



On the heels of one of the hottest years on record, the protection of our World Heritage marine sites is more urgent than ever. Fortunately, we are seeing a rising tide of activism to meet the challenge. Over the past year, governments, non-profit leaders, and experts are increasingly working together to safeguard the crown jewels of our ocean.

Over the past year, the World Heritage Centre and partners have secured new protections for the Philippines' Tubbataha Reefs National Park, decreasing the risk of ship strikes and pollution. We are now working to obtain similar protections for Mauritania's Banc d'Arguin National Park. We celebrated the creation of a 150,000 square kilometer marine reserve around Mexico's Archipiélago de Revillagigedo, along with a ban on new mining and construction. We ended the year on a high note when the Government of Belize signed a moratorium on all offshore oil drilling in their waters.

While strong local stewardship is essential, we have also seen severe coral bleaching as global temperatures rise. To understand the vulnerability of these unique places, we joined forces with NOAA Coral Reef Watch to study impacts of climate change on World Heritagelisted reefs. The results were sobering: our research indicated that we must curb

carbon emissions sharply to give these rainforests of the sea a fighting chance for survival. Local management is clearly no longer enough.

Climate change is also opening the Arctic to new fishing, shipping and mining.

Last April, together with our partners, a new report was launched that explored World Heritage potential in the Arctic. It highlighted seven ocean gems that could warrant World Heritage protection, and stressed the urgency to accelerate Arctic conservation to keep pace with development pressure.

Nothing less than collective action will save the global ocean icons, and we are seeing commitment and cooperation from every corner of the globe. The World Heritage Marine Programme signed new partnerships with the French Agency for Biodiversity, the Principality of Monaco and the Annenberg Foundation last year and received an unprecedented amount of support from anonymous partners. The progress we made this past year would not have been possible without this growing global community of support. We look forward to working with you in 2018 and further step up protection of our common marine World Heritage.

Fanny Douvere

Coordinator, Marine Programme, World Heritage Centre

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Download our brochure UNESCO Marine World Heritage: Our legacy from the past, what we live with today, what we pass on to future generations

A YEAR OF CONSERVATION RESULTS:

SUCCESS STORIES FROM UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE MARINE SITES

Effective marine protected areas are more than just lines on a map. That is why all 49 World Heritage marine sites undergo routine monitoring and evaluation to ensure their exceptional values will be maintained. This increasingly stronger system of accountability along with the joint leadership across governments, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and scientists to secure protection brought some key successes in 2017. Below, we highlight a few of the year's milestones.

TUBBATAHA



Sitting at the junction of two international shipping routes, Tubbataha is particularly vulnerable to ship groundings. Recognition as a **Particularly Sensitive Sea Area**, the first in Southeast Asia, will help us conserve our precious reefs, and the fish, birds, whales and turtles they support.

Angelique Songco, Superintendent, Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park, aka "Mama Ranger" The atoll of Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park seeds fisheries throughout the Sulu Sea system. With support from the World Heritage Centre, Tubbataha was recently designated a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area off limits for vessels over 150 gross tonnes.

BELIZE BARRIER REEF RESERVE SYSTEM



The reef is the foundation of our economy and culture. The strides we have made, including the **offshore oil moratorium**, will also protect our way of life, and that is what World Heritage is all about: conserving the sites that shape and sustain our communities.

Beverly Wade,World Heritage Focal Point, Belize

The Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System was inscribed on the World Heritage List in Danger in 2009. Since 2015, the Government and NGOs have been working together to secure its removal from the Danger List. In 2016, the Government approved a visionary coastal zone management plan. Last year, a historic offshore oil moratorium was passed.

KOMODO NATIONAL PARK



Sharing knowledge and ideas with colleagues confronting similar challenges is one of the most valuable aspects of the World Heritage marine managers network. Our site will be stronger for the insights we have received from Glacier Bay and other sites.

Mr Sudivono. Director. Komodo National Park

While best known for its iconic dragon, Komodo National Park is also home to spectacular marine wildlife. In December 2017 we organized an exchange with experts from Glacier Bay to help Komodo finalize its marine management plan. The site is seeing increased cruise ship traffic, and can learn from Glacier Bay's sustainable tourism model.

