

NOVOTEL

Novotel Oceans Impact Report

Year Two

FROM BLUE VISION TO TRUE IMPACT:
Taking action to preserve the health
and longevity of the world's oceans.



Two years
of action

2024-2026



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Foreword by Novotel's Global Brand President

At Novotel, we have long believed that hospitality should be about more than welcoming people well. It should also reflect a deeper sense of care: for places, for communities, and for the natural systems that sustain life and wellbeing around the world.

The ocean is central to the longevity of the planet. It regulates climate, supports biodiversity, provides livelihoods and nourishment for billions of people, and shapes many of the destinations that travellers return to again and again. Protecting the ocean is not a distant environmental concern. It is closely tied to the future of travel, to the resilience of communities, and to the quality of life we all depend on.

This commitment to protecting the oceans is part of Novotel's new "Longevity Everyday" vision, which seeks to redefine the role of hotels in supporting guests' wellbeing and quality of life, while recognising that planetary health is intrinsically linked to personal wellbeing.

When Novotel launched its international three-year partnership with WWF France in 2024, the intention was clear: to create a framework that could help the brand take meaningful action, both within its own operations and beyond them.

The first year was about setting that foundation and led us to define the Novotel Positive Impact Plan. This second year has been about action. Across the network, owner partners and hotel teams are continuing to translate this commitment into action, reducing single-use plastics, pursuing eco-certification, and embedding more thoughtful food choices into the guest experience.

Seafood sourcing is being guided more closely by WWF's principles, training is reaching teams more widely, and education around ocean health is beginning to become part of everyday life within our hotels.

At the same time, the partnership is supporting a broader portfolio of marine conservation work, from protecting Posidonia meadows and endangered sea species in the Mediterranean to strengthening sea turtle conservation and expanding ocean protection actions into new geographies.

That does not mean the journey is complete. There is still a great deal to do, and some of the most meaningful conservation work will continue to unfold in the months ahead. But this year's progress shows what becomes possible when a global hospitality brand works with focus, consistency, and the right expert partner.

Our ambition now is to keep building on that momentum. To deepen action and implementation across the network. To continue learning from WWF. To make the connection between hospitality and ocean health more visible to guests and teams alike.

Because caring for the ocean is an act of caring for our shared future on this planet.



JEAN-YVES MINET
Global Brand President, Novotel



01. Introduction

Executive Summary

In its second year, Novotel's ocean commitment has evolved into measurable action. Across more than 600 hotels worldwide, the brand has enhanced the way it operates, serves food, trains teams, engages guests, and supports marine conservation.

In June 2024, Novotel embarked on a bold, three-year partnership with WWF France, focused on rebalancing the brand's impact on the ocean.

Novotel committed to starting a wave of change within the brand, establishing a roadmap of short and long-term initiatives across four pillars that form Novotel's Positive Impact Plan.

Progress can be seen across everyday hotel operations, with 92% of Novotel hotels now compliant with Accor's single-use plastic policy*, and 73% of the network eco-certified by a third party. These are practical changes, but they carry wider significance, demonstrating how decisions made on land, in hotels, can help reduce the pressures that ultimately reach the ocean.

As part of Novotel's sustainable food strategy, plant-forward dining has become another important area of transformation. By the end of 2025, half of Novotel hotels were offering at least 25% vegetarian or plant-based dishes, and by the end of 2026 this is expected to reach 100%.

With ambitious plans to lead sustainable seafood at scale, 41% of Novotel hotels have banned 350+ vulnerable seafood species from menus in line with WWF guidance, while progress continues on seafood traceability and improved sourcing practices. As of mid-May 2026, more than 1,600 chefs and kitchen team members have completed the WWF Sustainable Seafood Training, helping turn principle into daily practice.

Education has become another defining part of the programme. As of mid-May 2026, more than 3,200 Heartists (hotel team members) have completed Novotel's Ocean Awareness training, developed in partnership with AXA Climate, helping to deepen understanding of the challenges facing marine ecosystems. Guest-facing initiatives, including World Ocean Month activations, have had a palpable impact on the hearts and minds of teams and their communities.

To further inspire younger generations, Novotel hotels have introduced educational games developed with the support of WWF, designed to raise awareness around the protection of endangered marine species, in an accessible and engaging way. This matters to Novotel – a global favourite among travelling families - because meaningful progress depends not only on operational change, but also on people understanding why ocean preservation matters and how marine life is increasingly under threat.

Alongside these hotel-based actions, Novotel's international partnership with WWF France continues to support a broad range of conservation initiatives at sea. Over the last year, this included ongoing progress on Posidonia protection, ghost gear identification and removal, and the Blue Panda programme in the Mediterranean, as well as sea turtle protection in the Western Atlantic, and the ambitious Blue Corridors initiative at global scale. Together, these projects, funded by Novotel, span habitat preservation, marine research, community mobilisation, and scientific knowledge-building, while also beginning to expand into new geographies.

Novotel's growing commitment was also brought onto the global stage in June 2025 through its participation at the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) in Nice, where the brand joined discussions around sustainable tourism, marine biodiversity, sustainable seafood, and the role hospitality can play in protecting the future of the ocean.

Behind this progress is a growing network of owners and partners who share Novotel's vision for more responsible hospitality. By investing in operational transformation and leading implementation within their hotels, they play a critical role in translating the brand's commitments into meaningful, measurable impact.

Taken together, this second year marks a clear step forward. There is still much more to do, but the direction is clear: Novotel is committed to the health and longevity of the ocean.

** Unless otherwise stated, all data referenced relates to FY2025 and is aligned with Accor's annual Sustainability Reporting.*

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WWF ocean conservation projects around the world funded and supported by Novotel

92%

of Novotel hotels now compliant with Accor's single-use plastic policy

73%

of the Novotel network is eco-certified by a third party

50%

of Novotel hotels offer a minimum of 25% plant-forward menus

41%

of Novotel hotels have banned vulnerable seafood species from menus

1,600

chefs and kitchen team members have completed the WWF Sustainable Seafood Training

3,200

Heartists (hotel team members) have completed Novotel's Ocean Awareness training

2

family games, developed with WWF support, raise awareness for ocean preservation

Why the Ocean?

