery, which funded and co-produced the series with WildAid and Bilibili, one of China's most popular streaming platforms with more than 360 million monthly active users.

With technical guidance from China's Ministry of Ecology and Environment, we created "The Answer Is Earth," a three-episode documentary — filmed in Zhang Linghe's home province of Jiangsu — that celebrates the technology and the people: the engineers, welders and grid workers doing the "dirty jobs for a low-carbon future." The series now runs through WildAid's proven distribution engine in China: the same pro bono media model whose campaigns have reached more than 200 cities and hundreds of thousands of digital screens.

Then we turned viewers into participants. Backed by Weibo's strongest support ever for WildAid — including a 24-hour splash-screen takeover of its app — we invited the public to film the new energy facilities rising in their own neighborhoods — wind turbines on the ridgeline, solar panels on a warehouse roof — and share what the transition looks like where they live. More than 3 million original posts poured in; the #JoinZhangLingheForEnergyWalk topic page alone gathered over 1 million, and Zhang Linghe's own post drew nearly 1 million reposts.







OUR IMPACT

"The Answer Is Earth" is on track to become one of the most-watched climate documentaries ever made. It premiered to a live audience of 10 million, with more than 400 media outlets covering the launch. Its episodes have been played more than 20 million times, holding the No. 1 spot on Bilibili's documentary chart, and conversation around the series has passed 1.2 billion views across Chinese social media. This attention is translating into action: in the same month the series launched, China announced that officials' job performance would be judged, in part, on progress toward the country's climate commitments.

This story is on a journey — across digital billboards in 10 major cities from Beijing to Shenzhen, into classrooms where teachers screen it for their students, and beyond China's borders. Warner Bros. Discovery is bringing "The Answer Is Earth" to international audiences on Discovery's Southeast Asia channel.



40 million+
original posts and discussions by the public

2 million+
citizen posts showcasing clean energy in daily life

20 million+
episode plays on Bilibili streaming platform

10 million
livestream views of the campaign launch event

1.2 billion+
views of #TheAnswerIsEarth topics across all platforms

400+
media reports nationwide — with special coverage by Xinhua, People's Daily and China Daily

PRIDE OF A NATION:

Saving Tanzania's Lions by Ending Urban Demand for Wild Meat





WHY THIS MATTERS

The king of beasts is running out of kingdom. In just half a century, Africa's wild lion population has collapsed by 90% — from roughly 200,000 in the 1970s to around 20,000 today.

Tanzania is the species' last great stronghold, home to the largest wild lion population on Earth — by some estimates, half of what remains. Lions are woven into Tanzania's national identity, and they anchor a tourism economy that sustains communities across the country. The fight for the lion's future will be won or lost here.

THE CHALLENGE

The threat isn't hunters targeting lions — it's dinner. In Tanzania's fast-growing cities, consumers with other choices eat millions of servings of illegal wildmeat every year: antelope, buffalo, birds and wild pigs - the very prey lions need to survive. To supply this trade, poachers lay cheap wire snares near watering holes, and the snares don't discriminate: lions caught in them die slowly or are left too injured to hunt.

Our investigation also revealed a decentralized, nearly invisible supply chain running from protected areas and surrounding lands into informal urban markets - cheap, discreet and thoroughly normalized. Enforcement alone cannot stop a trade that hides in home kitchens. Only changed demand can.

BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

Reducing the consumption — and social acceptability — of wild meat in Tanzania's cities and towns — protecting lions and the prey they depend on.

OUR SOLUTION

You cannot change behavior you don't understand — so WildAid built the evidence first. With the generous support of the Lion Recovery Fund, we conducted the first-ever nationwide survey of urban wild meat consumption in Tanzania, interviewing 1,500 people across eight major cities, and pairing it with an undercover analysis of the illegal supply chain. Together, they produced one of the clearest pictures ever assembled of who eats wildmeat, why and where — revealing that consumption is highest among men aged 25-44, most common in four hotspot cities and driven by the belief that wildmeat is fresher, tastier and more "natural."

Now, we aim to turn that evidence into a national behavior-change campaign — delivered by the messengers Tanzanians told us they trust and respect the most. The campaign, rooted in national pride and built around a beloved Tanzanian children's game to make the message unforgettable, asks urban Tanzanians to connect the dinner plate to the snare. And we are not starting from scratch: WildAid has run conservation campaigns in Tanzania for a decade, including our award-winning documentary "Tanzania: Land of the Lion," aired more than 150 times on national television.





Not brush — wire. Thousands of confiscated snares, stacked in strands. Inexpensive and indiscriminate, a snare can't choose its victim: each one can kill a lion, or the prey lions depend on.

The foundation is laid. For the first time, Tanzania can see the full scale of the threat to its lions — and exactly where and how to fight it. The research has named the cities, the consumers and the beliefs the campaign must change. When urban Tanzanians connect their choices to the lions they love, every meal refused pulls a wire from the grass.

Tanzania holds the future of the wild lion. With the research complete and the campaign taking shape, WildAid is poised to do for lions what we have done for elephants and sharks: make the choice that harms them unthinkable — so the world's greatest lion population can thrive for generations to come.

1,500

the number of people surveyed

4

hotspot cities identified where demand is highest — so the campaign can strike where it counts

25-44

The male age group who eat wild meat most commonly





CRASHING THE MARKET FOR EXTINCTION:

From Africa to Asia, Falling Prices Are Giving Pangolins a Lifeline



WHY THIS MATTERS

The pangolin — the shy, armor-plated gardener of the forest — holds the world's saddest title: the most trafficked wild mammal on Earth.

Its scales are shipped to Asia for traditional medicine; its meat is served as a delicacy in African cities. DNA analysis of scales seized across Asia told investigators where most were coming from: the forests of Cameroon. One animal, hunted for two markets on two continents — so saving it required changing behavior on both.

THE CHALLENGE

For a Cameroonian hunter, a pangolin paid twice. The meat sold in the city; then traders came door-to-door through the villages, buying up scales to resell in China. Double profit made pangolins doubly hunted. Laws existed on paper, but as long as demand kept prices high, every forest path led to a profitable market. The only way to stop the hunting was to make it stop paying.



BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

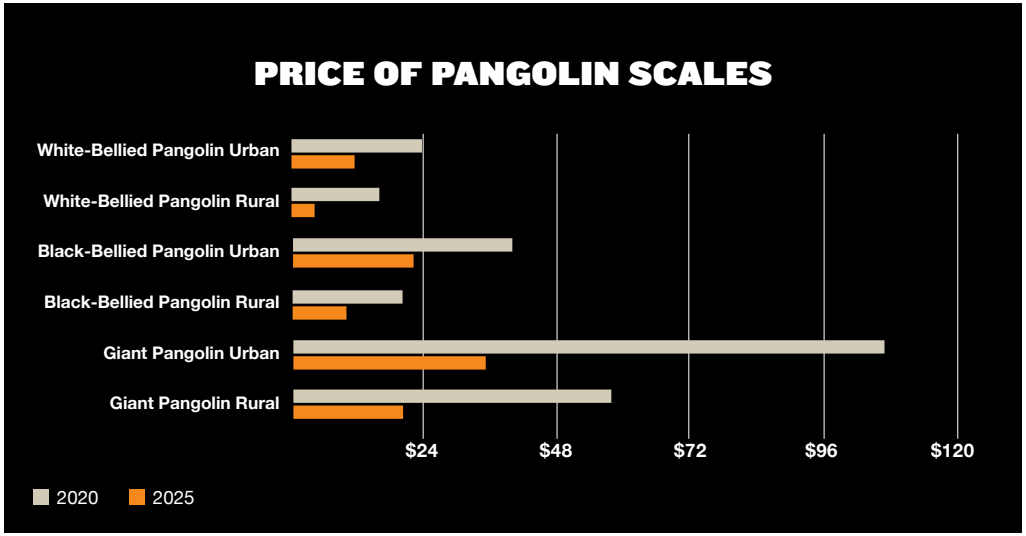
Reducing consumption of pangolin meat and scales — people eating less, doctors prescribing less, restaurants taking it off the menu — so hunting them no longer pays.

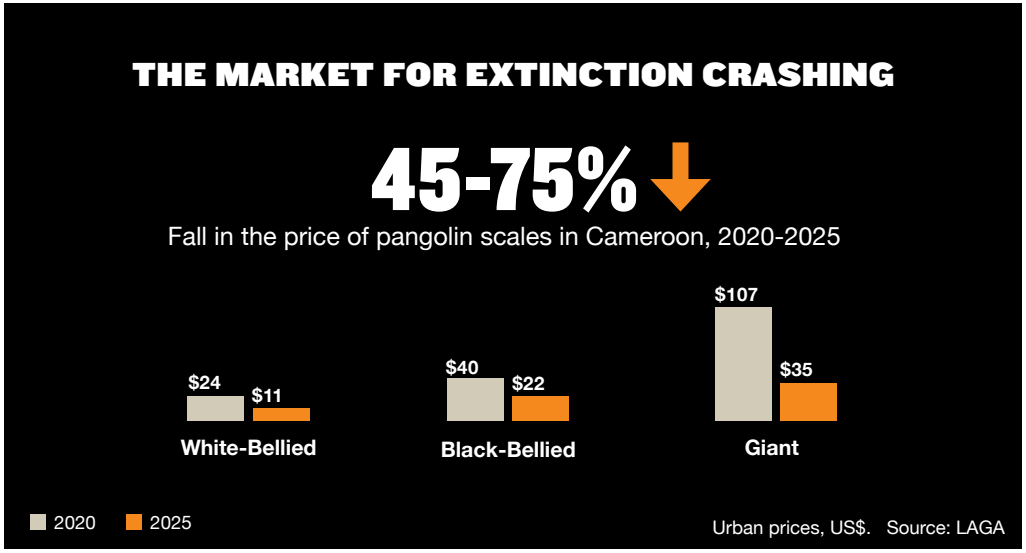
OUR SOLUTION

WildAid attacked both ends of the supply chain at once. In China, we worked alongside the traditional medicine community itself — as advisor to the Coalition for Wildlife Protection in TCM, three members of which also sit on the Chinese Pharmacopeia Commission — as the government cut the annual quota for pangolin scales from roughly 25 tons to about one and removed 13 pangolin-scale medicines from the nation's official list of approved drugs.

In Cameroon, our "No Pangolin On My Plate" campaign — fronted by celebrity ambassadors and carried into 809 restaurants across five cities — asked owners to pledge publicly to take pangolin off the menu. When Cameroon passed one of Africa's toughest wildlife laws in 2024, with fines up to $89,000 and 20-year prison terms, we worked with the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife to make sure the country knew about it through billboards, television, radio and thousands of posters, while our partners at LAGA helped put traffickers behind bars.

"The sharp fall in the price of pangolin scales in Cameroon offers these wonderful animals a real lifeline."
— Simon Denyer, WildAid Africa Program Director





OUR IMPACT

The market for pangolins is collapsing, and pangolin scale prices in Cameroon have fallen 45–75% since 2020 — across all three species and in cities and villages alike. As the price of a poached animal crashes, so does the incentive to poach it.

The threats remain real, and the work continues. But fewer buyers in China, fewer diners in Cameroon and falling prices in the forest mean fewer pangolins are hunted. This is a full-circle victory — two continents, connected by one shared shift in values.



45-75%

collapse in pangolin scale prices across Cameroon since 2020 (LAGA market data)

27%

drop in urban Cameroonians eating pangolin meat monthly between 2022 and 2024

75%

of restaurants that were serving pangolin meat in five major cities and towns have now pledged never to serve it again. That's more than 220 individual establishments

25x

reduction in China's annual allowance of pangolin scales in medicine — from roughly 25 tons to just one

13

pangolin-scale medicines removed from China's official pharmacopeia

60 MILLION BRAZILIANS EAT SHARK.

MOST HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THEY ARE EATING

Brazil has quietly become the world's largest importer of shark meat — an estimated 45,000 tons are eaten every year in homes, restaurants, schools and hospitals under the name "cação." DNA studies have found that critically endangered scalloped hammerheads, among the most threatened sharks in the ocean, are sold simply as "cação." Only 40% of Brazilians know it is shark meat; most have no idea. It is a case of mistaken identity on a national scale — and correcting it is one of the biggest opportunities for behavior change in ocean conservation today.

This year, WildAid brought its proven playbook — the one that helped drive shark fin consumption down 80% in China and 34% in Thailand — to Brazil. Working with our partners and guided by Brazil's leading scientists — who found toxic metals in shark meat at up to 30 times permitted levels — we are building a national norm-shifting campaign: Cação é Tubarão ("Cação Is Shark").

Momentum is already on our side. A Federal Court has ruled that the government may no longer purchase "cação" without identifying its species and origin — a landmark decision won by our partner Sea Shepherd Brasil, with federal agencies now ordered to deliver traceability plans. WildAid is working with a coalition of stellar local partners to build on this growing momentum, including Sea Shepherd Brasil, Freeland and NO.LAND Agency. Policy is moving; now culture must follow.

The goal: cut Brazil's shark meat consumption in half within three years — and close one of the largest unaddressed gaps in global shark protection. The campaign launches now. The full story unfolds in next year's report.



BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL
Increasing Brazilians' understanding that 'cação' is shark — and encouraging them to stop buying, eating and serving it.

TEAM SHARK:

Thailand Rewrites Its Relationship With Sharks



WHY THIS MATTERS

Here is a secret about the ocean's most stunning places: none of them thrive without sharks.

For more than 400 million years, sharks have kept the sea healthy and in balance — and the coral reefs that take our breath away cannot flourish without them. Yet every year, humans kill roughly 100 million sharks for their fins, meat and cartilage.

But history offers hope. For centuries, people feared whales as monsters of myth and legend. Today, whales are beloved and fiercely protected. Sharks can make the same journey. People love what they understand, and they protect what they love. The time is now.

