

# A CUIDAR DO OCEANO PELO PLANETA



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## ON THE UNDERTAKING SIGNED

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The mission of the **Oceano Azul Foundation** is to contribute to a productive and healthy ocean and for this reason it believes that it is necessary to significantly change the paradigm of commercial exploitation of the sea. Given the severe ecological crisis affecting the ocean, it is crucial today to be able to disassociate growth in the marine economy from deterioration of the marine environment and of coastal zones. In this context, there is an urgent need to develop a new blue economy that can accelerate this disassociation and create wealth from the ocean without harming it, or can even contribute to its decarbonisation, through a reduction in the greenhouse gases that are absorbed by the ocean.

The **Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation** has been working for more than five years on raising awareness among companies and environmental NGOs about the natural capital and economic value of the ocean and about the need to strengthen their capacity to adopt and/or promote more sustainable management policies for the marine environment. In January 2018, it launched the Gulbenkian Sustainability Programme with the aim of accelerating the transition to more sustainable patterns of production and consumption, in which the ocean will continue to be an area of focus. In this context, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation seeks to stimulate innovation in the blue economy, exploring more sustainable business models that promote the bioeconomy and the circular economy, and also seeks to increase the influence of existing knowledge related to the sea on the definition of public policies.

In this context, the two foundations decided to join forces to promote of the value of the sea, its natural capital and its environmental, economic and social sustainability.

This undertaking is also an unmistakable sign, from the two institutions, of the importance of collaboration between foundations in order to implement initiatives that promote changes in society and the planet.

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## ON THE BLUE BIO VALUE PROGRAMME

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In the context of the cooperation undertaking that we are signing today, the foundations undertake to invest 1 million euros over the next three years in the implementation of the *Blue Bio Value* programme.

*Blue Bio Value* is the first joint initiative between the Oceano Azul Foundation and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and embodies the vision of both foundations with regard to the sustainability of the sea.

The initiative aims to accelerate the evolution of the Portuguese economy in the areas of bio-resources and marine biotechnology, sectors in which Portugal, through the vast biodiversity of its sea and the number of marine research centres, truly benefits from competitive advantages that are unique at both European and international levels.

Blue Bio Value is a business acceleration programme that aims to attract projects and ideas that can be transformed into business opportunities in the marine bio-resources value chain, including biotechnology, with a view to the development of sustainable products or services that can contribute to a healthier use of the ocean.

Marine bio-resource industries, which are innovative industries with significant levels of scientific knowledge, generate high added value, resulting in products, processes and services with application in a number of industries, including the pharmaceutical, nutraceutical and food industries, cosmetics, textiles and biofuels, among others.

Practical examples of biomaterials include prostheses made from shrimp exoskeletons, food supplements based on fish bones, cosmetics that use seaweed, or sustainable paints for ships.

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In the last 10 years, the growth rate of the marine biotechnology sector in Europe has been consistently above 5%, with an increasing number of start-ups. However, its development has not yet reached the levels that can be found in Canada or the United States.

Forecasts suggest that this sector will represent, globally, more than 6 billion euros by 2025, making it an area of major economic significance in coming decades. If it starts to specialise in this sector, Portugal has ideal conditions to become a leader in this market at a European level. Because it is a country with the raw materials, with a richer marine biodiversity than any other country in Europe, it has the natural resources necessary to develop this sector. It also has respected marine research centres and, in recent years, has prepared human resources with the scientific knowledge necessary to develop an innovative industry, based on both biotechnology and the sea's own biological resources.

In this context, the Oceano Azul Foundation and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation have joined forces to attract to the country, through *Blue Bio Value*, international entrepreneurs operating in these sectors, to help ensure that Portugal becomes a major international player in the development of the marine bioeconomy, promoting healthier use of the ocean.

Applications for this acceleration programme, which will have other Portuguese and international partners, are expected to open in June 2018.

For further information on *Blue Bio Value*, contact by email: [info@bluebiovalue.pt](mailto:info@bluebiovalue.pt)