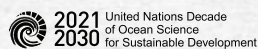


# LETTERS to the SEA

**EXHIBITION • OCEAN LITERACY • NETWORK**



# LETTERS to THE SEA

'Letters to the Sea' is a project by Onewater and Somos OceanoS. It is endorsed by the United Nations Ocean Decade and the EU Mission 'Restore our Ocean and Waters'. It amplifies letters that children and youth write directly to the ocean.

Local campaigns, organized with partners, also include letters written to specific rivers, forests, or mountains that children and youth in a given area feel closely connected to. These letters reflect our commitment to a landscape approach – one that recognizes the interdependence of social, economic, and ecological systems across interconnected landscapes, from source to sea.

By personifying nature, youth are encouraged to reflect on their relationship with their environment and explore ways to help conserve it. This promotes a deeper connection to nature.

Our oceans are in crisis, facing multiple escalating threats – rising eutrophication

and acidification, widespread plastic pollution, and destructive overfishing. Many of these challenges originate far upstream. Meanwhile, sea levels are rising at an accelerating pace, marine heatwaves are becoming more frequent and intense, and marine biodiversity is under severe pressure. Vital ecosystems such as coral reefs are at risk of near-total collapse. Projections indicate these devastating trends will persist and intensify in the coming decades.

In this context, nurturing a genuine commitment to ocean conservation – and a strong understanding of our world's interconnectedness – is especially important among younger generations. We believe that when young people are encouraged to reflect on their relationship with the sea, they are more likely to develop an intrinsic motivation to protect it.

Education takes decades to sprout – start now!

## HISTORY



“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

— Nelson Mandela

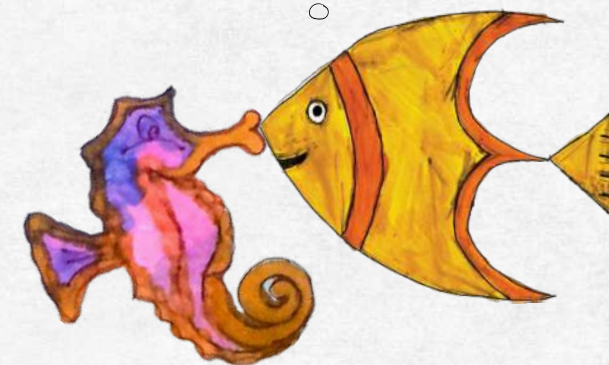
# LETTERS to THE SEA

Organisations or individuals can engage with 'Letters to the Sea' in many ways. You will find information for the following five ways to engage in this document. Once you're decided what to do, please reach out to us.

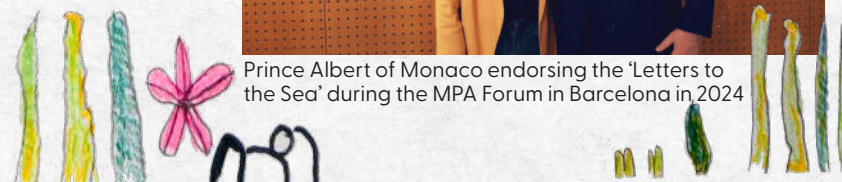
1. **Create Letters:** Individuals and groups can contribute their own heartfelt messages by writing or drawing letters to the sea. Onewater offers teaching materials and a nascent online platform to support this creative process. *More information on page 3.*
2. **Answer Letters:** Participants can personally encourage and connect with youth by adopting, i.e. answering, their letters. Either when featuring them in an exhibition, digitally via QR codes, or even physically by mailing handwritten letters to our office. *More information on page 4.*
3. **Host an Exhibition:** Organizations and event organizers are encouraged to showcase the letters in their offices, at events, conferences. or at dedicated

exhibitions. Onewater provides guidance and various display packages to suit different venues and occasions. *More information on pages 5 – 7.*

4. **Join 'Friends of the Letters':** Individuals or organizations who regularly create letters, answer letters, run local campaigns, or fund the project are encouraged to join the 'Friends of the Letters' network. If you're feeling ambitious and want to take greater ownership in the project we're also keen to have individuals or organisations 'champion' the project. *More information on page 10.*
5. **Fund the project:** You can provide vital financial backing to this non-profit, volunteer-driven initiative through donations or by exploring strategic partnerships that help us sustain and expand our work.