THE CHALLENGE

Shark fin has long signaled status at Thai family celebrations, and curiosity endures: 56% of urban Thais say they would still like to try it, and 1 in 3 would try shark meat. Meanwhile, the pet-snack trade is growing — and our monitoring found 131 online shops selling shark-based pet products, up 10% in a year, with marketing claims that our research shows are unsupported by science.

Two-thirds of the shark species we identified in these products are protected under international trade laws. Few of these consumers mean any harm. Most Thais have no idea that the products in front of them threaten endangered species, and a lingering fear of sharks makes indifference easy. Replace fear with wonder, and everything changes.

BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

Reducing shark consumption in Thailand — by people and by pets — and shifting attitudes until it is socially unacceptable.



OUR SOLUTION

Change starts with a charming face — so WildAid introduced Thailand to seven unforgettable sharks. Maya, Similan, Ginger, Maiton, Spot, Hope and Toty are young leopard sharks: gentle, spotted and impossible to fear. Raised through the StAR Project, Thailand's first shark rewilding effort, they were released off Phuket to public celebration, and any diver can help track them through the Spot the Leopard Shark platform. Behind the sharks stands a full team: the global ReShark alliance, Aquaria Phuket, Ocean Blue Tree, King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang, and Thailand's marine and national park agencies. Seven named sharks gave Thailand something it had never had before: adorable sharks to root for.

Then we invited everyone onto the team. Created with global agency BBDO Bangkok under the #CelebrateWithoutSharks banner, our "Team Shark" campaign styles shark protection after a scouting troop, with badges, scarves and a pledge to say no to shark fin, shark menus and all shark products. Its PSA shows a family birthday where shark fin soup is served. When the daughter posts a photo, disapproving comments pour in — the social cost suddenly becomes visible. This second phase hands the movement to Gen Z, inviting young Thais to create their own content and declare themselves Team Shark.

> "I was about to buy it for my pets — but after seeing this post, I changed my mind."
>
> — Thai pet owner, responding to the Treat or Threat campaign

To meet the newest threat tempting pet owners, we led with science. A WildAid-commissioned DNA analysis, published in the peer-reviewed journal Biological Conservation, identified which shark species end up in pet treats. Our testing also found potentially unsafe arsenic levels in whole dried sharks sold as snacks. Those findings fueled our "Treat or Threat" campaign, warning that what looks like a treat could threaten pets and the ocean alike. Twenty-seven Thai pet influencers, with nearly 12 million followers combined, carried that warning directly to pet lovers.



OUR IMPACT

The new story is taking hold where it counts most: at the table. Shark fin consumption among urban Thais has dropped 34% since 2017 — 8.1 million fewer servings every year. And the sharks themselves are proving it, too. All seven released leopard sharks have been detected alive on our 20-station listening network across Phang-Nga Bay. Rewilding works. Thailand's government joined the team, signing a national conservation agreement for sharks and rays and honoring the StAR Project with a Conservation Recognition Award.

Somewhere off Phuket, Maya, Similan, Ginger, Maiton, Spot, Hope and Toty are hunting on their own reefs — living proof that Thailand's relationship with sharks is changing. Every declined bowl of soup, every rejected pet treat, and every young Thai who joins Team Shark moves the ocean closer to balance.





34%

drop in shark fin consumption among urban Thais since 2017 — 8.1 million fewer servings a year

88%

of urban Thais now recognize sharks' importance to the ocean — up from 68% in 2017

7

leopard sharks released in Thailand's first rewilding — each one detected alive and thriving

20

underwater listening stations now tracking the released sharks across Phang-Nga Bay

32.5M

people reached by news coverage of our shark pet-treat safety studies

27

Thai pet influencers — with nearly 12 million total followers — warning that treats can be threats





"High-quality journalism plays an essential role in explaining why conservation matters to Africa and Africans. It helps transform complex environmental issues into stories that people can understand, connect with and act upon."

— Simon Denyer, WildAid's Africa Program Manager





WHEN JOURNALISTS ROAR:

GABON'S FIRST-EVER ENVIRONMENTAL MEDIA AWARDS ARE PROTECTING ITS WILDLIFE

Gabon holds some of Central Africa's most important forests and wildlife — but until recently, almost no one was telling their stories. Independent environmental journalism scarcely existed as a profession there. So WildAid set out to build it, first training Gabonese journalists in environmental reporting with Mongabay, then launching the nation's first-ever Environmental Media Awards in partnership with the U.S. Embassy. Six fearless works were honored, including an investigation into mining pollution, coverage of Indigenous beekeeping in the Congo Basin, reporting on marine life on the coast in Gamba, a radio report on the ecological cost of artisanal gold mining, and a photo of the year no one will forget: a buffalo on a plastic-strewn beach.

The model is proven. WildAid pioneered it in 2023 with the Uganda Wildlife Authority, and the awards are now a national institution in Uganda — where award-winning stories have moved the government to act. The formula travels: recognize the best work, raise the profile of conservation reporting and build a community of journalists who keep digging — with Cameroon and Tanzania next in line. Few conservation organizations would think to invest in journalism itself. But behavior change at the scale of a society requires something no campaign can manufacture: an independent press people trust.

Across Africa, the environmental beat is becoming a path to conservation success — journalists are digging, editors are publishing and the public is responding.



MARINE ENFORCEMENT LEADERSHIP







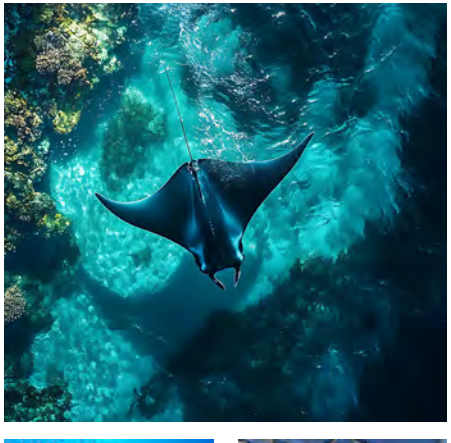


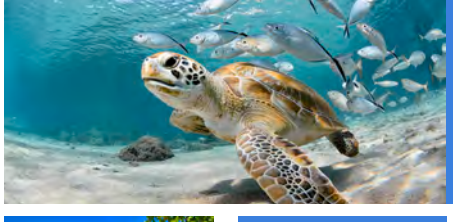


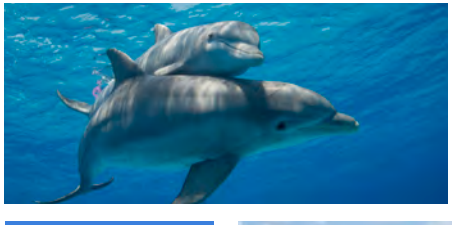




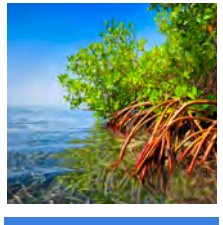




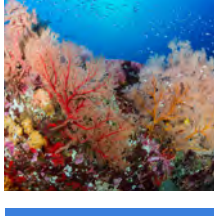


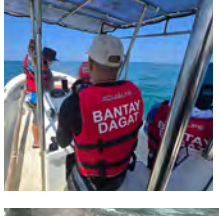







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BANTAY
DAGAT


POLICE











FOUR NATIONS, ONE OCEAN:

The Gold-Standard Network Guarding the Ocean's Greatest Wildlife Migrations

WHY THIS MATTERS

Most people picture “wildlife” on land — lions, elephants, rhinos. Yet 80% of all life on Earth lives in the ocean.

