



# Youth4Ocean Forum

Meet the Founding Members

# ARCTIC OCEAN



 Alvine Datchoua-Tirvaudey

Currently lives in Hamburg, Germany

*In 2016, I was an intern for the social entrepreneurship cChange (Oslo, Norway). My contribution to an EEA publication (with examples of coastal transformations) changed my vision of the importance of oceans as part our futures (whether we live close or far from it). My PhD studies at the University of Hamburg (since 2019) focus on climate governance and climate justice. It further motivated me to take action, such as facilitating local claims (especially of young people) to be heard in political sphere(s).*

 Jack Laverick

Currently lives in Glasgow, UK

*I have always loved the ocean, but as I've grown older I've seen more and more damage. Fishermen are finding less fish for more effort, and modern lifestyles are filling the ocean with waste. We have to do better to protect our oceans, as a shared piece of our global heritage.*



# ARCTIC OCEAN



Paridhi Rustogi

Currently lives in Hamburg, Germany

*As a climate scientist (in-training), the ocean's ability to sequester carbon and mitigate the effects of carbon emissions, along with supporting life at every trophic level is astonishing. My course trains me to study the ocean but I yearn for the opportunity to make a tangible impact outside of the classroom, and this will be a step in the right direction.*



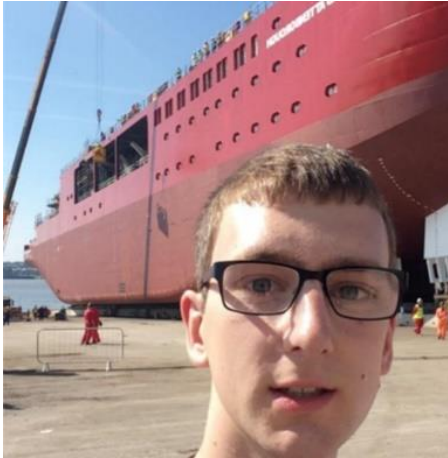
Nil Rodes

Currently lives in Barcelona, Spain

*We are currently aware of the multiple impacts and activities threatening the health of the seas and oceans, and I believe that there are possible solutions for most of these problems. What is now required is the social and political will to change and enhance the way we address and deal with the ocean. Therefore, I hope that my deep interest in the ocean, together with my enthusiastic and hard-working personality, can bring a glimpse of enhancement to the ocean's future situation.*



# ARCTIC OCEAN



 Samuel Hartharn-Evans

Currently lives in Newcastle, UK

*I've always lived and holidayed close to the sea, and so it has always been important to me. The oceans are a special place for humanity, it's where we live, transport things, our food is reliant on it, our climate depends on it, and it brings great pleasure to people in so many ways. However, as I began studying it in my degree, I learnt quite how fascinating and complex it is, whilst we are simultaneously damaging it in ways that we can't yet understand.*



Victoria Buschman

Currently lives in Nuuk, Greenland

*Caring for the ocean makes a difference for people. Indigenous communities are intimately connected to the sea and we understand that the ocean's health is our health too. Young people have the responsibility and the willpower to ensure that our world oceans are cared for both now and in the future.*



# ATLANTIC OCEAN



Esther Blanco Rayón

Currently lives in Bilbao, Spain

*Understanding the importance of the ocean for all of us and its beauty made me realise that I wanted to make a difference for the ocean.*



Valentine Charlet

Currently lives in Lille

*I realised the importance of pollution in oceans when I was in India 4 years ago. I saw there was plastic everywhere around us and the decline of species diversity, especially in aquatic environment.*



# ATLANTIC OCEAN



 Eloïse Faure

Currently lives in Athens, Greece

*It was during a road trip in Sri Lanka (my childhood country). I went back there 12 years after I left. I was truly desolate to realize how much pollution there was in town, as well as citizen's lack of awareness about environmental preservation, and the destroyed and damaged oceanic ecosystems.*