Prince Albert of Monaco endorsing the 'Letters to the Sea' during the MPA Forum in Barcelona in 2024



# LETTERS to THE SEA

## CREATE LETTERS, RUN WORKSHOPS, CLASSES OR LOCAL CAMPAIGNS

We collaborate with partners worldwide to expand our shared reach, empower youth and inspire ocean conservation.

As part of exhibitions or simply by joining 'Friends of the Letters' (page 10), you can get access to teaching material to run small classes or workshops during which young and old craft 'Letters to the Sea'.

We also run tailored campaigns for 'Letters to the river' or other landscapes. If you have a particular river, forest, mountain, or coral reef or desert in mind, we'd be thrilled to collaborate and promote it through the network and platform. For example, we run an annual campaign for the Salzach river together with the City of Burghausen, local stores and schools.

You can learn more on [www.letters.blue](http://www.letters.blue), our nascent platform, which includes an Ocean Literary Hub with materials to use.

Partners also have the opportunity to connect with other institutions network, broaden their reach, share resources, pursue joint funding opportunities and collaborate on other initiatives.



# LETTERS to THE SEA

The letters deeply resonate with many people, and we encourage you or your visitors to answer the young writers.

**Answer during an exhibition:** When exhibited, visitors can scan the QR-code next to each letter and answer them directly.

We also offer formats for people to write their responses directly on the wall next to the exhibited letters. Print-ready files are available upon request.

**Answer online:** Everyone can go to [www.letters.blue](http://www.letters.blue) and answer a letter online, or send us an email. Uploading thousands of letters takes time – in case you don't find your letter there, please bear with us.

**Answer by mail:** If you like some extra focus and care, feel free to answer with a physical letter. You can mail them to our office (page 9).



Thank you for your important message. Yes bottom trawling is a disgrace and should be banned everywhere in the world.

We have to all come together and keep fighting to keep our oceans and seas clean and healthy so that we can enjoy all the benefits and services coming from marine ecosystems now and in the future. Thank you so much for your commitment. Muy Suerte.

- Albert de Monaco

## ANSWER A LETTER

Dear Tala,

Thank you so much for your sweet letter! You have such a big heart and a kind soul—it's like you always find the sparkles in people, just like sunlight dancing on the ocean.

I hope the world gives you all the wonderful things you deserve, and that you always get to splash in a happy, healthy ocean, full of life and magic.

- Aldo Simone (WildAid)



# LETTERS to THE SEA

We encourage everyone to exhibit the 'Letters to the Sea' during their event or permanently at their organisation. Please read through the following pages for more information.

By showcasing the letters, for example at global conferences, you can also help ground leaders, inspire action, and shape the global dialogue on conservation and sustainability.

Through the direct, emotional power of children's letters and artworks, 'Letters to the Sea' connects diverse audiences to the profound importance of our oceans. We seek to foster empathy, spark dialogue, and drive meaningful change.

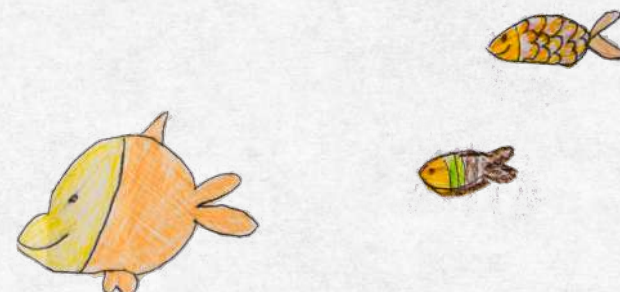
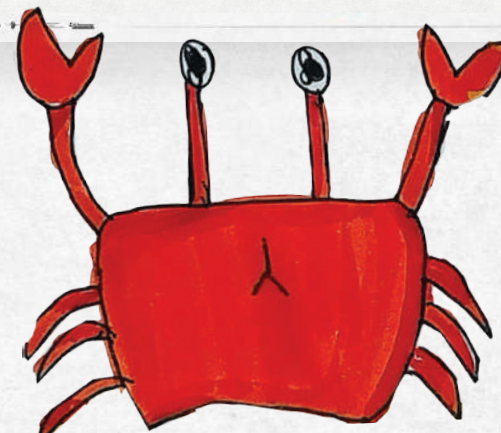


Onewater representatives together with the European Commission's DG MARE Directors during the EU Ocean Days in Brussels.