WildAid protects the homes and highways ocean life needs to survive, and nowhere is this work more vital than the Eastern Tropical Pacific. Here, the waters of the Galápagos, Cocos, Coiba and Malpelo form one of the largest marine conservation corridors in the world: an ocean superhighway for hammerhead sharks, sea turtles, whales and giant mantas. But even if a shark is safe in the Galápagos, she can swim straight into unprotected water and meet a longline waiting for her. Protection that stops at a border is no protection at all.





THE CHALLENGE

Bringing four sovereign nations into one enforcement system may have been the hardest problem in ocean conservation. Each country guards its own data. Each fields its own navy, park service and fisheries agency — dozens of institutions with overlapping authority and separate chains of command. Political winds can shift with every election. On the water, many enforcement teams lacked the technical training and equipment to act on what they saw, while illegal fleets exploited every seam between jurisdictions. The coordination required isn’t built at a summit, and it isn’t built just because someone signed an agreement. It is only built one way: trust.

BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

Strengthening collaboration among four sovereign nations — coordinating patrols and enforcement to protect one ocean, and some of Earth’s most vulnerable migratory wildlife, as a single regional network.

OUR SOLUTION

Trust is earned the slow way — and WildAid, a small U.S.-based nonprofit working alongside governments that had every reason to be skeptical, earned it. Our marine team, with over 200 years of combined law enforcement experience, kept proving itself in operation after operation. As a result, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Panama and Colombia invited WildAid to help connect their defenses — not four separate marine parks, but one vast connected system.

None of this happened at a summit, and none of it happened because someone signed an agreement. It happened because people kept showing up — year after year, operation after operation — until counterparts across four borders became colleagues, and colleagues became a team.

Here is what this looks like on the water. In Colombia: the country's first-ever comprehensive maritime monitoring center, so rangers can spot illegal activity and coordinate a response in real time. In Panama: a patrol vessel for Coiba National Park — a UNESCO World Heritage site with over half a million acres of ocean — where rangers once had to borrow boats. In Costa Rica: an interceptor vessel for the waters around Cocos Island, one of the most important shark strongholds on Earth. In the Galápagos: upgraded satellite monitoring and the first-ever aerial patrols, with satellite phones delivered to the Navy's air unit so pilots can talk to the monitoring center mid-flight.

Behind the hardware stands the deeper investment: people. This year alone, 840 men and women — 46% women — were trained to track illegal fishing vessels by satellite, so every tool has a skilled hand operating it. This important work is supported by Global Affairs Canada, the Bezos Earth Fund and Fundación PACÍFICO.



OUR IMPACT

In a single year, the region moved from isolated patrols to coordinated defense. Colombia now operates a comprehensive maritime monitoring system. Ecuador's aerial patrols swept nearly 14,000 nautical miles of the new Hermandad Marine Reserve on their first flight. And enforcement is delivering: 16 longliners caught fishing illegally — six seized, 10 more under investigation.

The result is bigger than any one country: the entire region is now measurably closer to the global goal of truly protecting 30% of the ocean by 2030. What WildAid and its partners are building here is fast becoming the gold-standard model for ocean conservation worldwide. For the sharks, turtles and mantas that know no borders, the Eastern Tropical Pacific is becoming what it was always meant to be — not a patchwork of paper parks, but a single protected ocean, defended by nations working as one. Conservation is a team sport — and this is what a winning team looks like.



840
people trained to track illegal fishing vessels by satellite — 46% women

16
longliners caught fishing illegally — six seized, 10 under investigation

~20
trainings and workshops delivered this year — more than triple the target

14,000
nautical miles swept in the first-ever aerial patrol of the new Hermandad Marine Reserve

65%
marine radio coverage across the Galápagos — up from 40% — with WildAid-supported equipment

~2,500
people engaged across the region this year — 45% women



SPOTLIGHT:
MASSIVE MOONLIT MIGRATION

Here is something most people don't know: scalloped hammerheads are among the only sharks that school in massive gatherings — hundreds moving together through the water column — and the largest gatherings left on Earth happen right here, in the Eastern Tropical Pacific. Navigating by Earth's magnetic field, they follow seamounts like underwater highways on journeys of more than a thousand miles across all four of these connected nations. They set out on the full moon, the mothers bound for coastal mangrove nurseries where their pups will be born. A female repeats the journey her whole life, logging some 120,000 miles: halfway to the moon. These sharks don't recognize borders. They just swim. Which is exactly why four nations working together to guard one ocean matters so much — and that collaboration is why, in the Galápagos Marine Reserve, not a single shark finning case has been reported since 2014.



GUARDIANS OF THE SEA:

Turning the Tide on Destructive Fishing in the Philippines

WHY THIS MATTERS

The western Pacific holds one of Earth's richest stretches of ocean.

The Coral Triangle contains three-quarters of the world's coral species and more than 2,000 kinds of reef fish, and its waters cradle spawning grounds for the tuna that feed the planet. At its heart sit the Philippines' more than 7,000 islands, so dense with life that scientists call the country the center of marine biodiversity. This abundance feeds and employs millions of Filipinos and sustains millions more across the region. These reefs matter to the whole world, and they depend on protection.

THE CHALLENGE

In parts of Palawan and Southern Leyte, that protection is under attack. Blast fishers drop homemade bombs, built from cheap and easy-to-find materials, that turn living reefs into gray rubble in an instant; recovery takes decades. Cyanide fishers squirt poison into coral crevices to stun valuable fish, sickening the reef itself. And divers breathing through hoses hooked to rattling air compressors stay down for hours, stripping fragile habitats bare. These methods don't just harm the reefs; they maim and kill the fishermen themselves. Across thousands of scattered islands, community patrols often spot the crimes first. But their reports historically went nowhere: cases stalled, evidence went missing, and violators learned that getting caught rarely meant consequences.



BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

Stopping blast fishing and cyanide poisoning in the southern Philippines — practices that kill fish indiscriminately and destroy coral reefs.

OUR SOLUTION

Since 2022, WildAid has worked across 15 local governments in southern Palawan and Southern Leyte to connect every link in the enforcement chain — so that when illegal fishing is spotted, it leads to a real case, not a dead end. We train and equip the community patrol teams known as Bantay Dagat — "guardians of the sea" — and link them to the police, prosecutors and national agencies who can turn detection into justice.













"Protecting the ocean is not just for the authorities — it's our responsibility too."

— Bantay Dagat leader, Philippines.

