

# S ≈ A B ≈ YOND

## OCEAN LITERACY WORLD CONFERENCE

### **Report on the first day of the “Ocean Literacy World Conference” organised by the Prada Group and UNESCO-IOC as part of SEA BEYOND**

*131 delegates from UNESCO Member States and ocean literacy experts gathered together to finalise the “Venice Declaration for Ocean Literacy”*

*New partnership between Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli and UNESCO announced on the occasion of the 37th America's Cup*

*Over 290 participants attended the premiere of the documentary dedicated to the “Kindergarten of the Lagoon”, including institutional guests, academia and Venetian public*

**Venice, 7 June 2024** - Today, on the eve of the **World Oceans Day**, the **first United Nations conference dedicated to ocean literacy entitled “Ocean Literacy World Conference”** took place in Venice. The event, organised by the Prada Group and UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission on the theme of ocean preservation, represents an important milestone in the partnership between the Prada Group and UNESCO which, since 2019, have been working side by side to develop the SEA BEYOND educational program aimed at raising awareness among the younger generations on the health and protection of the ocean.

The main objective of the conference - held with the patronage of the Municipality of Venice, the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the 3rd United Nations Ocean Conference to be held in Nice next June 2025 - was to bring together 131 delegates from UNESCO Member States and ocean literacy experts from around the world to contribute to the **“Venice Declaration for Ocean Literacy”**, a collective document that in 10 points contains concrete recommendations to rebalance the relationship between the ocean and human beings. Participants of the first day exchanged best practices and future perspectives to formulate policies and strategies to integrate ocean literacy within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (in particular, Sustainable Development Goal 14) and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Sciences for Sustainable Development (2021-2030), including the **definition of a common path to introduce ocean literacy in school curriculum**.

The Declaration will be endorsed on the second day of the event, tomorrow 8 June, and shared with UN Member States on 2 July in New York, helping to shape the agenda for the UN Ocean Conference to be held in Nice and which will be co-hosted by the governments of France and Costa Rica.

**Vidar Helgesen, UNESCO Assistant Director General and Executive Secretary of the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission** said: *“According to recent data published in the UNESCO's ‘State of the Ocean Report 2024’, the rate of ocean warming has doubled in the last 20*

*years and sea level rose 20 centimeters in the last century. The ocean is running out of breath and we are running out of time”.*

**Francesca Santoro, Senior Programme Officer of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission**, added: *“The role of ocean literacy is essential in this context, as a fundamental tool to help understand the urgency of collective actions. It is a priority to define how and where to intervene, to make the relationship between humans and the ocean more harmonious, just and sustainable”.*

**Lorenzo Bertelli, Executive Director of the Prada Group and Patron of the Ocean Decade Alliance**, said: *“The future of our planet depends above all on the health of the ocean. This is why it's important for the youngest to be aware and capable of taking action. We also hope that the document resulting from the reflections of these days will raise the awareness of decision-makers so that they put the protection of the ocean at the centre of the international agenda”.*

In the afternoon, following the speech by **Peter Thompson**, UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, where he stated that ocean literacy will play a pivotal role during the next international gatherings on ocean issue, the new **partnership between Luna Rossa Prada Pirelli and UNESCO** was announced. This collaboration is aimed at spreading the messages of ocean conservation to the large audience of the upcoming 37<sup>th</sup> America's Cup, scheduled to take place in Barcelona from the end of August. The mainsail of the Italian boat will bear the UNESCO and SEA BEYOND logos.

The first day of the conference ended with the **presentation of the documentary** dedicated to one of the projects within SEA BEYOND, the Kindergarten of the Lagoon, at the Cinema Rossini. The documentary recounts the experience of a Venetian school involved in the project, which offers pre-school children the opportunity to closely understand and love the lagoon ecosystem through outdoor education.

The second day of the Ocean Literacy World Conference kicks off tomorrow, 8 June, with the presentation of the first **SEA BEYOND Ideas Box** created in collaboration with **Bibliothèques Sans Frontières**. The multimedia library, specially set up with content dedicated to the ocean curated by UNESCO's ocean literacy team, will be presented during a conversation between **Philippe Starck** and **Patrick Weil**, founder of the French NGO. The media library will be available to children and youngsters from the afternoon for workshops led by UNESCO-IOC and Bibliothèques Sans Frontières educators together with the SEA BEYONDers, ambassadors of the project.

## About SEA BEYOND

Conducted in partnership with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (UNESCO-IOC) to raise awareness of sustainability and ocean preservation, SEA BEYOND is an educational program supported by Prada Group since 2019. The project has contributed to the progress of ocean education on a global scale, through a series of training initiatives dedicated to younger generations. Since its debut, and over the course of three editions, the educational module has shared the principles of ocean literacy with more than 35,000 secondary students around the world. Moreover, the “Kindergarten of the Lagoon” project – outdoor education activities in Venice for children in pre-school – was launched in 2023 with the aim of creating a link between kids and the lagoon ecosystem. While the main focus remains education, in 2023 SEA BEYOND extended its scope beyond education with two new areas of focus: support for scientific research dissemination and humanitarian projects, both dedicated to the ocean. This is thanks to the fact that, as of July 2023, 1% of the proceeds from the Prada Re-Nylon Collection support SEA BEYOND.

The most recent projects undertaken are:

- Dissemination of the scientific discovery of black coral in the waters of the Egadi Islands, Italy, by Giovanni Chimienti, marine biologist and National Geographic Explorer;
- A partnership with Bibliothèques Sans Frontières to facilitate access to ocean education for children and young citizens in vulnerable communities through the Ideas Box, a mobile multimedia centre of over 100 square meters which hosts an internet connection, tablets, laptops and over 250 books and games, as well as hundreds of training materials.

Through SEA BEYOND, Prada Group has also trained its more than 14,000 employees worldwide on ocean literacy principles via VR educational content and the AWorld app, the official platform selected by the United Nations to live more sustainably.

## About Prada Group

Prada Group is socially engaged to contribute to the sustainable development of the communities and stimulate the cultural debate in all its forms of expression. The Group partners with recognized players and international entities to develop educational and training programs, value talent, support scientific research, foster women's empowerment, and promote local culture and artistic heritage. Prada Group operates in the luxury sector through the Prada, Miu Miu, Church's, Car Shoe, Marchesi 1824, and Luna Rossa brands.

## UNESCO-IOC

The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (UNESCO-IOC) promotes international cooperation in marine sciences to improve management of the ocean, costs and marine resources. The IOC enables its 150 member States to work together by coordinating programmes in capacity development, ocean observations and services, ocean science, tsunami warning and ocean literacy. The work of IOC contributes to the mission of UNESCO to promote the advancement of science and its applications to develop knowledge and capacity, key to economic and social progress., the basis of peace and sustainable development. The UNESCO-IOC is the entity in charge of coordinating the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development 2021-2030 (the Ocean Decade).

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