The ocean is easy to think of as something distant: a horizon, a holiday backdrop, a place of beauty and escape. In reality, it is much closer to daily life than that. It produces around half of the oxygen we breathe, helps regulate the planet's climate, supports extraordinary biodiversity, and provides food and livelihoods for billions of people. Its health is deeply connected to our own.

For hospitality, that connection is especially clear. Many of the world's most loved destinations are shaped by the sea, while tourism itself depends on healthy natural environments. Yet the pressures facing the ocean do not begin only at the shoreline. Pollution, overfishing, habitat degradation, and climate change are all part of a much wider system, and around 80% of marine pollution comes from land-based activities. That means the choices made far from the coast, including those made by hotels, restaurants, suppliers, and travellers, still matter.

For Novotel, this creates both a responsibility and an opportunity. As a global hotel brand operating predominantly on land, its relationship with the ocean is shaped through everyday choices: the single-use plastics eliminated across properties, the ingredients used, the sourcing standards applied to seafood, the way teams are trained, and the experiences created for guests. These actions may seem like small acts in isolation, but at scale they can help reduce pressure on marine ecosystems.

This is also why the ocean commitment sits so naturally within Novotel's wider view of longevity. A healthy ocean supports planetary balance, more resilient communities, and a stronger future for travel. Protecting it is not only about preserving nature for its own sake, but about recognising how closely linked environmental health is to human wellbeing. Through its Positive Impact Plan and partnership with WWF, Novotel is acting on one shared ambition: to help build a more thoughtful and lasting relationship between hospitality and the ocean, ensuring longevity for all.





02. Novotel's Positive Impact Plan

Overview

Novotel shaped its ocean commitment around a clear framework: the Positive Impact Plan. Created following the launch of the brand's three-year partnership with WWF in 2024, it brings together the areas where Novotel can make the most meaningful contribution, both by reducing pressures linked to its own operations and by supporting broader marine conservation efforts.

The plan is structured around four key areas of action, each designed to mirror the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 14 – Life Below Water. Novotel's first pillar of action focuses on **reducing operational impact**, particularly through the elimination of single-use plastics and the continued spread of eco-certification across the network.

The second looks at **dining**, with a growing emphasis on plant-forward choices, sustainable seafood, and better traceability.

The third centres on **education and ocean awareness**, helping hotel team members, guests, and families better understand why the ocean matters and how everyday actions can affect it.

The fourth extends outward into **research, conservation, and advocacy**, through Novotel's support of WWF projects and engagement around ocean preservation.

Together, these four pillars create a structure that is both practical and expansive. Some parts of the plan are rooted in the day-to-day life of the hotel, where hotel owners and teams play a vital role in driving operational changes such as the elimination of single-use plastics, the introduction of new menus, and training. Others go far beyond hotel walls, actively contributing to marine conservation through data collection, education, and actions to protect endangered ocean species.

NOVOTEL'S POSITIVE IMPACT PLAN

CONTINUING THE WAVE OF CHANGE



73%

of Novotel hotels are eco-certified by a third party.

POSITIVE IMPACT PLAN: PILLAR #1

Reducing Impact on Marine Pollution & Ocean Acidification

For Novotel, ocean action begins long before the shoreline. It starts in the everyday mechanics of hospitality: the materials a hotel chooses to use, the systems it puts in place, and the resources it consumes behind the scenes. While marine pollution and ocean acidification are global issues, many of their root causes begin on land.

As Accor's founding brand and one of the Group's largest hotel portfolios, Novotel is helping to advance environmental action across the wider organisation.

Building on Accor's broader sustainability commitments and operational expertise, Novotel continues to play an active role in testing, implementing, and accelerating more responsible practices that positively contribute to ocean health.

Over the past year, Novotel has continued to strengthen this foundation across its network. By the end of 2025, 92% of Novotel hotels had eliminated single-use plastics in line with Accor's single-use plastic policy, while 73% of the network was eco-certified by a third party.

These practical shifts are transforming hotel operations, but they also reflect something larger: a commitment to creating a more positive environmental impact across the Novotel network.





50%

of Novotel hotels are offering at least 25% plant-powered dishes.

350+

vulnerable seafood species removed from 41% of Novotel hotels.

POSITIVE IMPACT PLAN: PILLAR #2

Delicious, Healthier, More Sustainable Food

Food is one of the most visible ways Novotel's ocean commitment comes to life. Across its hotels, the brand is focused on two connected priorities: helping drive more sustainable seafood practices across hospitality supply chains, while also encouraging more delicious, balanced, and lower-impact plant-forward dining choices.

Seafood remains an important part of diets, cultures, and travel experiences around the world. For Novotel, the ambition is not to remove seafood, but to help ensure it is sourced as responsibly and transparently as possible. At the same time, the brand is continuing to expand plant-led offerings that support both environmental sustainability and healthier everyday eating habits.

By the end of 2025, 50% of Novotel hotels were offering at least 25% vegetable-led dishes, as part of the brand's ambition to make lower-impact choices more visible, appealing, and accessible within the guest experience. Meat production generates significantly higher carbon emissions than plant-based ingredients, which is why the brand is encouraging more conscious choices amongst guests.

To help inspire a new generation of plant-forward eating, Novotel also partnered with chef and digital creator Alfie Steiner, whose community of more than five million followers has made him a leading voice in accessible, flavour-driven plant-led cooking. A selection of Alfie's dishes are now uniquely available in Novotel hotels, helping demonstrate how lower-impact dining can remain vibrant, comforting, and full of flavour.

