

A NATIONAL AQUARIUM FOR THE SOLENT?

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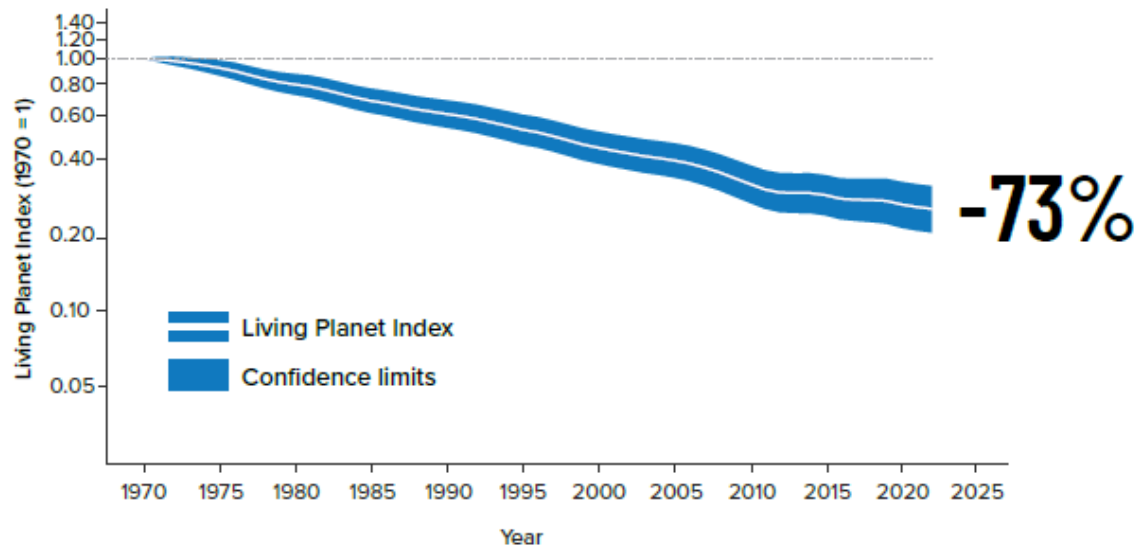
**National
Oceanography
Centre**



- Marine biologist (30+ years)
- Deep-sea ecology
 - Seamounts, vents, cold-water coral reefs
- Polar ecology
 - Biodiversity, connectivity
- Ocean management / policy
 - Polar, deep-sea fishing, BBNJ



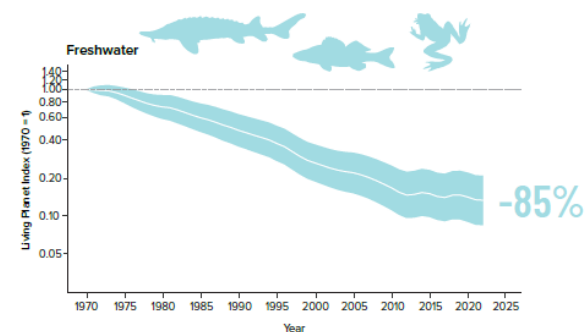
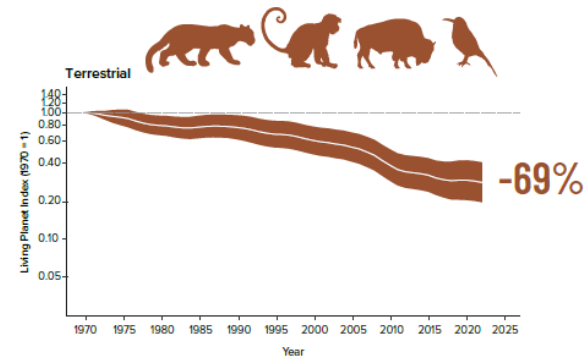
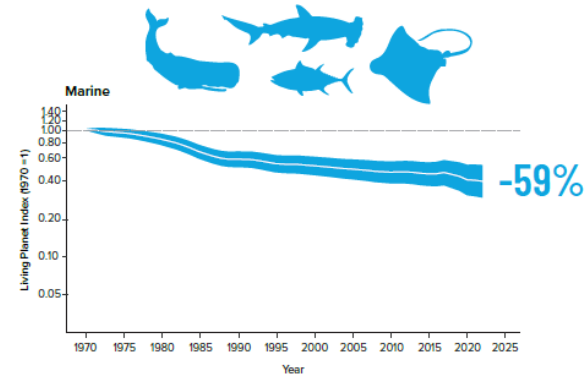
THE LIVING PLANET REPORT 2026



The Living Planet Index monitors 35,803 populations of 5,790 species of vertebrates and has measured a 73% decline since 1970.

Marine ecosystems seem less vulnerable or more resilient to human impacts; freshwaters are more vulnerable or less resilient.

WWF (2026) Living Planet Report 2026: The Science of Hope. WWF, Gland, Switzerland, 120pp