WRANGEL ISLAND



World Heritage oversight and support helps ensure that globally-significant sites like Wrangel Island are managed to the highest standard. Thanks to the managers network, we completed **the first ever management plan** to preserve the sites' special World Heritage values.

Alexander Gruzdev, Director, Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve

Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve in the Russian Federation boasts the world's highest density of ancestral polar bear dens and is a major feeding ground for grey whales. Earlier last year, the World Heritage Centre and IUCN completed a Reactive Monitoring Mission to assess its conservation.

GULF OF CALIFORNIA



Mexico is working at its best to save the vaquita. But the trade route for totoaba extends through the United States to China, **trilateral cooperation** will be required to halt this illegal trafficking. With the help of the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, we are strengthening collaboration to bring the **vaquita** back from the brink.

David Gutierrez, Special Projects General Director, CONANP

More than a third of the world's marine mammal species are found at the Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California, including the critically endangered vaquita. The World Heritage Centre has been working with the governments of Mexico, USA and China to halt the illegal totoaba trade that threatens the vaquita as bycatch.

ARCHIPIÉLAGO DE REVILLAGIGEDO



World Heritage designation for Archipiélago de Revillagigedo opened the door for expanded protection. The **new marine reserve closed for commercial fishing** will have ripple effects throughout the Pacific, since Revillagigedo is a stopover for so many migratory fish, whales, and sharks.

Maria Jossue Navarro Sanchez, Deputy-Director of the Office for the Archipiélago de Revillagigedo Biosphere Reserve

Inscribed in 2016, Archipiélago de Revillagigedo supports multitudes of sharks, rays, whales, turtles and manta rays. In 2017, following a request from the World Heritage Committee for increased protection, the Government of Mexico collaborated with NGOs to create an ocean reserve that extends twelve miles from shore.

EAST RENNELL



Effective management of East Rennell requires the cooperation of customary owners, community and government leaders. The round table we facilitated last summer and the adoption of a roadmap were important first steps in **charting a more sustainable future** for our World Heritage site.

George Tauika, Chairperson of the Lake Tegano World Heritage site association

East Rennell was Danger Listed in 2013 because of logging, invasive rats and over-exploitation of marine resources. With support from the World Heritage Centre and IUCN, the country developed the first comprehensive roadmap to address these concerns. In August, Solomon Islands organized the first ever round table with customary owners, local communities and ministries to discuss conservation plans and the development of livelihoods.

SANGANEB



Salwa Abdelhameed, Sudanese National Commission for UNESCO

Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay – Mukkawar Island Marine National Park, was inscribed on the World Heritage List in 2016. In June 2017, two young people from the local communities travelled to New York to ask world leaders at the United Nations General Assembly to protect our ocean for future generations.

MARINE WORLD HERITAGE MANAGER'S NETWORK: ACCELERATING CHANGE IN OCEAN CONSERVATION

The World Heritage Marine Managers network covers 49 unique ocean places across 37 countries. While these treasured global icons are not immune to the challenges the ocean faces they nevertheless host a wealth of conservation solutions.

Bringing those best practices and success stories together accelerates change and avoids the same mistakes are replicated. It saves time, money and resources. With the oceans facing existential threats, our managers' network has become an indispensable part of our daily work.

Through UNESCO's robust monitoring, we have begun to tap the vast expertise—hundreds of thousands of hours of on-the-ground experience innovating to tackle problems like overfishing and development pressure contained within our global collection of World Heritage marine site managers. Local quardians have confronted every imaginable problem facing our temperate and tropical oceans, and many have created leading-edge solutions. Setting up international exchanges of best practices is a hallmark of the World Heritage Marine Programme. Below are some of the results from the past year.



World Heritage sites are all different, but they all share the responsibility to protect humanity's Outstanding

Universal Value. That makes us so unique and that's why it is so important to exchange experiences and help each other.