At the same time, Novotel continues to embed its WWF Sustainable Seafood Principles across the network. In 2025, 41% of hotels had already banned 350+ vulnerable seafood species from menus in line with WWF guidance, while work also progressed around sustainable seafood sourcing standards

and supplier traceability. Novotel's work with WWF has resulted in new sustainable seafood policies for all Accor brands, as part of the Group's Good Food Policy.

This work is increasingly being carried into kitchens through training and practical support. By mid-May 2026, more than 1,600 chefs and kitchen team members had completed the WWF Sustainable Seafood Training, helping them better understand the environmental, social, and economic impacts of overfishing, as well as good practices for purchasing sustainable seafood.

Alongside operational changes inside hotels, Novotel is also helping advance broader industry collaboration and supply chain transparency. Through partnerships with WWF and sector stakeholders, the brand is contributing to initiatives designed to strengthen accountability and traceability across seafood sourcing systems well beyond its own network.

In 2025, Novotel became the first hospitality brand to join the Seafood Task Force (STF), the global trade association bringing together retailers, seafood brands, and supply chain partners to strengthen oversight and improvement from vessel to plate. This helped reinforce a broader set of traceability initiatives being developed with WWF France.

In **Asia**, a project with the Seafood Task Force was launched to focus on tuna and farmed shrimp across hotels in Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia, where supply chains can carry significant environmental and social risks. Around 50 hotels are participating across the three countries, with work progressing to identify priority suppliers and assess them through 2026, with the aim of moving towards alignment with STF recommendations.



Novotel becomes the first hospitality brand to join the Seafood Task Force

In **Europe**, a two-year initiative began in March 2025 with WWF France to improve seafood traceability across fresh and frozen seafood suppliers serving Europe. The project has already moved through supplier analysis and recommendation-sharing, with a parallel focus on removing endangered species from suppliers' catalogues.

In **Brazil**, work that began in June 2025 has focused on farmed shrimp traceability across nine hotels in the State of São Paulo, where a fast-growing industry, fragmented supply chains, environmental pressures, and social risks make traceability increasingly important.

In the **Middle East**, Novotel launched a two-year partnership in 2025 with Seafood Souq to implement comprehensive seafood traceability audits across 18 hotels in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) region. The initiative focuses on auditing 100% of seafood products for traceability, strengthening transparency and accountability across supply chains, and aligning sourcing practices with internationally recognised sustainability standards.

In **India**, Novotel supports the implementation of the Indian Squid Fishery Improvement Project (FIP) in Kerala, helping strengthen more responsible fishing practices in fisheries that supply local Novotel hotels.

Together, these efforts show how food can become a meaningful expression of care — bringing more thoughtful choices to one of the most immediate and sensory parts of the guest experience.



Group of giant tuna | Image courtesy of Shutterstock / Guido Montaldo / WWF



NOVOTEL 37 COLLECTIVE MEMBER

Alfie Steiner | @alfiecooks

Culinary content creator Alfie Steiner has partnered with Novotel to help demonstrate how plant-powered cooking can be vibrant, approachable, and deeply satisfying. Known for creating flavour-driven recipes centred around vegetables and accessible ingredients, Alfie's approach reflects Novotel's ambition to make more balanced and lower-impact dining choices feel exciting rather than restrictive.

Developed as part of Novotel's broader food philosophy, Alfie's recipes showcase how everyday ingredients can be transformed into dishes that are colourful, comforting, and rooted in sharing and discovery. From smoky oyster mushroom shawarma to nourishing miso noodle bowls and Mediterranean-inspired mezze platters, the collaboration highlights how vegetable-powered cooking can support both personal wellbeing and more sustainable eating habits without compromising on flavour or enjoyment.

Cooking with Alfie Steiner

To help inspire guests and families to explore more plant-forward cooking at home, Alfie Steiner has developed a series of approachable recipes designed around flavour, balance, and lower-impact ingredients. The dishes celebrate the idea that sustainable food can still feel comforting, sociable, and full of character.



Mediterranean Mezze Board

A colourful sharing platter inspired by the Mediterranean coast, featuring hummus, tzatziki, falafel, Shirazi salad, and roasted aubergine.



Miso Noodle Bowl

A nourishing noodle bowl built around a creamy miso-garlic broth with seared tofu and charred tenderstem broccoli.



Oyster Mushroom Shawarma

A plant-forward reimagining of a classic street food dish, layered with smoky oyster mushrooms, tahini, pickles, and sumac onions.

NOVOTEL 37 COLLECTIVE MEMBER & OCEAN DEFENDER

Kaushiik Subramaniam

Novotel is partnering with Kaushiik Subramaniam, an award-winning wildlife photographer, filmmaker, and conservation biologist whose work is helping bring greater visibility to the beauty, fragility, and urgency of ocean conservation.

Originally from the UK and holding an MSc in Wildlife Conservation Biology, Kaushiik combines scientific understanding with cinematic storytelling to create immersive visual narratives focused on marine ecosystems and endangered wildlife. Working primarily across ocean environments, he has documented some of the world's most iconic marine species, from whale sharks and sea turtles to blue whales, helping audiences better understand both the wonder of the natural world and the growing pressures it faces.

Through this global partnership with Novotel, Kaushiik will help bring the brand's ocean commitment to life through photography, filmmaking, social storytelling, and guest-facing experiences designed to inspire greater awareness and everyday action. As Novotel's newly appointed Ocean Defender, he will also support the launch of the brand's "1% for the Ocean" initiative, combining his powerful visual storytelling with Novotel's global reach to encourage guests to adopt small, meaningful everyday actions that collectively contribute to ocean preservation.

As part of the partnership, Novotel is also launching an immersive virtual reality exhibition across 12 properties worldwide, inviting guests to experience a curated collection of Kaushiik's ocean photography through a powerful three-minute journey designed to deepen awareness around ocean protection and marine biodiversity.

