

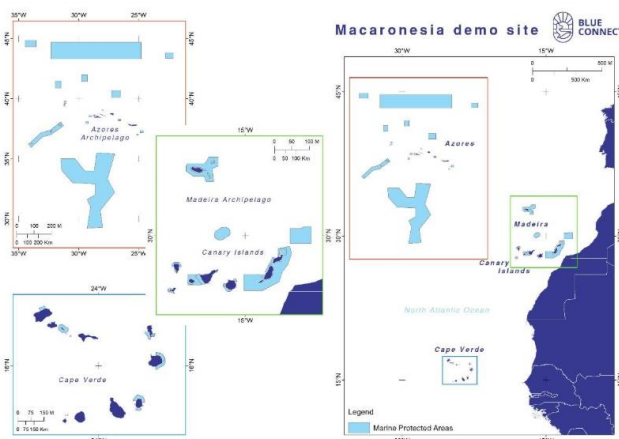


DEMO SITES NEWSLETTER

#1 – SEPTEMBER 2025

MACARONESIA

We enthusiastically celebrate the first anniversary of the Blue Connect project in Macaronesia, an initiative funded by the European Commission (EU Blue Parks Mission Ocean HORIZON-MISS-2023OCEAN-01), which has been strengthening marine biodiversity conservation and promoting ecosystem resilience in the Azores, Madeira, Canary Islands, and Cape Verde.



★ About the Blue Connect Project in Macaronesia

The initiative, coordinated in Macaronesia by the [University of the Azores](#) in collaboration with [Fundação Gaspar Frutuoso](#), [Fundação Maio Biodiversidade](#) and [Royal Belgium Institute of Natural Sciences](#), aims to create ecological corridors that connect marine protected areas (MPAs) and promote co-management among different stakeholders in the region. Our goal is to improve the connectivity of marine ecosystems, increase resilience to climate change, and ensure the sustainability of marine resources vital to local communities and global biodiversity.



One year of team work and achievements!

The 1st Meeting with the Local Stakeholder Working Group (LSWG) in February 2025 brought together **15 institutions** from the four archipelagos to align **strategies**, exchange **knowledge**, and **define priorities** for marine conservation in the region based on the *bottom-up* participatory model.



Establishment of 3 Working Groups – **Connectivity**, **MPAs**, and **Co-management** – which have been working collaboratively to discuss and define key aspects and action plans such as species monitoring, protected area management, and transnational cooperation.

Each Working Group meets every three months, promoting continuous information exchange, alignment of actions, and the strengthening of the network of partners involved in the project. Within the MPAs group, we work in synergy with [PHAROS Project](#)!



The **University of the Azores** visited **Cape Verde** in March 2025 and, in collaboration with local partners on the island of Maio, sought to establish the first steps toward a marine and fisheries co-management model in the **community of Calheta**.



During the **European Cetacean Society** conference held in the Azores in May 2025, we co-organized two workshops: “**Macaronesian Ecological Corridor**” in collaboration with the **Marine Sabres Project**, where we brought together experts, managers, and local communities to discuss strategies for enhancing connectivity and the conservation of key species such as cetaceans, sharks, and tuna; and “**Communities and Tech for Cetacean Monitoring on a Budget**” co-organized with Blue Connect partners, where specialists shared their experiences and knowledge on marine cetacean monitoring projects.





A BLUE FUTURE

What's Next?



In 2026, training sessions will be organized for MPA managers, local authorities, scientists, and communities, in partnership with the National Environment Directorate of Cape Verde, Fauna & Flora International, and the PAMAR and PHAROS projects, covering co-management techniques, data collection, and ecological modeling.

Co-creation of the Action Plan for the consolidation of co-management and conservation plans with local communities, valuing community knowledge to enrich scientific strategies and promote more inclusive decision-making.



Development of adaptive management strategies, based on scientific data, for the creation of ecological corridors and improvements to the MPA network.



GET INVOLVED!

Are you interested in the Blue Connect Project in Macaronesia?

Please take a moment to answer this short [QUESTIONNAIRE](#) and join us on this journey of cooperation to create a sustainable future for our oceans!

Let's build resilient corridors for marine life in Macaronesia together!



MPA
Community Network

MACARONESIA



Curious to learn more about the project? Join the next LSWG meeting, scheduled for February 2026!

Send an email to debora.gutierrez@uac.pt and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

Sending warm ocean hugs,

**The Blue Connect Team in
Macaronesia**



blueconnect-project.eu



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