Dr. Harald Marencic,Deputy Executive Secretary
Common Wadden Sea Secretariat



Managers sharing best practices during the Third World Heritage Marine Managers Conference [27-31 August 2016, Galápagos Islands, Ecuador]

→ Demonstrating success with ship protection in Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park, Philippines

In 2013, the grounding of a US Navy vessel in the Philippines' Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park prompted the quest for solutions to safeguard the site from future shipping accidents. Tubbataha is located in the Sulu Sea -one of Asia's busiest maritime routes. Fortunately, Tubbataha was able to secure advice from colleagues at The Wadden Sea. Due to its close proximity to Hamburg, Bremen and Rotterdam port, Wadden Sea has enjoyed special protection from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) as a particularly sensitive sea area to safeguard its precious tidal flats from



© US Pacific Fleet

ship pollution and accidents. Under the auspices of UNESCO, experts from the Wadden Sea shared their expertise with Tubbataha. Last year the IMO adopted special protection measures in the Philippines, similar to those the Wadden Sea has had in place for many years. By emulating the strategy in the Netherlands, the Philippines authorities were able to rapidly protect their unique reef and create a lasting conservation success.



© UNESCO / Andreas Krueger

Guanacaste: Working across borders to protect our Eastern Tropical Gems

Managers from eight Eastern Tropical Pacific sites met in Guanacaste, Costa Rica to share scientific data to underpin the management of their sites. During a 3-day meeting, they discussed their common management challenges and identified fundraising opportunities to support regional conservation projects. The meeting was organized by the funding platform PACIFICO and resulted in a regional ministerial agreement to develop a Regional Marine Control and Surveillance Strategy.



© UNESCO / Kartika D. Suardana

Komodo: Replicating Glacier Bay successes at Komodo National Park

While perhaps best known for the Komodo Dragon, Indonesia's Komodo National Park is also home to a stunning array of corals, fish, seabirds, turtles and marine mammals. From 1 to 8 December, experts from glacier Bay National Park in the United States, Australia and elsewhere travelled to Komodo National Park to assist with the future development of a management plan for its ocean areas. The three-day exchange focused on increasing climate resilience and fisheries health, mitigating impacts from cruise ship tourism and other marine activities.

CEO of iSimangaliso World Heritage site wins prestigious KfW prize

Andrew Zaloumis, CEO of the iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority until end 2017, was awarded the prestigious 2017 KfW-Bernhard-Grzimek-Preis for visionary management of South Africa's only marine UNESCO World Heritage site. The site was selected as a prime example of successful balancing economic development and conservation of its special World Heritage values. The 50,000 Euros prize was offered during a special award ceremony at the KfW headquarters in Frankfurt, Germany.



© KfW



AGENCE FRANÇAISE
POUR LA BIODIVERSITÉ

ÉTABLISSEMENT PUBLIC DE L'ÉTAT

Our 2017 activities to strengthen the World Heritage marine site manager's network and accelerate change were supported by the Annenberg Foundation, the Government of Flanders, and the French Agency for Biodiversity. We also thank the generous support of our anonymous partners to this work.

MARINE WORLD HERITAGE IN THE FACE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Coral Reefs





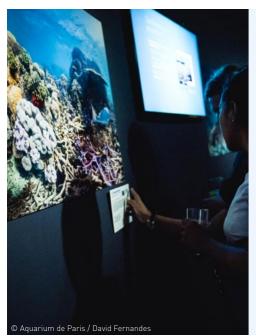


Last July, we released the First Global Scientific Assessment of Climate Change Impacts on World Heritage Coral Reefs, and the results were sobering. The past three years have seen the worst documented coral bleaching, with more than 70% of reefs exposed to severe heat stress. The assessment predicts that all World Heritage reefs might cease to host functioning coral reef systems by the end of the century unless we drastically curb CO₂ emissions.

The study relied on satellite data from the United States National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coral Reef Watch and received support from the French Agency for Biodiversity.

We know the frequency and intensity of coral bleaching events will continue to increase as temperatures rise. Our goal was to document climate impacts on World Heritage-listed coral reefs to date, and examine what the future may hold. The fate of these treasures matters to all humankind, and nations around the world are bound by the 1972 World Heritage Convention to support their survival."