OUR IMPACT

In April 2026, that system faced its first test. Under Operation Trident, WildAid joined the Philippine National Police Maritime Group, the Palawan Council for Sustainable Development and Bantay Dagat teams in coordinated patrols across the highest-risk waters of southern Palawan, using the boats, training and equipment that the Government of Canada, Rainforest Trust and the Minderoo Foundation helped put in place. The very first boarding told the story: officers found bomb bottles, stoppers, hoses and a compressor, and the crew admitted they were waiting on a delivery of explosives from a second boat.

Arrests followed on the spot. Another crew dumped their chemicals overboard as the patrol closed in, then confessed to cyanide fishing. One captain threw his compressor into the sea before entering the patrol zone, certain he could dodge inspection; he was cited anyway. In all, the operation disrupted one suspected cyanide ring and three blast-fishing groups.

The results were immediate and striking. Within days, illegal fishing in patrolled waters dropped by roughly 90% — and local fish prices climbed almost overnight, proof that illegal fishing had been driving an entire shadow economy. When rules are real, fair and consistently upheld, behavior changes fast.

Confiscated blast bottles, cyanide rigs and compressors will never touch a reef again. But the deeper victory is quieter: communities and government now act as one system, with patrols that last beyond any single operation. Because of that, the reefs at the center of the world's marine life have real guardians — this year and every year that follows.

90%
drop in illegal fishing in patrolled waters — within days

35
arrests and citations in a single coordinated operation

5
animals rescued from wildlife traffickers in one patrol — two macaques and three endangered Sunda box turtles

15
local governments strengthened across southern Palawan and Southern Leyte since 2022

1st
Southern Leyte Law Enforcement Partnership created, uniting coast guard, police and fisheries agencies

30
national enforcement officers trained in a weeklong intensive covering open-source investigations, body cameras and evidence handling

EYES ON THE WATER:

Yucatán's Fishing Families Are Taking Their Coast Back From Poachers



WHY THIS MATTERS

Where the Gulf of Mexico meets the Caribbean Sea, the Yucatán Peninsula holds some of the richest waters in the Western Hemisphere.

Its coastal lagoons, mangrove forests and coral reefs shelter four species of sea turtles, 34 species of coral, and 24 species of sharks and rays. Alacranes Reef, the largest coral reef in the southern Gulf of Mexico, anchors it all. These waters also feed families. Fishing is the lifeblood of coastal Yucatán, and the octopus, lobster and grouper pulled from these seas sustain communities up and down the peninsula. When the ocean here thrives, so do the people who depend on it.

THE CHALLENGE

A black-market gold rush is emptying the seabed. The target is the humble sea cucumber, the ocean floor's cleanup crew. These slow-moving animals recycle nutrients and keep seabed ecosystems healthy, yet they are defenseless against divers who vacuum them up by the thousands. Dried and sold as a luxury delicacy in Asia, sea cucumbers command prices so high that poachers on makeshift air-compressor rigs risk their lives to harvest them. Hidden in the mangroves, clandestine poaching camps process them for smuggling. The lawlessness doesn't stop there: poachers ignore closed seasons, raid protected areas, and steal the octopus and lobster that honest fishers depend on. Along a remote coastline, authorities cannot be everywhere at once. For years, the people who know these waters best had no organized way to fight back.



BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

Increasing community reporting of illegal fishing and closed-season violations — helping depleted fisheries recover.







OUR SOLUTION

Since 2020, WildAid has worked with Yucatán's fishing federations and Mexico's park, fisheries and naval authorities on a simple idea with radical leverage: empower the fishers themselves to patrol. Organized surveillance committees contribute their own boats, fuel and crews, bringing generations of local knowledge to joint operations with park rangers, fisheries inspectors and naval personnel. It is WildAid's marine model in its purest form: our partners supply the vessels and the will, and we supply the tools that multiply them.

Technology turns vigilance into evidence. With WildAid training, committees log every patrol, boarding and violation using O-FISH and EarthRanger, digital tools that track illegal fishing even in remote stretches of ocean. More than three regional fishing federations and five community surveillance committees have adopted the system, and government agencies are following their lead.

We also equipped park rangers at Alacranes Reef National Park and the Ría Lagartos Biosphere Reserve, and returned a rehabilitated patrol vessel to the water along the eastern coast. Because lasting protection is chosen, not imposed, the committees lead education and outreach in their own ports, building respect for closed seasons and protected areas. Several communities have gone even further and established Fish Refuge Zones, recovery areas they monitor themselves with WildAid's technical support.

OUR IMPACT

The deterrence is real, and the sea is responding. Coordinated patrols seized 17 illegal fishing vessels along with their contraband catch and banned gear. They dismantled roughly a dozen clandestine sea cucumber processing camps hidden in the mangroves of Dzilam de Bravo. As compliance rises, octopus, lobster and grouper populations are showing signs of recovery in some locations, living proof to the communities that their vigilance pays.

In the Yucatán, the ocean's best defenders were there all along. They just needed the tools, the training and a team behind them.



17

illegal fishing vessels seized, along with their catch and banned gear

~12

clandestine sea cucumber processing camps dismantled in the mangroves of Dzilam de Bravo

2

newly equipped flagship marine protected areas: Alacranes Reef National Park and the Ría Lagartos Biosphere Reserve

3

commercially vital species — octopus, lobster and grouper — showing signs of recovery where communities patrol

6

Fish Refuge Zones established and monitored by coastal communities

1

patrol vessel rehabilitated and returned to the water to guard the eastern coast



ANSWERING THE CALL:

Gabon's Communities Rise to Defend Their Spectacular Ocean Wildlife and Mangroves

WHY THIS MATTERS

Gabon has done something no other African nation has: built the continent's largest network of protected marine areas — 20 sanctuaries that, together with its coastal national parks, shelter nearly 27% of its vast ocean territory.

These areas safeguard the ecosystems most vulnerable to fishing pressure — seagrass beds, sea turtle nesting beaches, estuaries, deep-sea seamounts and old-growth mangroves — and are home to the world's largest nesting population of leatherback turtles, more than 60 species of sharks and rays, and the critically endangered Atlantic humpback dolphin. And Gabon is aiming even higher: 30% of its ocean protected, with half under strong protection, by the end of 2027.

THE CHALLENGE

A sanctuary is only as strong as its enforcement — and today, only about 5% of the network enjoys a high level of protection. Gabon's two enforcement agencies, the fisheries directorate and the national parks agency, must patrol an immense ocean area with limited boats, budgets and personnel. Illegal fishing keeps rising, driven largely by small commercial vessels that play an outsized role in Gabonese fisheries and can easily slip into protected areas. Fish populations are declining, an estimated $610 million — 3% of Gabon's entire economy — is lost every year, and the coastal families who depend on the sea for food and income bear the cost. Endangered species remain protected only on paper.



BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

Empowering Gabon's coastal fishing communities to report violations and follow the rules — protecting vital mangrove habitats.