Adrien Landa

Currently lives in Boulogne-sur-Mer, France

*As a swimmer, I spent much time wondering about what was below. As a diver, I learned to love living creatures in the Big Blue. As a human I have been horrified by what we do to the Ocean. And as a world citizen, I decided to work to preserve and restore life below water through a deep change of human activities.*



# ATLANTIC OCEAN



Natalie Prinz

Currently lives in Tauranga, New Zealand

*I have always had this vision to devote my life to working for the ocean, which strengthened throughout my education, now taking shape in the motivation to create change. And I know I am not alone. Humans generated more than enough knowledge around the ocean and our dependence on it, to act, and steer human lifestyles away from ignorance, towards a more sustainable and nature-minded direction. Awareness, science and education are key to create global change, if we all start pulling together for the future we want. And I want to take part in this.*



Matthieu Le Chanjour

Currently lives in Lassy, France

*I was born and raised in Brittany, a Celtic land with a deep connection to the sea. Both of my grandfathers were master mariners. Growing up, it was normal to go fishing and soon I got fond of diving. Lately, I got to help formatting a policy brief about the impact of sun blocks on corals in the Philippines. Because I'm a science educator and because I might have kids, I want to do more so that what I got can be passed along.*



# ATLANTIC OCEAN



Marie Orain

Currently lives in Paris, France

*All the plastic pollution I saw during my travels made me realize that we are not taking the right way for the future of the biodiversity and our health. We are not permanent residents on earth, we are just guests. We have to leave our path cleaner than ever to respect all the living beings.*



Kianna Gallagher

Currently lives in Ghent, Belgium

*To me, the oceans have always been a source of wonder, a fascinating and unknown world to be explored. When I started diving the true immensity and importance of the oceans became clear to me. At the same time, I witnessed just a fraction of the damage caused by various anthropogenic impacts. This conflict between the many services our ocean provides and the many threats it faces is my inspiration to make a difference for the oceans.*





# ATLANTIC OCEAN



Louise Ras

Currently lives in Brest, France

*The deep sense of serenity when looking at the sea and the incredible sense of freedom when sailing nourished my connection to the ocean. Slowly, I learned more and more about the countless threats the ocean faces in the current context of growing anthropogenic stress. The more I learned, the more it struck me as essential to do my best to participate in building a more sustainable relationship to the sea and helping the ocean become more resilient. Today I continue this engagement through the Sailing Hironnelle's project, Expedition Sea the Future.*

# BALTIC SEA



**Maria Jaeger**

Currently lives in Kiel, Germany

*Having seen and read so many terrifying documentaries on the deterioration to all parts of the ocean, the whole ecosystem and the creatures living in and depending on it, including us humans, made me realise that I want to do my part in stopping this development. As little as my contribution may be, hopefully it won't be in vain. In the end "challenges are what makes life interesting and overcoming them is what makes life meaningful" (Joshua J. Marine).*



**Lisa Simone de Grunt**

Currently lives in Berlin, Germany

*I've always been drawn to the ocean - growing up near the North Sea coast, I would always be in awe of the beach, the dunes, the waves - both in summer as well as in winter. When I began to see more of the world and settled in Berlin, I knew that I wanted to work in an ocean-related field, as I realised just how important the ocean is, not only from an ecosystem services or economic perspective, but also considering a humanities viewpoint.*



# BALTIC SEA



 Agata Skomar

Currently lives in Gdynia, Poland

*The Earth is our house. I love her and I am caring about her. I feel a great bond with nature and I can't be indifferent when people destroy it. I want future generations to be able to live and admire the beauty of the life on Earth.*

 Bodil Sofie Espersen  
Currently lives in Copenhagen, Denmark



# BLACK SEA



 Isabela-Mihaela Jantea

Currently lives in Constanta, Romania

*The alarming effect of the environmental pollution is the reason that made me want to contribute to its protection, making me realise that any involvement, no matter how small, can make a difference.*