Dr. Scott Heron, NOAA Coral Reef Watch and lead author of the assessment



→ Exhibit at the Aquarium of Paris

From October to December 2017, the Aquarium of Paris hosted a special exhibition, "Coral Reefs on UNESCO's World Heritage List." Thousands of visitors were taken on a journey to discover the exceptional diversity of these reefs, and learn about the threat of climate change and UNESCO's work to address it. The exhibit was made possible by the Aguarium of Paris and its partners, as well as the French Agency for Biodiversity. Photos were provided by The Ocean Agency and World Heritage marine sites, and Virtual Reality films were provided by Seaview 360.



Dr. Charlie Veron

ightarrow Coral Reefs at the World Heritage Committee

During the World Heritage
Committee's 41st session in Krakow
last summer, the Committee
expressed the utmost concern
about current and future climate
impacts on World Heritage sites,
including coral bleaching. We
brought international experts Dr.
Mark Eakin of NOAA Coral Reef
Watch, Dr. Charlie Veron, and Mr.
Christophe Lefebvre of the French
Agency for Biodiversity to Krakow
for a side event on coral reefs.

The AFB is France's central operator for terrestrial, aquatic and marine biodiversity. Ocean protection is one of its priorities.

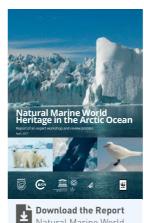
AGENCE FRANÇAISE POUR LA BIODIVERSITÉ

ÉTABLISSEMENT PUBLIC DE L'ÉTAT



isa Speer (Director, International Oceans, NRDC) and Carl Gustaf Lundin (Director of IUCN's Global Marine and Polar Programme).

Marine World Heritage in the Arctic



Heritage in the Arctic Ocean

The Arctic region is warming twice as fast as the rest of the planet.
Rapidly melting sea ice is opening up previously inaccessible areas to shipping, drilling and industrial fishing. We are in a race against time to improve our understanding and conservation of the Arctic's globally unique marine ecosystems. While the Arctic itself is uniquely important and is host to many globally exceptional features, the area is also intrinsically linked to the preservation of biodiversity in other marine protected

areas already inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. Every year, millions of birds migrate from the Arctic to the Wadden Sea and further south to Banc d'Arguin National Park, and scientific evidence suggests that grey whales born in Mexico's El Vizcaino World Heritage area migrate all the way to Wrangel Island in the Arctic. Protecting the Arctic and its wildlife is thus essential to ensure other World Heritage sites maintain their integrity.

To shine a light on this challenge and opportunity, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), in partnership with the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and the World Heritage Marine Programme, launched a report last April that identified seven globally significant marine sites in the Arctic Ocean that could potentially qualify for World Heritage status. The report was launched during the Monaco Blue Initiative at the Monaco Yacht Club in the presence of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco.

At the end of 2017, Canada announced the addition of eight new sites on Canada's Tentative List, including "Sirmilik National Park and the proposed Tallurutiup Imanga National Marine Conservation Area, Nunavut", an area that was identified in the report as of possible OUV, and the first step toward a possible World Heritage listing. The Tentative List is a country's inventory of what it considers its important natural and cultural heritage sites.





The Arctic report was made possible by support from the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation. The foundation is

dedicated to the protection of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development on a global scale.

>> YOUTH FROM AROUND THE WORLD UNITE TO LEAD #MYOCEANPLEDGE

Young people will inherit the consequences of our actions, so it felt fitting to launch the **#MyOceanPledge** campaign with children from World Heritage marine sites who called upon world leaders to protect our ocean for future generations.

On 8th June, World Oceans Day, children from 12 UNESCO marine World Heritage sites travelled to New York to urge leaders at the United Nations General Assembly to accelerate ocean conservation action for the benefit of current and future generations.

These youth presented the pledge on stage at the United Nations General Assembly, and called upon world

leaders to sign their commitment. They travelled from some of the most remote corners of the world to highlight the global nature of the threats our ocean faces, and the need for collective action. HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco was the first to sign the pledge, followed by representatives from the Government of Flanders, Australia, and United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for the Environment Adrian Grenier.





