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## **Sustainable Markets Initiative launches new effort to turn Ocean commitments into action**

**19 January 2026, London, UK:** As the new global Ocean Treaty for the High Seas has entered into force, the Sustainable Markets Initiative, founded by His Majesty King Charles III as The Prince of Wales, today launched the Ocean Stewardship Initiative. Through private-sector engagement, the Initiative's first goal is to support the establishment of one of the world's largest Marine Protected Areas in Antarctica.

Delivered through the Ocean Stewardship Initiative, the project creates a structured platform for constructive private engagement with governments and civil society. It aims to translate global Ocean commitments into practical action, while balancing conservation with the sustainable use of marine resources.

The first delivery track of the initiative builds on the long-standing international efforts under [the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources \(CCAMLR\)](#) to establish a large-scale Marine Protected Area (MPA) covering seventy per cent of the Antarctic Peninsula. The MPA will be established alongside a modern science-based krill fishery management framework, which will increase ecosystem monitoring and spread out the fishery effort in the area that remains open and regulated for fisheries.

The Ocean Stewardship Initiative seeks to mobilise private sector engagement in support of effective Ocean governance, encompassing marine protection and science-based fisheries management. The initiative has been developed in partnership with Aker BioMarine and Aker QRILL Company, with advice from the Marine Stewardship Council. If approved, the Marine Protected Area, as proposed in CCAMLR by Argentina and Chile, would be among the world's largest no-take zones, and would protect Antarctic mammals and cover nearly half a million square kilometres of the Southern Ocean. The proposal would increase the total area of the Antarctic Ocean protected by up to fifteen per cent, making a considerable contribution to the global commitment to protect thirty per cent of the Ocean by 2030.

### **Delivering results through industry engagement**

By demonstrating success through industry leadership in Antarctica, the Ocean Stewardship Initiative will create a playbook to accelerate improvements in fisheries management and the implementation of marine protected areas globally. The initiative will enable companies to engage with governments and other stakeholder groups to identify solutions and deliver meaningful results.

This effort builds on years of work by governments, scientists, non-governmental organisations and fishing companies to improve fisheries management and advance marine protection, recognising that greater coordination is needed to accelerate delivery at scale. It recognises that durable outcomes depend on alignment across sectors.

"The private sector has a decisive role in shaping the Ocean economy," said Jennifer Jordan-Saifi, CEO of the Sustainable Markets Initiative. "Governments set the rules, but delivery depends on capital, companies and supply chains moving in the same direction with a default sustainable mindset. This initiative is about private sector leadership aligning Ocean-based value creation with conservation, sustainable fisheries management, and meeting the world's 30 x 30 target. Our hope that private sector support for the CCAMLR MPA and krill fisheries management framework can serve as a model for similar efforts around the world."

The initiative comes amid growing geopolitical uncertainty, underscoring the need for a stronger role for industry in translating commitments into action.

"For fishing companies, this is no longer a question of whether Marine Protected Areas will happen," said Matts Johansen, CEO of Aker BioMarine and chair of Aker QRILL Company. "The real question is whether industry chooses to engage constructively, and be part of the solution, or remain on the sidelines while the rules are shaped without its involvement."

#### **Stewardship as a foundation for Ocean action**

The Marine Stewardship Council was founded to recognise and incentivise sustainable fishing and to catalyse private sector-led improvements in fisheries management and practices.

"Effective Ocean management requires stewardship of the entirety of our Ocean built on science, transparency and accountability," said Rupert Howes, CEO of the Marine Stewardship Council.

"Strong protection measures and well-managed fisheries go hand in hand, and both are essential to the future of the Ocean. Given the unique ecological importance of the Southern Oceans, there is a compelling case for this government-proposed MPA with multistakeholder support from both industry and NGOs."

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#### **Notes to editors**

##### **The Sustainable Markets Initiative**

The Sustainable Markets Initiative (SMI) is the world's go-to private sector organization for sustainable transition; characterized by our unique brand of 'private sector diplomacy'.

With the vision of our founder, His Majesty King Charles III, and our unique convening power, the SMI facilitates action between world leaders and CEOs to position sustainability at the heart of global value creation.

Together, we seek to mobilize the trillions of dollars required to achieve a sustainable future. Investment at this scale requires global systems-level change with a default sustainable orientation across markets, industries and supply chains. Here, our mandates, the [Terra Carta](#) and [Astra Carta](#), provide practical private sector trajectories.

The SMI believes that with bold ambition and courageous leadership, we can seize a new era of global prosperity that will last for generations to come. We call this 'The Growth Story of Our Time'. Read more: [www.sustainable-markets.org](http://www.sustainable-markets.org)

**The Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)** is an international non-profit organisation which sets globally recognised standards for sustainable fishing and the seafood supply chain. Fisheries representing 20% of the world's wild marine catch are engaged in its certification program. For more information visit [msc.org](http://msc.org).

**Aker BioMarine and Aker QRILL Company** are leaders in sustainably harvesting Antarctic krill and developing high-quality krill ingredients and products for human health, nutrition, aquaculture, and animal feed. Together, the two companies operate the world's only vertically integrated krill value chain, from sustainable harvesting in the Southern Ocean to finished products reaching customers worldwide.

#### **The Ocean Stewardship Initiative**

- Industry-led platform to accelerate delivery of marine protected areas and science-based fisheries management across existing Ocean governance systems
- Supports the global 30x30 target, with only ~2.8% of the Ocean currently fully protected
- First delivery combines area-based protection with improved quota-setting, monitoring and implementation in active fisheries, supporting a Marine Protected Area covering approximately 70% of the Antarctic Peninsula ( $\approx 456\,000\text{ km}^2$ ) by 2026.
- Antarctica serves as a proof point to develop a transferable industry playbook applicable to other regions and fisheries from 2027 onward

#### **Fisheries management in Antarctica**

- Antarctic krill fishing has been managed by CCAMLR since 1981 using precautionary, ecosystem-based rules and ongoing monitoring

- All vessels operate under strict regulations, including mandatory observers, satellite tracking and daily catch reporting
- Estimated total krill biomass in Area 48 is 63 000 000 tonnes
- The total krill quota is 5 610 000 tonnes, with fishing limited to a precautionary level of 620 000 tonnes
- 12 vessels from five nations operate across 3 500 000 km<sup>2</sup>, one of the world's largest and most closely managed fishing areas
- Management measures are based on best available science and are widely recognised as highly precautionary

#### **Antarctic MPA**

- Proposed Marine Protected Area covering approximately 70% of the Antarctic Peninsula, where most of Antarctica's land-based wildlife is found
- Total area of 455 957 km<sup>2</sup>, among the world's largest MPAs
- Proposed by Argentina and Chile through CCAMLR, following more than 10 years of scientific work and negotiation
- Designed as a no-take area, with fisheries managed outside the MPA under existing CCAMLR rules
- If adopted, MPAs would cover approximately ~15% of the Antarctic region
- Represents a significant contribution to the global 30x30 target, at a time when only around 2.8% of existing MPAs worldwide are fully protected no-take zones

#### **High Seas Treaty (BBNJ)**

- The High Seas Treaty creates the first global framework to protect marine life in ocean areas beyond national borders
- It enables countries to establish large-scale Marine Protected Areas on the High Seas, guided by science and international cooperation
- The Treaty strengthens transparency and environmental safeguards for activities taking place far from shore
- Read more: <https://www.un.org/bbnjagreement/en>