Neli Tsankova

Currently lives in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria

*During my whole life I have lived by the sea. It always saddened me as a child when I saw pieces of plastic and trash floating around in the water. After learning about how precious the ocean is for maintaining the balance of the ecosystems and how much it and its inhabitants suffer because of pollution I decided to help with everything I can to preserve it. The first steps - becoming a veterinary student and a volunteer at Green Balkans.*



# BLACK SEA



Denitsa Petkova

Currently lives in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria

*I have been living near the sea since I was a child and I have always been interested in the living creatures in it. The ocean is home to species we have yet to discover. I want to find a way to reduce pollution. Because losing our oceans means losing life on earth that hasn't been discovered yet. We have to work to save the oceans not only for us but for future generations.*



Costin Timofte

Currently lives in Ovidiu, Romania

*The main reasons which made me think were global warming and pollution. As days go by, life from the ocean is suffering in so many ways mainly due to global warming and pollution. More and more areas from the ocean are losing their biodiversity, becoming lifeless, species are becoming extinct or they are not longer there, affecting millions of people which feed on fish, being the primary food source.*



# BLACK SEA



Diana Minzala

Currently lives in Constanta, Romania

*I am concerned about the severe degradation of the ocean and about the public awareness for the effective protection of the ocean ecosystem, because during the study for my PhD. thesis about the impact of microplastics on living marine organisms, I realised that marine pollution is one of the biggest problems regarding the environmental health status.*



Alina Greceanu

Currently lives in Constanta, Romania

*I think that people are so preoccupied about themselves and forget about the essence of life, the water. I think that a change regarding the ocean is needed as fast as possible. More than that, I really love this project and I consider it very relevant for our planet and our lives.*



# BLACK SEA



Evmorfyia Evanova

Currently lives in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria

*What made me realise I want to make a change for the ocean is when animals that I love and that I was interested in started getting extinct. It dawned on me that there might be a day that I will not be able to see them and they would be left in the past. And I did not want to live in a world where some of those animals are gone just because we couldn't care enough to protect their home.*

# MEDITERRANEAN SEA



 Nikola Medic

Currently lives in Copenhagen, Denmark

*The ocean is the biggest ecosystem on Earth, it plays a crucial role as climate regulator and sustain life on our planet. Most of the time people associate the ocean with blue water, holidays on the beach, coral reefs, dolphins, sharks and whales. They never think about the microscopic unicellular organisms that live in the water column and produce more than half of the oxygen we breathe. That made me realized that I want to do a difference for the ocean and bring the importance of these tiny organisms – phytoplankton in the first place while talking about ocean, climate change and life on Earth.*

 Salomé Bellon

Currently lives in Aix-en-Provence, France

*When I realised how polluted the ocean was with plastic and hydrocarbons and that this pollution has already and is still damaging biodiversity, fish, planktons, corals... I decided I had to act to protect our oceans.*






# MEDITERRANEAN SEA



 Théo Zecchini  
Currently lives in Marseille, France

*I've been aware of the climate and ecological emergency for several years now. My studies in environmental sciences confirmed my will to do whatever I can to tackle those challenges, and today I want to act as fast and efficiently as possible for ocean preservation.*

 Valentina Lovat  
Currently lives in Treviso, Italy

*I've always had a respectful relationship with water and a passion for the marine life. During the high school years, I learned more about the threats the ocean is facing. In that moment, my passion for the ocean became a mission: we all have a role to protect the blue world.*



# MEDITERRANEAN SEA



Kristina Odžak

Currently lives in Split, Croatia

*During my studies I have spent so many hours under the sea scuba diving and I faced all the bad impacts that humans have on the oceans, so protecting them in order to preserve marine and human life is the only right thing to do. As a marine biologist I want to help our oceans to breathe and to be alive again. Also, as a human being I want to save oceans and marine life so that future generations can enjoy the same benefits that oceans provide us.*



