



Press release

OceanCare: Generation change on a solid basis

Wädenswil, 30th November 2021: OceanCare is carrying out a strategically planned generational change: As of 1st January 2022, Fabienne McLellan will take over the management of the international marine conservation organisation. Sigrid Lüber, founder of OceanCare, will continue to contribute her experience from 33 years in marine conservation as President. The current co-managing director Vera Bürgi will take over responsibility for organisational communication.

Sigrid Lüber and Vera Bürgi, to date co-managing directors, have been preparing for this change since 2014 with the aim of ensuring ongoing well-founded work in marine conservation in the long run, whilst also safeguarding the values that distinguish OceanCare.

Sigrid Lüber has consistently oriented OceanCare towards international processes for tackling the threats to the ocean at their basis. Early on, for example, she recognised the dangers of noise pollution for the oceans and made those driving international marine policy aware of this problem. This commitment yielded the UN Special Consultative Status, which OceanCare was granted in 2011. Using her negotiating skills and intuition for solution-oriented approaches, Lüber has developed a culture of dialogue that allows OceanCare to bring controversial issues onto the agendas of international fora. The founder's pioneering spirit has made OceanCare an organisation that knows how to deal with the challenges in marine conservation. Sigrid Lüber remains with OceanCare as President, taking on governance responsibility and continuing to ensure the quality of the organisation's work.

At Lüber's side since 2003 Vera Bürgi has helped to build up the organisation with her focus being on communication and fundraising. Since 2013, she has been responsible for finances as co-managing director and created structures within the organisation that make the its focus on conservation projects possible. She remains committed to the organisation and Bürgi will now feed her many years of expertise into organisational communication.

From 2022, Fabienne McLellan will take over the operational and strategic management. Over recent years, she acted as co-director of international relations at OceanCare. Together with her team, she is involved in negotiations for a UN treaty on the high seas and develops strategies for international cooperation to curb transboundary marine pollution, including noise and plastic. McLellan is also working for the reorientation of conventions increasingly towards marine conservation, including for example, the work of the International Whaling Commission, and is advocating for the strong implementation and enforcement of multilateral environmental agreements.

A dialogue-based approach that promotes viable solutions is more important than ever. The rush for marine resources is increasing as the "blue economy" is being driven forward. For example, the necessary energy transition is generating increased demand for minerals, which are also to be mined in the deep sea. A contradiction in terms because a healthy ocean is our greatest ally in counteracting climate change.

Sigrid Lüber sees Fabienne McLellan as her ideal successor because she has all the necessary skills to tackle the challenges ahead. I have full confidence in her. I know my life's work is in good hands. She has seamlessly taken over the work in the international committees and has shown great skill both professionally and personally. She is solution-oriented, well versed in policy work and embodies leadership qualities that are important for OceanCare," Lüber is pleased to say.

"It is fascinating to see the dedication that Fabienne McLellan invests in OceanCare's aims," Vera Bürgi confirms. "She acts with perseverance and precision for preserving life in the ocean. What is more, her

amiable nature makes working together – within the team and beyond – a pleasure. The generational change we are now making ensures the continuity of how OceanCare has been developed over three decades.”

Fabienne McLellan is bursting with motivation for seizing her new challenge: “OceanCare’s solidly built foundation, the unique positioning and reputation established by Sigrid Lüber and Vera Bürgi, and a team of expert and dedicated professionals allow me to continue the urgent ocean conservation action determinedly and dynamically. I will carefully nurture this foundation and develop the organisation further according to the needs of the times.”

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About OceanCare

OceanCare is a Swiss non-profit organisation. It was founded in 1989 and has a strong commitment to realistic and cooperative initiatives. The organisation works at national and international level in the areas of marine pollution, environmental changes, fisheries, whaling, sealing, captivity of marine mammals and public education. OceanCare holds Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC) and is a partner of the General Fisheries Commission for the Mediterranean (GFCM), the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), and the UNEP/CMS Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans in the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), as well as UNEP/MAP. OceanCare has also been accredited to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), which is the governing body of UNEP and is part of the Sciences and Technology Major Group, and a member of the UNEP Global Partnership on Marine Litter. www.oceancare.org

Annex



Fabienne McLellan, Managing Director OceanCare (*from 1 January 2022*)