OUR SOLUTION

WildAid, trusted by both agencies, has launched a three-year project, supported by the U.S. Department of State, to reduce illegal fishing in the highest-priority sanctuaries. It combines community-driven intelligence, stronger operations and targeted innovation. At its core is a free, anonymous national tip line — soon able to receive photo and video evidence via WhatsApp — that turns coastal communities into the eyes of the enforcement system, so that tips become cases and cases lead to consequences. Gabon is proving what enforcement veterans have long known: an alert public is the most powerful weapon against environmental crimes.

Every additional link in the enforcement chain is another chance to change behavior: more patrols on the water; training and mentoring for officers; digital case files so no violation disappears into a drawer; and legal reforms that embed community participation in law and give sanctions real teeth.

To finally tackle the small vessel challenge, WildAid is developing an innovative breakthrough — a low-cost tracking system for small-scale fisheries using $50 solar-powered trackers and license-free long-range radios that need to be purchased only once. This replaces a failed approach that cost roughly 10 times more per boat annually. Pilots across the fleet of 750 Gabonese small boats begin in 2027.



OUR IMPACT

Visible community enforcement in waters that once saw little is already delivering results: WildAid-supported patrols have conducted more than 430 at-sea inspections this year and identified 77 fishing infractions. Local community tip line reports helped patrols intercept repeat violators, demonstrating how insider eyes on the water can strengthen enforcement and protect ocean wildlife.

Over the next three years, the project sets clear, public targets: a tip line known in every coastal community, with at least 30% of credible reports leading to enforcement action; at least 8 in 10 detected violations formally recorded and processed; trackers on 80% of small-scale commercial vessels in priority waters; and at least two legal reforms advanced. The prize is sustained reductions in illegal fishing, healthier seas, and greater food security and resilience for Gabon's coastal communities — in Africa's largest ocean refuge ever built.



430+
at-sea inspections this year by WildAid-supported patrols

77
fishing infractions identified

6
community workshops bringing fishers into compliance with the rules

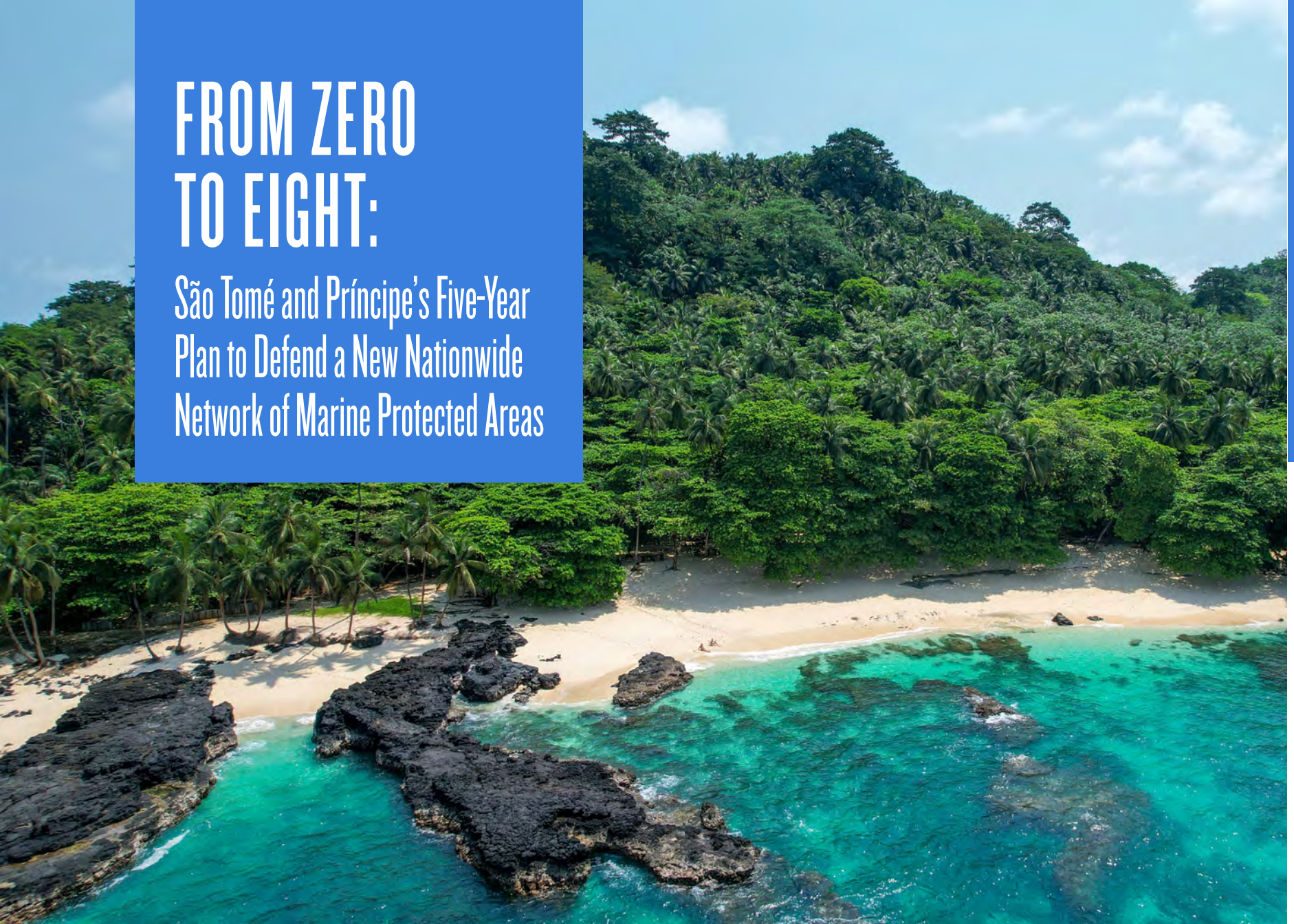
$50
one-time tracker cost — replacing systems that cost 10x more annually per boat

750
small-scale vessels to be tracked in the national pilot

2x
more fish caught by small boats than by Gabon's entire industrial fleet

FROM ZERO TO EIGHT:

São Tomé and Príncipe's Five-Year Plan to Defend a New Nationwide Network of Marine Protected Areas



WHY THIS MATTERS

São Tomé and Príncipe — the tiny island nation often called the “Galápagos of Africa” — is home to some of the richest marine biodiversity on Earth.

Its reefs and beaches shelter five of the world’s seven sea turtle species and welcome humpback whales each year. For its people, the ocean is survival itself: fish provides more than half the animal protein the nation consumes, and fishing is the lifeblood of its coastal communities. For years, the country has been charting a course to protect its incredible marine wildlife; this year, that promise became real.

THE CHALLENGE

Designating marine protected areas on a map is one thing; making them real on the water is another. When we began, São Tomé and Príncipe had no marine protected areas. Illegal and destructive fishing was growing — weighted purse seine nets, banned near shore but routinely used anyway, dragged across the seafloor, smashing coral reefs. Enforcement agencies worked with scarce boats, outdated laws and little coordination. The test over the past year: could a small nation turn plans and goodwill into laws, patrols and real protection?



BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

Empowering the government and fishing communities to create the nation's first eight marine protected areas — stopping illegal fishing and coral reef destruction.