The partnership reflects a shared belief that storytelling can play an important role in conservation. By combining Novotel's global reach with Kaushiik's visual expertise and conservation background, the collaboration aims to inspire a deeper emotional connection to the ocean — and help transform awareness into action.





2

family games, developed with WWF support, raise awareness for ocean preservation

POSITIVE IMPACT PLAN: PILLAR #3

Enhancing Education & Ocean Awareness

For lasting change to take root, people need more than policies and targets. They need context. They need to understand why a subject matters, how it connects to daily life, and where they themselves fit within the story. That is what makes education such an important part of Novotel's ocean commitment. Welcoming more than 5 million families each year, Novotel has a unique opportunity to inspire the next generation to better understand and help protect the oceans.

By mid-May 2026, more than 3,200 Novotel team members had completed the Ocean Awareness training module, helping build a stronger base of knowledge across the network on why the ocean matters and how hospitality can play a role in protecting it. Developed in partnership with AXA Climate, the training is structured around three themes: oceans as a challenge for tourism and for Novotel; how hotels can better protect the environment and the oceans; and the role of the Novotel x WWF partnership. Together, these learning modules help anchor the brand's actions in shared understanding and give teams a clearer sense of how everyday hospitality choices connect to ocean health.

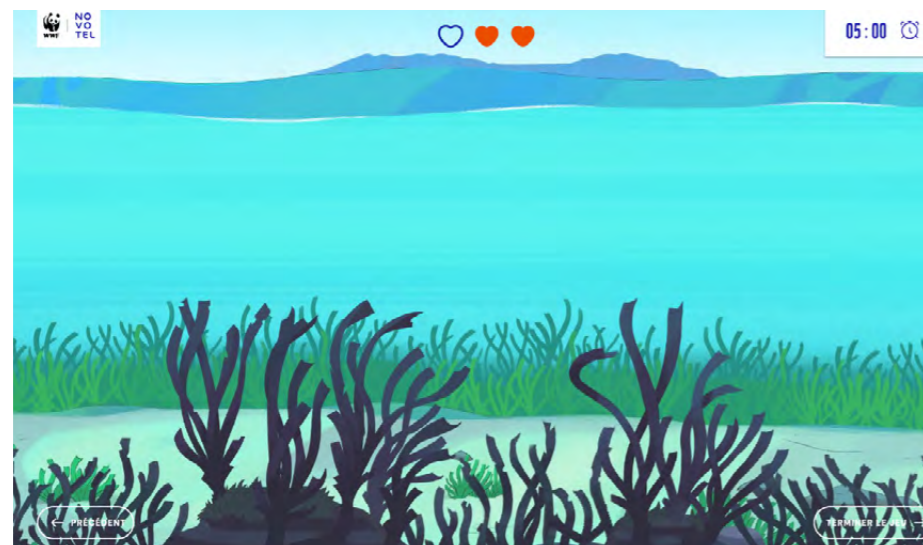
This educational effort also extends beyond hotel training. Each June, World Ocean Month has become a recurring moment in the Novotel calendar, giving hotels worldwide a way to celebrate the cause with guests, local communities, and teams through events, content, and on-property experiences.

This growing focus on awareness was also reflected through Novotel's participation at the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC) in Nice in 2025, where the brand joined global leaders from government, business, finance, and civil society to help advance discussions around ocean protection and sustainable tourism. As part of the WWF France and Accor-hosted event, Our Living Ocean, Novotel participated in panel discussions focused on sustainable seafood value chains and the future of nature-positive coastal tourism.

During UNOC, Novotel also reaffirmed its long-term commitment to ocean preservation through new pledges connected to sustainable seafood, plant-forward dining, and marine biodiversity protection.

For families, Novotel has also introduced physical and digital games developed with the support of WWF, designed to make marine conservation more engaging, playful and accessible for younger generations. Through interactive games such as Guardians of the Mediterranean and Traps Ahead, children are invited to discover marine ecosystems, vulnerable species, and the challenges facing ocean life through storytelling, games, puzzles, activity books, and ocean-themed playing cards.

By creating space for teams to understand the issues and for guests to encounter them in a more engaging way, Novotel is helping turn awareness into something more active: a deeper and more lasting connection to the cause.



'Traps Ahead' game created with WWF France



Ocean Adventures for Young Explorers

Novotel is creating new ways for children and families to discover the wonders of the ocean through play, storytelling, and hands-on activities during their stay. Designed with the support of WWF to spark curiosity about marine life in a fun and accessible way, the games encourage young guests to learn more about the species living beneath the surface – and the importance of protecting them for future generations.

Already available across Europe since summer 2025, Guardians of the Mediterranean invites children to explore the mysteries of the Mediterranean Sea through an interactive digital adventure available in multiple languages. The game is complemented by a series of welcome activities, including an activity book, stickers and educational card games, designed to bring marine discovery into family travel moments.

From June 2026, Novotel will also begin rolling out Traps Ahead worldwide – a new sea turtle-themed experience focused on helping children understand the challenges these endangered marine animals face from pollution and ocean waste. Alongside the digital game, families will discover a collection of playful physical activities including a puzzle, stickers, restaurant placemats, "Happy Families" style card games, and an activity book.





Novotel is proud to support critical WWF France conservation projects around the world through financial support. Each project is focused on creating meaningful, lasting impact - helping protect marine ecosystems, strengthen biodiversity, advance scientific understanding, and contribute to the long-term health and resilience of the world's oceans.

POSITIVE IMPACT PLAN: PILLAR #4

Contributing to Scientific Knowledge & Research

Novotel's ocean commitment extends beyond its own hotels. Through its partnership with WWF, the brand is helping support a wider body of marine conservation work, protecting habitats, advancing research, strengthening community action, and helping bring greater visibility to the future of the ocean.