 \rightarrow Join the

movement to

ocean for future

protect our

generations!











The United Nations General Assembly event was made possible by The Explorers Club, which promotes scientific exploration by supporting research and education in the physical, natural and





biological sciences. The event received additional support from Stefan $\,$ & Irina Hearst, the Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation and











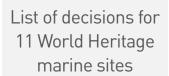


WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE

REVIEWS CONSERVATION STATUS OF MARINE WORLD HERITAGE SITES

World Heritage Listing is only the first step. Once a place is designated and inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, it becomes subject to continuous monitoring and evaluation to ensure its special values are maintained. Last year, we contributed to the scientific assessments of 11 marine sites.

The World Heritage Committee oversees all sites on UNESCO's World Heritage List, reviews state of conservation reports, and requests governments to take action to address specific conservation challenges. At its 41st annual session held in Krakow, Poland, last July, the Committee adopted decisions for 11 World Heritage marine sites.



Click on each image to Read the Decision



Area de Conservación Guanacaste Belize Barrier Reef Reserve

Read the Decision



System (Belize)

Read the Decision



Coiba National Park and its Special Zone of Marine Protection (Panama)

Read the Decision



East Rennell (Solomon Islands)

Read the Decision



Everglades National Park (USA)

Read the Decision



Great Barrier Reef (Australia)

Read the Decision



Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California (Mexico)

Read the Decision



Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve (Russian Federation)

Read the Decision



Shiretoko (Japan)

Read the Decision



Socotra Archipelago (Yemen)

Read the Decision



© Nicky de Battista The Sundarbans (Bangladesh)

Read the Decision



Safeguarding sites on UNESCO's List of World Heritage in Danger

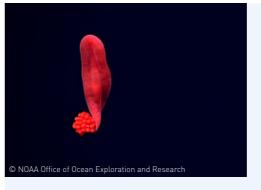
All World Heritage properties are monitored regularly to help ensure their exceptional characteristics will be preserved. When a site is not well protected, it can be inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger. If the values are irrevocably lost, a site can be removed from the World Heritage List all together.

Three World Heritage marine sites are currently inscribed on the List of World Heritage in Danger: **Everglades** National Park, Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System and East Rennell. With the support of the Government of Flanders, we undertook technical advisory missions to Belize and Solomon Islands in 2015, and coordinated the development of road maps to remove each site from the Danger List. Both road maps have been adopted by the World Heritage Committee, and are currently being implemented.

In 2017, the Committee issued Danger List warnings for three additional marine sites: Coiba National Park and its Special Zone of Marine Protection. Islands and Protected Areas of the **Gulf of California and Natural System** of Wrangel Island Reserve. The Committee will determine whether to inscribe these sites on the Danger List at its 42nd session in Bahrain.

//// Save the date

The World Heritage Committee will convene for its 42nd session in Manama, Bahrain, from 24 June to 4 July 2018. During the 42nd session, the Committee will discuss the state of conservation of at least 11 World Heritage marine sites, including Banc d'Arguin National Park, Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay – Mukkawar Island Marine National Park, Galápagos Islands, Gough and Inaccessible Islands, Socotra Archipelago, Puerto-Princesa Subterranean River National Park, Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System, Coiba National Park and its Special Zone of Marine Protection, East Rennell, Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve, and The Sundarbans.





World Heritage in the High Seas: An Idea Whose Time Has Come

In 2016, UNESCO and IUCN launched a report that explores ways in which the 1972 World Heritage Convention could help conserve wonders of the open ocean beyond national boundaries. In 2017 we partnered with the French Agency for Biodiversity, a long-time partner formerly known as the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas, to advance our work on the High Seas. In 2018, we envision a technical working meeting that will look at legal options for the possible nomination, protection and evaluation of ocean places of potential Outstanding Universal Value in the High Seas.



The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) provides technical advice to help the World Heritage Committee make informed decisions on natural World Heritage. IUCN also helped us assess World Heritage potential in the High Seas and the Arctic region.