OUR SOLUTION

Building on years of trust earned alongside our coalition partners — Fauna & Flora, Oikos and MARAPA — WildAid works hand in hand with the government agencies that guard these waters: the Directorate of Fisheries and Aquaculture, the Coast Guard, the Port Authority, the National Police, and the environmental authorities of both islands. Together, we finalized the country's first Marine Protection System Plan — a practical five-year roadmap to defend its planned network of eight marine protected areas.

The nation's first fisheries surveillance plan was a similar team effort. Through the FISH4ACP program, the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization secured funding from the European Union and the German government. Our longtime partner MARAPA brought deep local roots, and WildAid brought the technical playbook. Together, we surveyed every agency with a role on the water and spelled out who patrols, who inspects, who prosecutes, and how they all work together to catch illegal fishing.

Just as importantly, we helped strengthen the rules themselves. A newly published fisheries regulation — the first in a sweeping update of the nation's fishing laws — now requires fishers to obtain permits, giving the country its first real handle on fishing pressure, and bans destructive practices such as divers using compressed-air tanks to drive fish into the very nets that tear across coral reefs. More reforms are on the way.







OUR IMPACT

The results are historic. Two marine protected areas have been officially created — the first in the nation's history — with six more expected soon in Príncipe, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. And enforcement is no longer theoretical: this year, the fisheries agency conducted the first independent patrols and boardings in its entire history — and they are now increasing every week, with fisheries and Port Authority officers inspecting 57 boats in July alone.

For generations, São Tomé and Príncipe's fishing communities have cared for these waters by custom. Now, for the first time, the law stands with them: protected areas in statute, permits in hand, and patrol boats on the water. It is proof that when governments, communities, and partners hold course together, even the smallest nations can deliver protection that matters to the whole planet. And for the sea turtles hauling ashore on its beaches tonight, that protection is finally real.



2

MPAs officially created — the first marine protected areas in the nation's history

6

new marine protected areas expected soon in Príncipe, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

57

boats inspected in July alone — on the agency's first-ever independent patrols

1st

national fishing-permit requirement, giving the nation control over fishing pressure

5-year

Marine Protection System Plan finalized to defend all eight planned marine protected areas

3

foundational documents delivered this year for the FAO's FISH4ACP program: gap assessment, national fisheries survey and surveillance plan

AT THE EDGE OF THE MAP:

Rapa Nui and Chile Unite to Protect Ocean Waters Larger Than Texas



WHY THIS MATTERS

Rapa Nui — Easter Island — is the most remote inhabited island on Earth.

It is home to the moai, the towering stone figures carved centuries ago, and to the descendants of the Polynesian navigators who read the ocean like a map. Surrounding it is more than 720,000 square kilometers of protected ocean — an area larger than Texas — sheltering species found nowhere else on the planet. For the Rapa Nui people, this sea is not scenery. It is ancestry, food security and identity. How it is protected will show the world whether Indigenous communities and national governments can guard a vast ocean together, as equals.

THE CHALLENGE

Protected waters this vast have almost no one watching them. Foreign industrial fleets work the open waters beyond the horizon, undercutting local conservation. On the island, the local sea council — Koro Nui o Te Vaikava — runs on volunteers, without stable funding or a technical team. There is no radar, no long-range drone, and no port large enough for sustained naval operations. When a violation is detected, sanctions depend on a slow process on the mainland, 3,500 kilometers away, that too often ends in nothing. The community sees the problem daily — and until now, had no system to act on it.



OUR SOLUTION

WildAid began as it always does: by listening. Working with the Blue Nature Alliance, we spent months in consultation with everyone who holds a stake in these waters — Koro Nui o Te Vaikava, artisanal fishers, the Chilean Navy, and Chile's fisheries, biodiversity and environment agencies — and delivered a validated roadmap now guiding national counterparts.

Then, in April 2026, something rare happened: every stakeholder reached consensus on a three-part, community-led surveillance pilot — community-based marine surveillance, a local monitoring center powered by the free EarthRanger platform, and vessel tracking for the artisanal fleet. The pilot is beginning on a deliberately small scale, during the lobster closure, so the community can prove the model works before scaling it. At the fishers' own request, the trackers will serve first as a safety and search-and-rescue lifeline, not an enforcement tool — using the technology to build trust. And the community holds the pen: at Koro Nui's request, the timeline was extended to get the governance right, with a formal agreement between the council and Chile's protected-areas agency defining who leads, who supports and who watches the water.



BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

Empowering Rapa Nui and Chile to protect Easter Island's magnificent waters as equal partners — a historic first.

OUR IMPACT

The foundation is built — the hardest part is complete. This year, 23 community members and officials deepened their skills through co-design workshops; a shared governance framework now defines roles for community, government and volunteers; and the island's first formal collaboration agreement between the Koro Nui council and Chile's protected-areas agency is in place. Conservation is a team sport — and on Rapa Nui, the community is captain.

With the lobster closure, the monitoring center comes online, and the trackers go to sea as guardians of fishers' lives first. For a thousand years, the Rapa Nui have read this ocean. Now, with new tools in trusted hands, the world's most remote community is showing how the largest marine protected areas on Earth can be guarded — together.

720,000
square kilometers of protected ocean around Rapa Nui — an area larger than Texas

23
community members and officials trained in co-design workshops this year

3
pilot components agreed upon by every stakeholder: surveillance, a monitoring center and vessel tracking

1st
formal collaboration agreement between the Koro Nui sea council and Chile's protected-areas agency

7
government agencies and community bodies aligned behind a single community-led pilot

1
validated roadmap delivered and now guiding Chile's national agencies

TEACH A NATION TO PATROL:

China's Marine Rangers Get Their First Shared Playbook for Real Protection on the Water



WHY THIS MATTERS

China has made building a strong maritime nation a national priority — with a goal as old as its philosophy: harmony between people and the ocean.

The ambition shows. No country harvests more from the sea; its $1.4 trillion marine economy powers 7.8% of GDP; and its network of marine protected areas spans more than 36,000 square miles, sheltering spotted seals, Chinese white dolphins, coral reefs and coastal wetlands found nowhere else. And China is taking on the challenge every ocean nation shares: worldwide, up to 60% of marine protected areas are not effectively enforced. The difference between a line on a map and a living sanctuary is a ranger who knows what to do.



THE CHALLENGE

Patrolling the sea is far harder than patrolling land. China's rangers watch over roughly 11,000 miles of mainland coastline — a distance equal to nearly half the planet's circumference — plus protected areas scattered across open water and islands. Protection at that scale takes more of everything: more investment, more advanced technology and, above all, a patrol system every team can share. Dedication was never the problem. What rangers lacked was a shared playbook.

BEHAVIOR CHANGE GOAL

Empowering China's rangers with their first shared professional standard for ocean protection.



"The goal is simple. Our children and grandchildren will still see white dolphins in these waters. With every trained ranger and every patrol, that future comes closer."