This matters because operational change alone is not enough. Reducing single-use plastics, rethinking food, and training teams all play an important role, but marine ecosystems also need direct protection, long-term monitoring, and public support. Through WWF, Novotel is helping contribute to that broader landscape of action. And through Novotel's global network, WWF's mission reaches millions of travellers, families, and hotel teams each year—helping generate greater awareness, engagement, and momentum for ocean conservation. ALL Accor members can also donate loyalty reward points which are converted into financial donations through Dift, helping to raise necessary funds to support WWF France's Blue Panda research boat.

At the heart of this work is a portfolio of five flagship projects: Posidonia protection, ghost gear action, and the Blue Panda programme in the Mediterranean, sea turtle protection in the Western Atlantic, and conservation through the Blue Corridors initiative at global scale. Together, these projects reflect different but complementary forms of impact, from habitat preservation and the removal of lost fishing nets to scientific knowledge, education, and advocacy.

What makes this part of the commitment significant is that it expands the role hospitality can play in shaping environmental action. It demonstrates that a hotel brand can do more than reduce its own footprint. It can also help fund research, support restoration, strengthen local engagement, and enhance visibility on causes that need both attention and sustained action.

Project #1

The protection of Posidonia, an endemic flowering plant of the Mediterranean which plays a key role as a carbon sink – removing carbon from the atmosphere - and provides up to 25 benefits to our human societies.

“Posidonia is the Mediterranean’s underwater forest. It is a cornerstone ecosystem: it stores carbon year after year, produces oxygen, supports fish populations, and sustains the wider marine life around it. Protecting Posidonia means protecting the foundation of the Mediterranean Sea.”

- Catherine Piante,
Head of Maritime Areas Planning Division, WWF France

POSIDONIA PROTECTION: THE UNSEEN FOREST OF THE SEA AND THE FIGHT TO PROTECT IT.

Beneath the surface of the Mediterranean lies one of the world’s most important marine ecosystems: Posidonia seagrass meadows. They are a critical coastal habitat, a major long-term carbon sink, and a foundation for wider marine life. Posidonia builds layer upon layer of roots over time, increasing its carbon storage capacity year after year. It is both fragile and foundational.

Over the past 15 years, one of the major sources of damage to Posidonia meadows has been the anchoring of leisure boats and coastal marker buoys in the many bays along the coast. That is why WWF France’s work, supported through Novotel’s partnership, focuses on helping coastal cities introduce lower-impact infrastructure, strengthen regulation, and create the conditions for longer-term protection.

In 2025, this work continued across nine contracted coastal cities in the French Mediterranean: Grimaud, Cap-d’Ail, Théoule-sur-Mer, Bormes-les-Mimosas, Casaglione, Belvédère-Campomoro, Vico Sagone, Monacia-d’Aullène, and Cerbère. The most visible achievement was the conversion of 41 buoys to low-impact marker buoys, with 10 installed in Grimaud and 31 in Théoule-sur-Mer.

Alongside technical planning, communication and advocacy also scaled up. A national Posidonia campaign targeting boat rentals and boat owners reached 6.75 million people, supported by UNOC advocacy, WWF digital communication, and promotion by the French Nautical Industries Federation.

On the ground, awareness activities also took place in places such as Bormes-les-Mimosas and Belvédère-Campomoro, while new discussions were opened with Port-Cros National Park and Calanques National Park for future collaboration.

“The challenge is not only ecological, but practical. Coastal cities need solutions that are technically reliable, safe, and adapted to the realities of the sea. By replacing traditional buoy systems with lower-impact alternatives, we can reduce pressure on Posidonia and create models that can be shared across the Mediterranean.” - Catherine Piante, Head of Maritime Areas Planning Division, WWF France

Long-term financing is a critical challenge. Through the French Biodiversity Agency’s Life Biodiv project, WWF France launched and completed a study on the creation of a biodiversity credit for Posidonia around Porquerolles in Port-Cros National Park. The intention is to test whether this model can help secure longer-term funding for large-scale protection, with CDC Biodiversité supporting the next phase of implementation.

After 73 low-impact buoy conversions in 2024 and 41 in 2025, WWF France is planning a further 237 buoy conversions in 2026, while also preparing international toolkits and four online training sessions for WWF Greece, Turkey, and Tunisia.

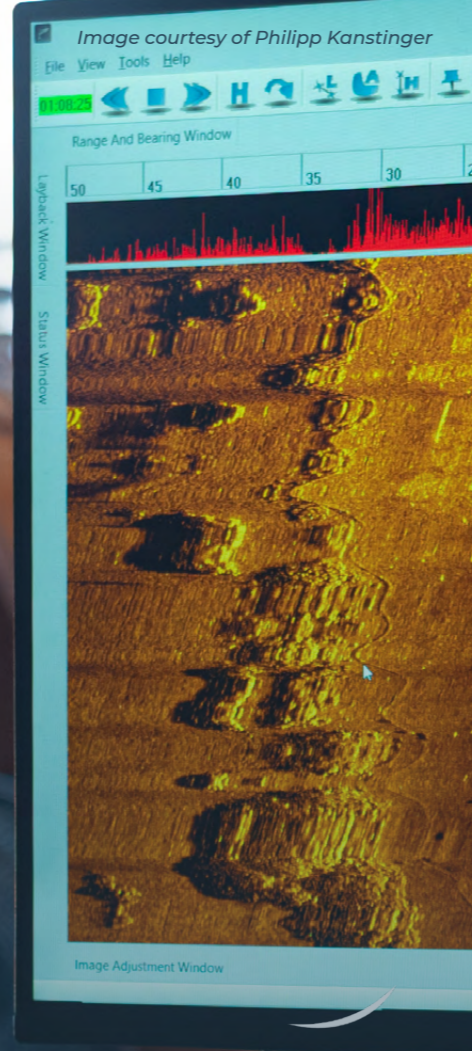


Project #2

The identification and removal of “ghost gear” – lost, abandoned and otherwise discarded fishing gear - the deadliest form of marine plastic waste which impacts many marine species such as marine turtles and mammals, elasmobranchs such as sharks, rays and skates, and marine birds.