1. **Educate:** Raise awareness about the vital interconnection and dependency of coastal communities, especially youth, and the sea.
2. **Amplify:** Offer a global platform for the diverse voices, hopes, and concerns of youth regarding the future of our oceans.
3. **Inspire:** Share authentic stories to motivate audiences, ground leaders, and inspire action for ocean stewardship.
4. **Connect:** Facilitate dialogue between youth, communities, policymakers, and educators on shared ocean challenges and solutions.
5. **Support:** Encourage engagement through answering letters, creating partnerships, and collect donations for your own initiatives.
6. **Showcase:** Highlight the importance of ocean literacy and youth involvement in cultivating the next generation of ocean guardians.

## HOST AN EXHIBITION



# LETTERS to THE SEA



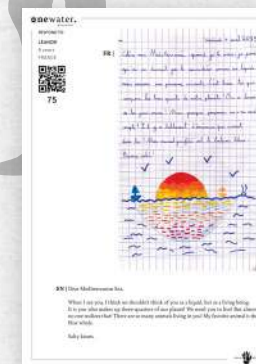
Custom intro panel on A0 for an organisation's 40 year anniversary. Visitors can colour the panel and add drawings themselves.



Interactive display of the letters during an exhibition. Visitors answer directly on the sheet or scan the QR-code.



Classic A4 display of the letters.



# LETTERS to THE SEA

## PLAN YOUR EXHIBITION



**[Space]** Plan for approximately 1-2 square meter of wall space per letter display, depending on the chosen format. We can advise you in greater detail based on your specific venue, or even develop custom layouts for galleries or museums. Past exhibition have hosted panels with sizes of up to 150cm width (A0). If requested, we can also assist with preparing the respective print files or help coordinate with curators.

**[Time]** Please allow sufficient lead time for curation, production, and shipping. We recommend planning at least 2 months in advance.

**[Costs]** This is a non-profit, volunteer-driven initiative, like many of the projects that Onewater drives. But we still have to cover some of your basic costs and therefore seek partnerships and donations to grow the initiative. Hosts are typically expected to cover a moderate fee, as well as their local printing, installation, and other event costs.



### Three standard sizes

S	M	L
20 letters	50 letters	100 letters

\*Custom curated sets (smaller or larger) are available for conferences or special venues.



“ A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle.

— James Keller ”

## About Onewater

Onewater was born in mid-2020 as a 'lockdown baby' out of the University of Oxford's MSc programme in 'Water Science, Policy, and Management'. Our goal was to create a space for learning and discussion about water.

We believe that sharing powerful stories and providing expert advice paves the way for a future where clean water, safe sanitation, and healthy oceans are a reality for all.

**Facts and spreadsheets alone don't inspire action. Stories do. It's through stories that we find meaning, connection and ultimately change.**

We blend art, science and web wizardry to create content, host events and deliver expert advice. Our work builds bridges between the public, practitioners, artists, academia and policymakers.

We do so because at the root of systemic gaps in funding, regulation and service delivery lie two key issues: a lack of education and ineffective policy. That is also why we provide a free, multilingual platform

where everyone can learn from others and contribute their own stories to global conversations.

As part of our UN Ocean Decade project, Somos OceanoS, we coordinate the Letters to the Sea initiative – a recognized UN Ocean Decade Action. We also conduct assessments of 'paper parks' to improve marine protected area management and have produced several documentaries, highlighting mismanagement of marine protected areas in Argentina and Mexico.