— Pearl River Ranger, May 2026

OUR SOLUTION

WildAid brought China two decades of experience in more than 110 marine protected areas across 20 countries — patrol strategies, ranger training, manuals and ranger academies — together with the trust WildAid has earned in China over 20 years of partnership. With the Marine Protected Area Research Team of the First Institute of Oceanography, under China's Ministry of Natural Resources, we developed China's first framework for marine protected area management and patrol.

Then we put it directly into rangers' hands. Released on World Ranger Day and filmed alongside frontline teams at two national nature reserves, "Marine Protected Area Management and Patrol Methods: From Standards to Action" is China's first patrol instructional video. It walks every ranger through six clear steps: setting conservation objectives, designing patrol routes, organizing crews and equipment, running routine patrols, mounting joint operations across agencies, and turning patrol data into management that sharpens year after year. Real rangers, real waters, real methods.

And this is only the beginning. Working alongside the research institute and government agencies — a cooperation few organizations are positioned to build — WildAid is helping bring the manual, its courses and the video into the official ranger-training system, so the playbook becomes the way every new ranger learns the job.

OUR IMPACT

When the nation that harvests more from the sea than any other professionalizes its ocean patrols, the impact reaches far beyond its own shores. China's rangers now have their first shared patrol standard — a true zero-to-one breakthrough — and it is already in the field, recommended to more than 200 frontline rangers and marine protected area managers.

From the seal colonies of the north to the Pearl River Estuary — home to the country's largest population of Chinese white dolphins — China's ocean treasures are gaining better-equipped guardians, patrol by patrol.



352
marine protected areas across China now served by a shared patrol playbook

11,000
miles of coastline in the rangers' care — a distance that would stretch nearly halfway around the planet

1st
national patrol framework and instructional video in China's history

6
patrol steps every ranger can follow, from route planning to data-driven management

18
countries of WildAid marine patrol experience distilled for China's rangers

450
spotted seals now thrive at the Liaohe Estuary — up from a few dozen two decades ago

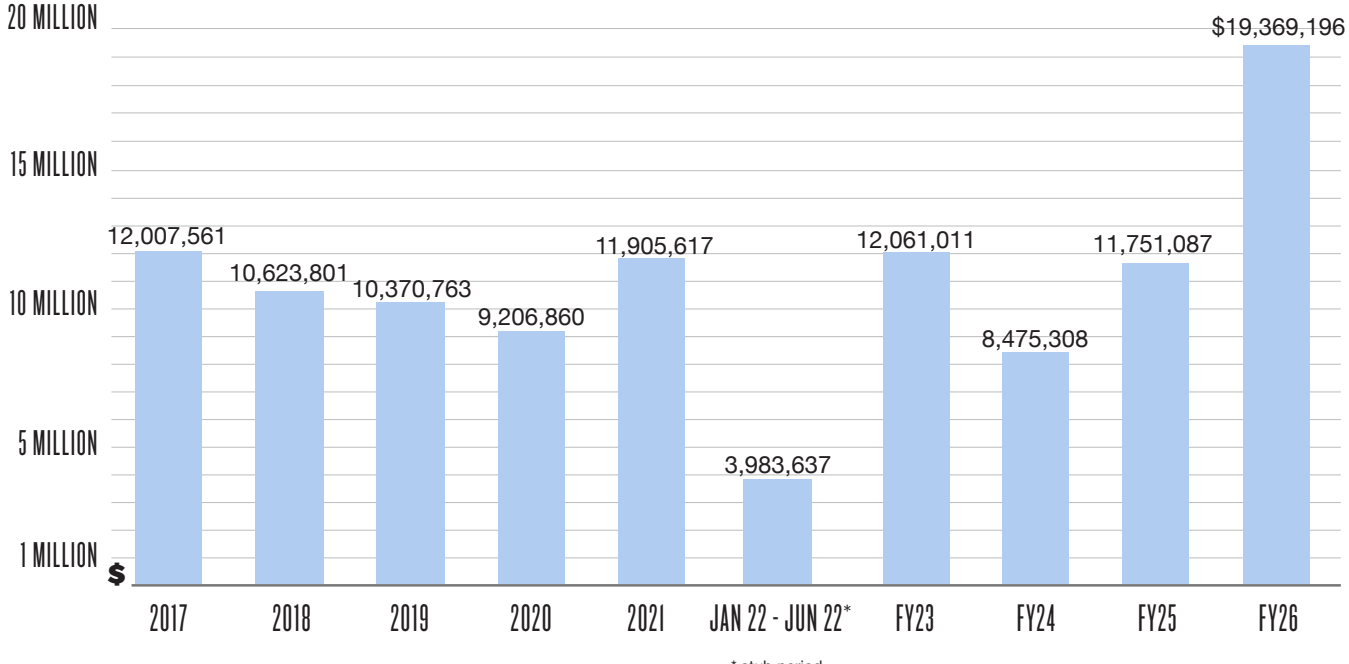
FINANCIALS

2025/2026 FINANCIAL REPORT

WildAid is committed to delivering outsized impact from every gift our generous donors entrust to us. We leverage long-standing relationships with private and government-owned media partners to amplify a small communications budget into pro bono media placements valued at $290 million — a level of donated media leverage unmatched in conservation.

For the 13th consecutive year, Charity Navigator has rated WildAid a Four-Star Charity, its highest designation, reflecting strong accountability across finance, leadership, adaptability, and transparency.

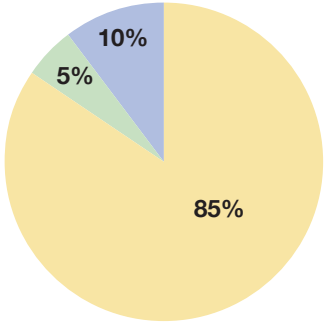
REVENUE BY YEAR



* stub period

EXPENSES BY TYPE

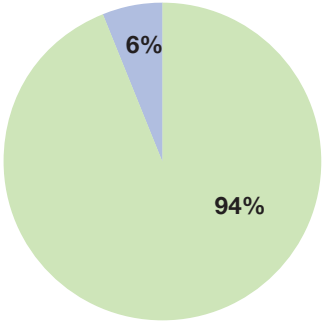
- Programs
- Fundraising
- General administrative



JULY 2025 – JUNE 2026

LEVERAGED DONATED MEDIA

- Donated broadcast and media placement
- Total direct expenses

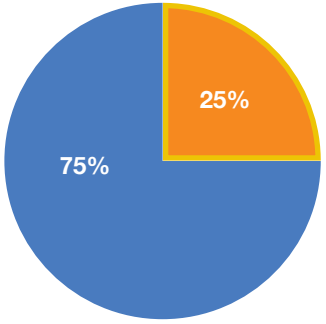


JULY 2025 – JUNE 2026

DIRECT EXPENSES BY PROGRAM

- Norm-Changing*
- Marine Protection

*Comprised of Wildlife and Climate Programs for comparison to past reports.



JULY 2025 – JUNE 2026



For the 13th year in a row, WildAid has earned Charity Navigator's highest possible rating of four stars.

WILDAID


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