“Ghost gear is often invisible from the surface, but its impact can continue for years. The first step is knowing where to look. By working with fishers and using sonar technology, we can identify priority areas, verify the real level of impact, and remove only the gear that is still harming marine life.”

Théa Jacob,
Marine Species & Sustainable Fisheries Expert, WWF France



TACKLING GHOST GEAR: INNOVATION, COLLABORATION AND RECOVERY IN ACTION

Ghost gear remains one of the most dangerous and persistent forms of marine plastic waste. Lost or abandoned fishing gear can continue trapping marine life for years, while slowly degrading into microplastics. In the Mediterranean, it can account for a significant share of marine litter, making it one of the most urgent and least visible threats facing marine ecosystems.

WWF France's work focused on identifying priority hotspots, prospecting large seabed areas using side-scan sonar, and verifying which nets were still actively harmful enough to retrieve. Three hotspot areas were identified during the year: Calanques National Park, the Golfe du Lion Marine Natural Park, and the west coast of Corsica. This hotspot mapping is a crucial first step, since it narrows down where sonar missions are most likely to find ghost gear interacting with vulnerable seabeds and marine fauna.

Operationally, the year produced some of the strongest results so far. In Cap Corse, a one-week mission in March verified 11 deep nets among 20 priority nets previously identified at depths of 70 to 100 metres. None were removed, as they were judged too old and no longer sufficiently harmful, but the mission did allow retrieval tests to improve future Remotely Operated Underwater Vehicle (ROV)-led recovery processes. In Calanques National Park, a sonar prospection mission in May and June scanned 1,094 hectares, identified 86 priority lost nets, and verified 30 of them with ROVs or divers. Of those, 14 fishing gears were ultimately removed from the sea.

This balance between urgency and ecological judgement is important. WWF France's approach is not to remove every net automatically, but to assess which ones are still causing damage and which may already have been integrated into marine habitats. It is a more careful, science-based model of intervention — one that combines detection, verification, and selective retrieval rather than blanket clean-up.

Looking ahead, WWF France plans to continue verification and retrieval work in Calanques and to expand prospection in the Golfe du Lion.

Project #3

The Blue Panda sails across the Mediterranean conducting missions to develop science-based solutions and recommendations to protect Mediterranean marine life, to raise public awareness, and leading lobbying missions with countries and communities.

“Blue Panda allows us to bring science, awareness, and advocacy together at sea. It is a platform for research, but also a way to make ocean protection more visible — to policymakers, communities, children, and the wider public.”

- Grégory Rondeau,
Head of Blue Panda Programme, WWF France

THE BLUE PANDA: INNOVATION, EDUCATION, AND CONVENING FOR MARINE CONSERVATION

Over the last year, Blue Panda continued to show how one vessel can operate as both a scientific platform and a public-facing catalyst for ocean action. Across France, Greece, and Spain, the programme combines field research, advocacy, education, and communications — helping bring marine conservation closer to policymakers, local communities, schools, media, and the wider public.

At sea, Blue Panda supported several important research missions. In the Pelagos Sanctuary, a three-week Cap Cétacés mission covered 1,252 kilometres and identified 87 fin whales, generating new behavioural data and testing new scientific protocols with the CNRS on board and other research partners. This mission also led to a world first: the first electrocardiogram ever recorded from a whale in the Mediterranean Sea, opening new pathways for understanding whale physiology and the risks posed by vessel traffic.

In Greece, a further three-week mission in the Hellenic Trench sailed 870 nautical miles, recorded 13 sightings, and observed 20 Cuvier’s beaked whales, contributing to the evidence needed to strengthen protection of one of the Mediterranean’s most vulnerable deep-sea cetaceans.

Blue Panda also played a visible advocacy role during the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference in Nice in June 2025, where it was one of the vessels selected to be present in port. Over the course of the conference, it hosted eight thematic events with more than 250 participants, welcomed elected officials and stakeholder delegations, and served as a platform for public communication and engagement. WWF France’s UNOC sequence generated 122 media coverages, 35 interviews, 30 digital posts, and more than 1.2 million people reached.

Elsewhere in the Mediterranean, Blue Panda supported wider conservation and awareness work. In the Alboran Sea, its third scientific campaign on environmental DNA surveyed 14 sampling stations and revealed the presence of Carcharias

taurus, a species previously considered regionally extinct in Spain. In Catalonia, the vessel supported WWF Spain's LIFE ECOREST work on deep-sea habitat restoration, helping engage nearly 500 people through awareness and education activities. The campaign also led to the return of 45 specimens from six species, recovered from fishing nets and kept in aquariums installed at collaborating fishers' guilds, back into restoration areas.

Education remained a major part of the programme. In Marseille, two weeks of school boat visits in May and late October welcomed 583 children from 27 primary school classes for awareness-raising activities on board. Blue Panda also took part in the 3rd International Outdoor Education Meetings, supporting WWF advocacy on education and connection with nature, with one event held on board for parliament members and local elected officials.

"When children come aboard Blue Panda, the ocean becomes real. Learning about marine biodiversity in a classroom is important, but stepping onto a vessel, meeting the crew, and discovering the work first-hand creates a different kind of memory. Sometimes, that is where a lifelong connection with nature begins." - Grégory Rondeau, Head of Blue Panda Programme, WWF France

The vessel also welcomed a group of ALL Accor members on board in September 2025 for an exclusive Limitless Experience, adding a guest-facing dimension to the programme and bringing the partnership to life through direct immersion.