As a non-profit social enterprise, we have supported over 50 clients, including UNESCO, the GEF, the Asian Development Bank, UNDP, the University of Oxford, IHE Delft, the Government of Brandenburg and many grassroots and folks passionate about our ocean and waters. We are very proud that we could help them tell their best stories, connect with beneficiaries, host fun events and answer complex questions.



Explore some of our projects  
[www.onewater.blue/projects](http://www.onewater.blue/projects)

### Create or adopt letters

Dr. Verónica Relaño  
[veronica@onewater.blue](mailto:veronica@onewater.blue)

### Become a champion or a 'Friend of the Letters'

Dr. Verónica Relaño  
[veronica@onewater.blue](mailto:veronica@onewater.blue)

### Host an exhibition

Maja Antić  
[maja@onewater.blue](mailto:maja@onewater.blue)

### Work with us

Christian Fischer  
[chris@onewater.blue](mailto:chris@onewater.blue)

### Learn More

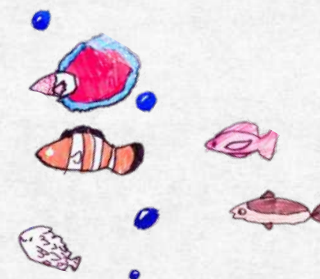
[www.letters.blue](http://www.letters.blue)  
[www.euphrates.blue](http://www.euphrates.blue)  
[www.onewater.blue](http://www.onewater.blue)

### Onewater gUG

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Deutschland

[contact@onewater.blue](mailto:contact@onewater.blue)  
+49 151 4133 54 27  
VAT-ID: DE346116428



made with love



# FRIENDS of the LETTERS

Individuals or organizations who regularly create letters, answer letters, run local campaigns, or fund the project are encouraged to join the 'Friends of the Letters' network. This is a group of individuals and organisations who want to:

- **Connect** with an international community dedicated to ocean literacy & youth empowerment.
- **Amplify** the letters and stories of children worldwide through your networks.
- **Be acknowledged** as a supporter on our website or materials and at relevant conferences.
- **Receive updates**, workshop materials, and toolkits to inspire participation.
- **Help identify** joint opportunities, including promotion, projects, exhibitions or funding.

To become a 'Friend of the Letters' and support our initiative, we invite organizations and individuals to contribute through an annual membership:

Grassroots: 0 €

Non-profits: 50 €

Public Schools: 100 €

Private Schools: 200 €

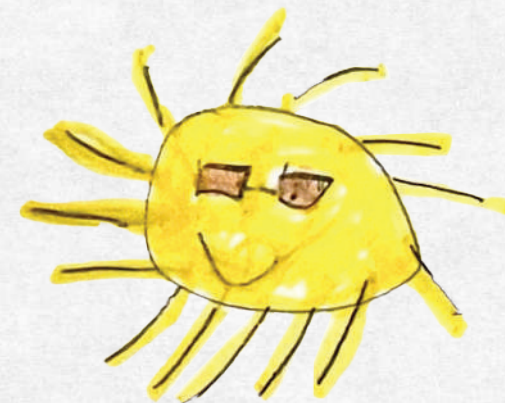
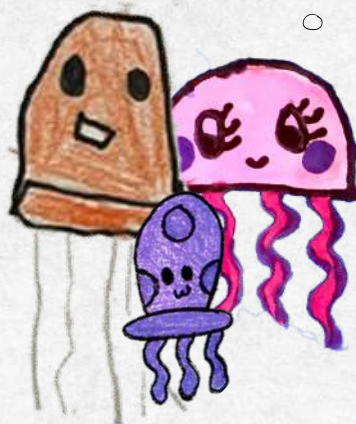
Local Administrations: 200 €

Universities or Institutes: 200 €

Cultural Institutions: 250 €

Intl. Organisations: 300 €

Individuals: Donation-based



YOU'RE A  
CHAMPION

## Champion the Letters

Champions are individuals, companies or other organizations who go above and beyond and represent the Letters to the Sea at events and in their communities. They take significant ownership in the project, regularly respond to children's letters, or take a leading role in local campaigns and advocacy. Champions are also regularly contacted to represent the letters at intl. conferences and encouraged to seek out such opportunities themselves.

