

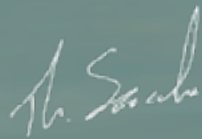
Thank you for walking this path with us

Our world is changing rapidly - ecologically, politically and socially. Marinecultures.org is also facing major challenges: Coral reefs are under massive threat and international funding is shrinking. Yet there is reason for optimism.

We do not focus on quick solutions, but on long-term prospects - by investing in training and joint learning. Together with the local population, we are looking for ways to preserve marine ecosystems and secure livelihoods. A particular success: our sponge farmers are now working as an independent cooperative - a milestone that is encouraging.

For us, the future means sharing knowledge, strengthening resilience and cultivating partnerships - both regionally and internationally. New approaches in coral reforestation, based on resilient species and sexual reproduction, point the way forward. A new chapter begins with Fabienne Addor as our new Managing Director. We will keep at it - with courage, perseverance and the confidence that commitment pays off.

Thomas Sacchi
President



marinecultures.org

Annual Report 2024/25

Aquacultures & Marine Conservation



From pearls to sponges and corals

During my second stay in Zanzibar in 2005, I discovered that women were cultivating algae rather than exploiting the fascinating ecosystem of the sea. And we wanted to be part of it! We quickly buried our initial idea of cultivating pearls when we realized how difficult it would be to market the pearls and protect the farms. In 20 years we have never regretted our decision to instead cultivate sponges and corals. On the contrary. Setting off for new shores in Zanzibar has rewarded us with a fascinating workplace. Above all, the warmth of the people compensated us for the hardships many times over. To this day, the proximity to local people, especially the trainings and educational workshops are our highlights. This was the only way to expand to the surrounding islands and the Tanzanian mainland what originally started as a local initiative. Today, marinecultures.org is not only a training centre, but also a regional hub for the reforestation of coral reefs.

I will leave the management with confidence - good successor and a great team will continue and expand what I have built up with your help.

Christian Vaterlaus
Managing Director



marinecultures.org

Sponge farming activities

The independent sponge farmers' cooperative in Jambiani is doing well and only contact us if there are difficulties, such as determining prices and finding new sales outlets. The farmers are motivated and some of them earn good money from their sales. A new farmer has recently been trained and her farm was successively stocked with sponges.

The two sponge farming research projects as part of the Blue Action Fund initiative in the Pemba Channel have been completed. In Kigombe, two teams spent 6 months trying to cultivate sponges. The team located in the north couldn't find enough sponges because their area is covered with dense seagrass. The team in the south discovered an interesting species, but it turned out that cannot be cultivated.

In Msuka, on Pemba island, the local team found the same sponge variety cultivated in Jambiani. Highly motivated, they tried to establish a brood stock, which initially worked well. However, toward the end of the project a pest appeared, which required surgical removal. We therefore recommended our partners WCS to extend the project to clarify whether cultivation is feasible in the long term.



Scaling-up coral reef reforestation

After the fourth global coral bleaching event, we were initially paralysed, but then we quickly realized that reforestation of coral reefs in Tanzania is more important than ever. Above all, it is about countering the galloping loss of biodiversity. With four parallel projects, we are in the right place at the right time.

We not only train new reforestation teams but also help our partners setting-up rearing facilities, selecting reefs for reforestation, and developing efficient and cost-effective processes. In three cases, we are also responsible for the overall project management. We implement the latest methods and trends, and work continuously to optimize our processes, while acting as a centre of excellence for other initiatives in the region.

Our teams were specifically selected and trained from the respective local fishing communities. They work extremely well and are highly motivated. Each new project has a potential output of 10,000 transplanted corals per year - the four teams are already fighting for the top spots.


Improved fisheries management

At all new locations where we are evaluating opportunities for sponge farming and reforesting coral reefs, we follow an integrated approach that includes establishing new or expanded marine protected areas and management plans. Together with the communities, the government and the various project partners, fishing and marine conservation are being put on a new footing.

Our reforestation project in Msuka on Pemba island, is in the northern part of PECCA's protected area expansion. In Kigombe, Tanzania, the Tanga Coelacanth Marine Park (TACMP) is being expanded and linked to new protected areas in the north, where we already have a new team in Fish Eagle (Boma/Subutuni) and soon another one in Moa near the Kenyan border.

In both cases, the overall program aims to improve coral reef health by strengthening the management capacity of protected areas and reducing primary human activities that lead to the degradation of coral reef ecosystems and negatively impact coral reef health and community livelihoods.





Organization

marinecultures.org is a Swiss non-profit organization. Registered as an association in the trade register office of the Kanton Zurich (UID CHE-114.582.081). We are re-registered as an NGO with the Zanzibar Revolutionary Government in 2018 with the new No. Z0000008818. Our Tax Identification Nummer (TIN) is: 110-483-058.

We are financed by membership fees, donations and project support contributions. Donations are tax deductible in Switzerland.

Bank: Postfinance, Bern, Switzerland Account No: 85-51774-9, IBAN: CH77 0900 0000 8505 1774 9, BIC/SWIFT: POFICHBEXXX

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Finance review (CHF)	2022	2023	2024
as per 31.12.2024			
Income			
Members	6'006	6'440	6'767
Donations	41'093	35'086	25'315
Grants	69'799	29'310	67'379
Others	5'881	0	0
Special Reserves	0	0	0
In-house efforts	50'108	35'505	25'456
Total Income	172'887	106'341	124'917
Expenditure			
Projects *	137'443	73'203	90'726
Governance **	12'142	16'616	13'844
Total Expenditure	149'595	89'819	104'570
Increase/Decrease Income (Ref. previous year)	111,5 %	60.0%	116.4%
Percentage of governance **	8,1 %	18.0%	13.2%

* incl. 90% of the managing director's salary and social costs

** incl. 10% of the managing director salary and social costs

For detailed financial audit report 2024 see www.marinecultures.org



Who we are

marinecultures.org is a small non-profit organization on the island of Zanzibar; organized as an association and founded in Zurich, Switzerland in 2008. We are financed by membership fees, donations and project grants.

Why we are involved

Overexploitation of the seas destroys the ecological balance and coastal populations lose their livelihood. Our goal is to improve the quality of life of the population and protect natural resources.

What we are committed to

We want to preserve the diversity of marine fauna and create sustainable jobs through the development of aquacultures.

How we get involved

As an alternative to overfishing the oceans, marinecultures.org researches and develops ecologically compatible aquacultures in cooperation with the population.

Where we get involved

The focus of our activities is in Jambiani, a fishing village on the east coast of Zanzibar. We also operate individual projects on other coasts in Tanzania and East Africa.

Verein marinecultures.org

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