Taken together, these achievements show Blue Panda at its most effective: not only as a vessel for research, but as a moving platform for connection — linking science with storytelling, conservation with public awareness, and fieldwork with the wider momentum needed to protect the Mediterranean.



Project #4

Protecting the sea turtles of the Western Atlantic, strengthening regional cooperation on sustainable fishing techniques and combating illegal fishing. Mobilizing civic society and fighting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing will help protect leatherback turtles breeding on coastal areas of the Guianas, and green and olive ridley turtles from Brazil to Venezuela.

“UNOC was a key moment because it brought together civil society representatives, youth ambassadors, fishers, and coastal communities from the Guiana Shield. It helped position the project internationally, while giving local voices a platform to speak directly about sea turtle protection.”

- Marie Trémolet,
Regional Cooperation Officer, WWF France in French Guiana

ATLANTIC TURTLES: YOUTH-LED ADVOCACY AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION.

In the Western Atlantic, WWF France's sea turtle programme is shaped as much by people as by species. It focuses on a region where leatherback, green, and olive ridley turtles face mounting pressure, particularly from illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing stretching from Brazil to Guyana. Protecting them means more than monitoring nesting beaches. It means building local capacity, strengthening community advocacy, and fostering cross-border cooperation across the Guiana Shield.

The project has now completed its first full year of action following the formal financing agreement in late 2024, and much of the work focused on creating foundations for long-term change. A key milestone came in June, when the project was officially signed during UNOC in Nice in the presence of WWF France, the French Development Agency, public authorities, and representatives of Guianas coastal communities. This gave the programme a visible public launch and helped anchor it within a broader regional coalition for turtle protection.

One of the project's most important achievements has been the Youth Ambassador programme. 14 youth ambassadors were recruited in French Guiana and Guyana — seven in each country — through proposals and interviews, then given four days of training on emblematic marine species, communication, and advocacy, alongside coaching. Their participation in Nice marked a first step toward creating a network of young regional voices capable of informing civil society and decision-makers on marine turtle protection. Recruitment in Suriname is planned next, alongside national communication strategies and further advocacy training.

Community engagement also advanced during the year. Seven nature outings were organised in French Guiana, mainly on Cayenne Island and in western French Guiana in the Amana Nature Reserve, reaching more than 100 people in total. Three educational areas were established around turtle nesting beaches — two on Cayenne Island and one in Awala-Yalimapo

— while a citizen science programme on emblematic marine species was developed in Suriname to involve schoolchildren and local communities in biodiversity monitoring, including for manatees and Guiana dolphins.

In January 2025, 15 eco-guides from western French Guiana were trained to support ecotourism linked to marine turtles in Kourou. A regional exchange also brought together 10 fishing representatives from the Guiana Plateau to discuss sustainable fishing techniques, while a wider regional network of coastal communities, fishers, and youth ambassadors dedicated to marine conservation was formally established.

“This project is about protecting endangered marine turtles, but it is also about strengthening the people and communities closest to them. By training youth ambassadors, fishers, and eco-guides, we are helping create local capacity, advocacy, and sustainable livelihoods around turtle conservation.” - Marie Trémolet, Regional Cooperation Officer, WWF France in French Guiana

This gives the programme a distinctive role within the Novotel x WWF partnership. It is a reminder that marine conservation depends not only on science, but on local energy, voice, and ownership. Looking ahead, the project is expected to broaden further in 2026 through Suriname youth recruitment, citizen science, ocean expeditions, and new activity in Bahia, Brazil, including training 40 fisherwomen in turtle conservation and ecotourism.



Youth Ambassadors at the UNOC | Image courtesy of WWF France



Image courtesy of Tom Vierus

Project #5

Tracking and tracing marine turtles in Asia-Pacific, gathering knowledge on their movements from nesting beaches to migratory corridors and foraging grounds, and mapping critical populations and conservation areas. Six of seven species of marine turtles remain threatened by harvesting, illegal trade, being caught by commercial fisheries and the loss of nesting beaches.

“Blue Corridors for Turtles is about connecting the missing pieces. For the first time, we are bringing movement data and genetics together at a global scale to help identify the ocean areas that are most important for marine turtles throughout their life cycle.”

- Christine Madden,
Global Marine Turtle Conservation Lead,
WWF-Coral Triangle Program



BLUE CORRIDORS FOR TURTLES: MAPPING GLOBAL TURTLE MIGRATION ROUTES AND BRIDGING DATA GAPS.

Where the Western Atlantic programme is rooted in local communities, Blue Corridors for Turtles operates at a global scale. Its purpose is to answer one of marine conservation's most important questions: where do turtles go once they leave nesting beaches, and which oceanic areas are most critical to protect across their life cycle?

This matters because five of the world's seven marine turtle species remain at risk of extinction. Turtles are also powerful indicators of ocean health: highly migratory, deeply connected to coastal and marine ecosystems, and vulnerable to many of the pressures affecting the wider ocean, from bycatch and illegal trade to habitat loss, pollution, shipping, and climate change. Protecting them means protecting the beaches, migration routes, feeding grounds, and marine habitats that many other species also depend on.

The Blue Corridors project aims to compile and connect data on all seven marine turtle species, using satellite tracking and traceability tools such as ShellBank to map movements across nesting beaches, migratory corridors, and foraging grounds.

This was a major year for the initiative. At UNOC in Nice, WWF released the first Blue Corridors for Turtles report and presented it during a side event aboard the Blue Panda. Over the course of the year, the project was also showcased at 14 events around the world, engaging marine turtle specialists and policymakers from locations including St Kitts and Nevis, Accra, Nice, Jakarta, the Solomon Islands, Mombasa, Abu Dhabi, Suva, and Brisbane.

One of the project's most important achievements was the formalisation of a partnership with the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species, which will help advance the identification of Important Marine Turtle Areas. In parallel, WWF launched two calls for data contributions in 2025, resulting in more than 50 additional satellite tracking datasets being contributed by major authors and organisations covering multiple regions. More than 350 data owners were also contacted individually by the core team during the year.