OUR PARTNERS



None of the successes we achieved in 2017 would have been possible without the support of our key partners. Cooperation across government, non-profit, and corporate sectors is essential to preserve our ocean legacy for generations to come. We invite you to join our growing global alliance.

CORE 2017 PARTNERS

Swiss watch manufacture Jaeger-LeCoultre

Government of Flanders, Belgium

French Agency for Biodiversity

Mr Adrian and Ms Jacqui Beecroft / Charities Aid Foundation

Annenberg Foundation

Principality of Monaco / Monaco Explorations

Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation

The Explorers Club

Mr Stefan and Ms Irina Hearst

Government of the Netherlands

Resource Media

Helmsley Trust

Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation

XL Catlin Seaview Survey / The Ocean Agency

Aquarium of Paris

National Geographic Voices

Polynesian Voyaging Society

IN COOPERATION WITH



The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), official advisory body for natural heritage under the 1972 World Heritage Convention.



The World Heritage marine site managers and their teams that work tirelessly on the ground to implement the 1972 World Heritage Convention.

We also wish to thank the anonymous donors whose generous support enables the World Heritage Marine Programme fulfill to its mandate.

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Experts from all over the world have helped make our work possible throughout 2017. We are grateful for their support and look forward to working together in 2018.

World Heritage Marine Programme Staff | Headquarters, Paris



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Carlos Chacon, Coordinator, Fundación PACIFICO

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THE 49 MARINE SITES INSCRIBED ON THE WORLD HERITAGE LIST (AS OF 01/01/2018)



Argentina

Península Valdés, 1999

Australia

Great Barrier Reef, 1981 **Heard and McDonald Islands**, 1997 Lord Howe Island Group, 1982 Macquarie Island, 1997

Ningaloo Coast, 2011

Shark Bay, Western Australia, 1991

Bangladesh

The Sundarbans, 1997

Belize

Belize Barrier Reef Reserve System, 1996

Brazil

Brazilian Atlantic Islands: Fernando de Noronha and Atol das Rocas Reserves,

Canada/USA

Kluane / Wrangell-St. Elias / Glacier Bay / Tatshenshini-Alsek, 1979

Columbia

Malpelo Fauna and Flora Sanctuary, 2006

Costa Rica

Area de Conservación Guanacaste,

Cocos Island National Park, 1997

Denmark/Germany/Netherlands

The Wadden Sea, 2009

Ecuador

Galápagos Islands, 1978

Finland/Sweden

High Coast / Kvarken Archipelago,

France

Gulf of Porto: Calanche of Piana, Gulf of Girolata, Scandola Reserve, 1983 Lagoons of New Caledonia: Reef **Diversity and Associated Ecosystems**,

Iceland

Surtsey, 2008

Sundarbans National Park, 1987

Indonesia

Komodo National Park, 1991 Ujung Kulon National Park, 1991

Ogasawara Islands, 2011 Shiretoko, 2005

Kiribati

Phoenix Islands Protected Area, 2010

Mauritania

Banc d'Arguin National Park, 1989

Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California, 2005

Sian Ka'an, 1987

Whale Sanctuary of El Vizcaino, 1993 Archipiélago de Revillagigedo, 2016

New Zealand

New Zealand Sub-Antarctic Islands, 1998

Norway

West Norwegian Fiords -Geirangerfjord and Nærøyfjord, 2005

Rock Islands Southern Lagoon, 2012

Coiba National Park and its Special Zone of Marine Protection, 2005

Philippines

Puerto-Princesa Subterranean River National Park, 1999

Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park, 1993

Russian Federation

Natural System of Wrangel Island Reserve, 2004

Sevchelles

Aldabra Atoll, 1982

Solomon Islands

East Rennell, 1998

South Africa

iSimangaliso Wetland Park, 1999

Ibiza, Biodiversity and Culture, 1999

Sanganeb Marine National Park and Dungonab Bay - Mukkawar Island Marine National Park, 2016

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Gough and Inaccessible Islands, 1995 **St Kilda**, 1986

United States of America

Everglades National Park, 1979 Papahānaumokuākea, 2010

Viet Nam

Ha Long Bay, 1994

Yemen

Socotra Archipelago, 2008







Heritage

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