Florian Cornu

Currently lives in Marseille, France

*The first video I have watched about whale hunting and the massive Erika oil spill when I was 11 years old was a first electroshock. I quickly decided then I would do everything I could to fight this and protect the ocean as a citizen, journalist and through my involvement with NGOs.*



# MEDITERRANEAN SEA



Olivia Garcia

Currently lives in Montpellier, France

*Two years ago, I was exploring some wonderful archipelagos in the Celebes Sea, when I noticed for the first time small islands of trash, drifting in the middle of a dreamy paradise water world. A few months later I asked to specialize in environmental science and pollution with the hope to somehow be able to work on that kind of issue in the future. I had always been excited about the underwater worlds but this episode had been a tipping point.*



Alessandro Scianca

Currently lives in Genova, Italy

*I'm an environmental analytical chemist with a multidisciplinary approach for the marine environment: I'm fully trained in ocean monitoring systems and I'm focused on Ocean Literacy. I realized that I would have liked to make a difference for the Ocean after my II Level Advanced Master in "Sustainable Blue Growth": a sustainable future depends on a healthy ocean and it requires ocean-literate people who understand the vital importance of our "One World Ocean".*



# MEDITERRANEAN SEA



 Anne-Laure Le Lay

Currently lives in Nice, France

*When I was young, I witnessed the pollution from the Erika on the Brittany coast. Therefore, this event motivated me towards acquiring and using my qualifications to protect the environment. As a Maritime lawyer, working in a field that aims to protect the oceans is one of my major objectives. I am very happy to be a founding member of Youth4Ocean because it fits perfectly into this dynamic.*

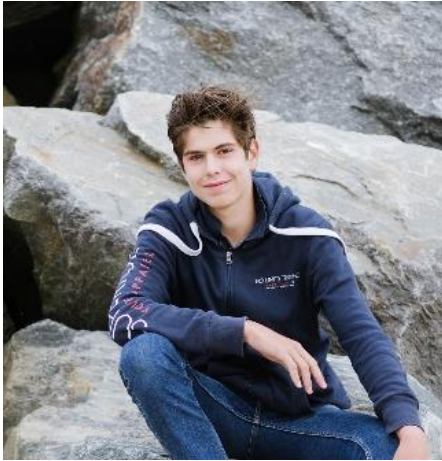
 Haris Paliogiannis

Currently lives in Amsterdam, Netherlands

*The oceans are an integral part of our planet, a finite resource, and at the same time have important cultural, political and economic value. Today, we are impacting the oceans and the future generations more than our ancestors ever could. Therefore, my ultimate aspiration is that my work will contribute to raising awareness concerning their vital role for our wellbeing.*



# MEDITERRANEAN SEA



 Thomas Lesage

Currently lives in Toulouse, France

*I have realised that the ocean is crucial for our planet and for us generally speaking and that unfortunately so many people ignore such reality. In this context, I have tried to identify the best channel to convey widely my message and it was through education and the awareness of children. That is the origin of the creation of the NGO "Children for the Oceans" and my involvement.*

 Badr El Mahrad

Currently lives in Portugal

*The Ocean is an exhilarating and happy space, where I swim, dive, surf, chill, spend my holidays and where I go to refresh my ideas. During my scientific experience I came to understand in-depth how the ocean is a unique and spectacular marvel that regulates our climate, floods, droughts, weather and provides a huge ecosystem services in many ways.*

*Humankind has been damaging this ecosystem through different activities and I am an optimist and I believe that if we can act now, we can yet fix it and put it right. I have committed my life to raising environmental awareness for the common good and Now is time for the #Ocean. We need that current generations, help their peers to learn how to work with nature rather than against it.*



# MEDITERRANEAN SEA



 Steven Bajada

Currently lives in Malta

*Growing up in Malta, a small island in the Mediterranean, means that the sea is an integral part of my identity. I have had the luxury of spending many long days at the beach, hiking along the coast, or snorkelling just offshore. All this depends on a healthy, clean, plastic free Mediterranean, which requires careful, considerate management if future generations are to experience this too.*