This data gathering matters because turtle conservation has long been constrained by fragmented information. Many efforts have focused on local nesting beaches, while the majority of turtles' lives are spent in oceanic habitats that are harder to monitor and often under-protected. Blue Corridors aims to close that gap by creating a global synthesis of movement and connectivity, identifying populations at greatest risk, and eventually supporting the delineation of Important Marine Turtle Areas through regional workshops with local experts and data holders.

The scale of the initiative is already visible in the project's telemetry map. By November 2025, satellite data had been assembled from across the world, far beyond the Asia-Pacific focus originally associated with the programme. The key message at this stage is not yet species abundance, but reach: the project has already secured turtle-tracking information from across multiple regions and jurisdictions, building the basis for a far more connected global understanding of turtle movements.

In 2026, the work is moving from collection toward synthesis and designation. WWF plans to continue cataloguing and cleaning data, assign genetic stock where possible through ShellBank, release a perspective paper on the rationale for Important Marine Turtle Areas, and hold the first IMTA workshop with the sea turtle community. It is patient, cumulative work — but it is exactly this kind of knowledge-building that allows future protection to become more precise, more connected, and more effective.



A green and two hawksbill turtle hatchlings making their way to the ocean | Image courtesy of Christine Hof / WWF Australia



A green sea turtle swimming above coral | Image courtesy of Shutterstock / Kjersti Joergensen / WWF



Novotel X WWF

Expanding our impact around the world

Sperm whale playing with a plastic bag | Image courtesy of Franco Banfi / WWF Australia



EXPANDING OCEAN PROTECTION TO AUSTRALIA

In 2026, Novotel's partnership with WWF extends into Australian waters through a dedicated whale protection initiative with WWF Australia. Surrounded by some of the world's most biodiverse marine ecosystems, Australia is a critical geography for several migratory whale species.

The project with WWF Australia will focus on mapping whale movements across key habitats, identifying migratory routes, and understanding how these "blue corridors" intersect with growing pressures such as shipping traffic, underwater noise, and plastic pollution. By strengthening the scientific understanding of whale migration in the region, the project will contribute to more informed advocacy for marine protection and spatial planning.

ADDRESSING GHOST GEAR ALONG THE COAST OF POLAND

In June 2026, Novotel expands its partnership with WWF, becoming a partner and co-funder of a new project with WWF Poland to tackle ghost gear in the Baltic Sea.

This initiative will focus on one of the region's important marine challenges: abandoned fishing gear, which continues to trap marine life and degrade into microplastics long after it has been lost. The project will begin with the identification and mapping of ghost gear using advanced sonar technology, helping to build a clearer picture of the scale and distribution of the issue along the Polish coastline. Over time, it aims to support the development of a locally adapted model for retrieval, sorting, and recycling of recovered materials, recognising that effective solutions must be tailored to regional conditions. While initial phases will prioritise data gathering and assessment, the longer-term ambition is to enable scalable removal and circular waste management approaches, contributing both to cleaner marine environments and to more sustainable fishing practices in the Baltic Sea.





03. Conclusion

Two Years In: Lasting Impact for Our Oceans

Two years into its ocean commitment and partnership with WWF, Novotel is driving global systemic change, inspiring action, and actively contributing to the health and longevity of the world's oceans and the communities that depend on them.

Hotels are more aware than ever of their impact and are taking measurable action to reduce harm - from cutting plastic waste to advancing more responsible practices. Menus are evolving, with more plant-forward dishes and stronger seafood sourcing principles. Training is reaching more teams, while World Ocean Month and family edutainment games are helping bring the cause into the guest experience in ways that feel accessible and real.

Novotel's support for ocean conservation has grown broader and more global, helping WWF advance life-changing action across critical marine priorities including Posidonia preservation, ghost gear action, research, advocacy, and endangered species protection. By connecting global expertise with local communities, these initiatives recognise that preserving the health and longevity of our oceans depends not only on safeguarding species and habitats, but also on supporting the people closest to them.

There is still more to do. Some of the most meaningful environmental outcomes will only become visible over time. Some regional projects, particularly around seafood traceability, are still progressing toward more comprehensive outcomes. But the direction is clear. Novotel's partnership with WWF is not built around short-term gestures. It is designed to create lasting, systemic change for the future of the ocean.

Closing Words

Commitments are easy. Change is not.

The ocean covers more than 70% of our planet. It regulates the climate, sustains life above and below the surface, and supports communities around the world. It cannot advocate for itself. Novotel can — and is proud to do so.

What began as a commitment has become a culture, measured not only in percentages and policies, but in the choices made every day by owners, partners, chefs, Heartists, and guests across more than 600 hotels worldwide. Behind every statistic is a habit changed, a contribution to conservation, and another person with a clearer understanding of why the ocean is worth fighting for.

Year two has proven that a hotel brand, operating with purpose and the right partners, can move the needle. The foundation is built. The next phase demands more: deeper sourcing commitments, wider certification, every chef trained, every guest informed. The third year of this partnership will be the most ambitious yet.

The health of the ocean is not a distant concern. It is an urgent one. Novotel's ambition remains clear: to use the breadth of its global footprint not as a burden on the ocean, but as a force in its defence.

This is not the end of a report. It is a growing wave of change - for Novotel, for hospitality, for communities, and for the ocean.

"The ocean was not damaged in a day, and it will not be restored in one either. But Novotel is taking big steps and making consistent daily improvements, because when progress becomes 1% better every day, across more than 600 hotels, thousands of Heartists, and millions of guests, it compounds into an impact the ocean can feel. That is Novotel's contribution: a lasting wave of change."

- Jean-Yves Minet, Global Brand President



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Image courtesy of Kaushiik Subramaniam, Novotel 37 Collective Member & Ocean Defender