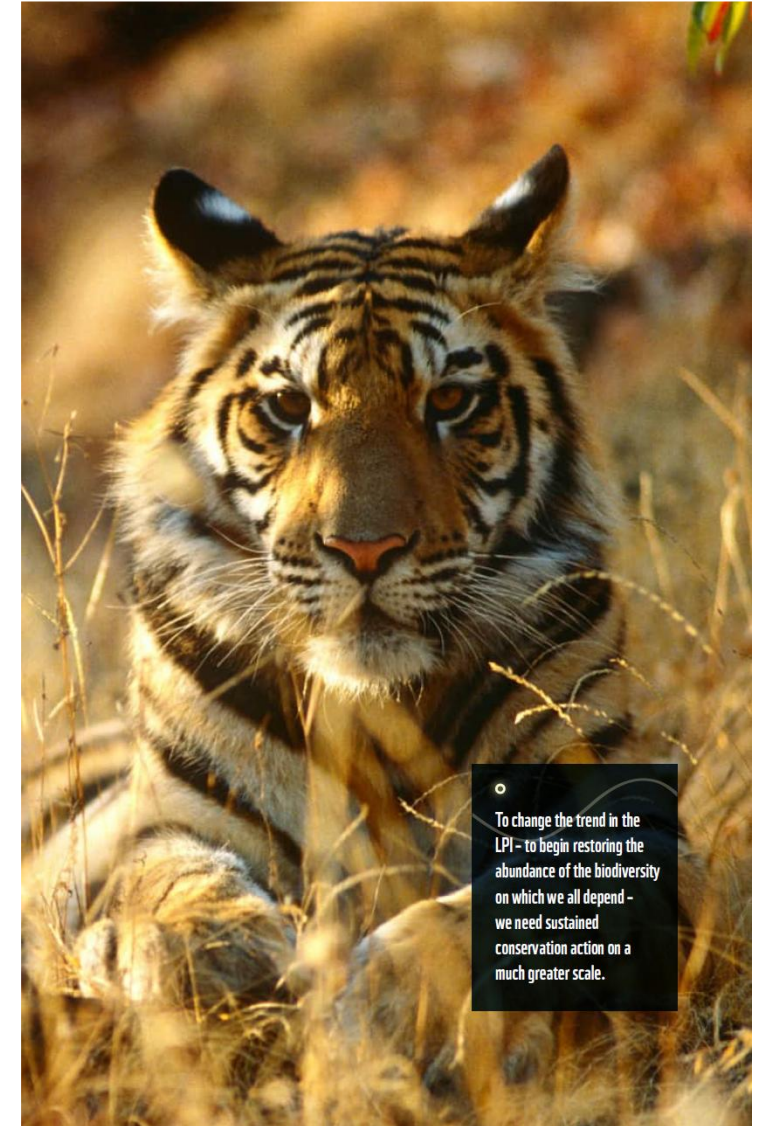


WHY THE LIVING PLANET REPORT 2026 IS A MESSAGE OF HOPE

- In 2010 there were 3,200 tigers and it appeared they were sliding into extinction. By 2025 there were 5,700 tigers (increase of 70%)
- Atlantic and Pacific blue fin tuna, Southern African elephants, green turtle, all stories of recovery and a shift out of threatened with extinction status
- All these projects have something in common
 - Clear goal
 - Adaptive to lessons learned
 - Resilience to keep going
- Zoos and aquaria are playing key roles in nature recovery
 - Education and inspiration
 - Ex-situ breeding programmes
 - Wildlife health
 - A focus for in-situ conservation programmes and capacity building



Charco palma pupfish
extinct in the wild, conserved
ex-situ at London Zoo/ZSL



To change the trend in the LPI - to begin restoring the abundance of the biodiversity on which we all depend - we need sustained conservation action on a much greater scale.

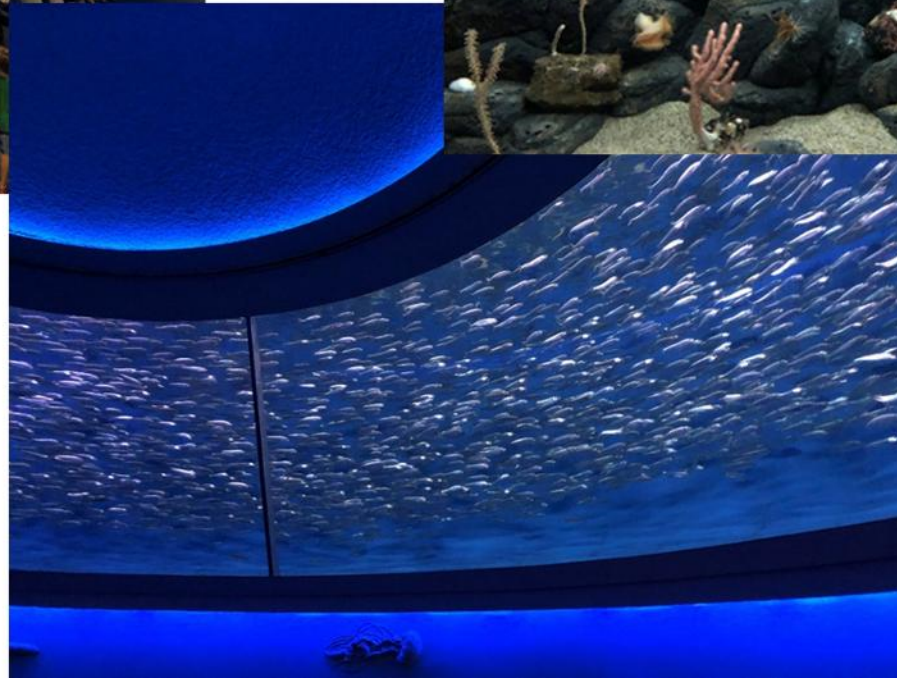


THE AMBITION OF A WORLD-CLASS AQUARIUM

- Must be an awe-inspiring attraction
- Integrated conservation and education programme
- Common theme / narrative throughout
- Immersive / interactive experiences
- Sustainable
- High-quality architecture, landmark development



LARGE-SCALE TANKS RECREATING HABITATS AND CREATING INSPIRATION



IMMERSIVE DIGITAL EXPERIENCES (E.G. VAN GOGH LIVE)



AQUARIA MUST HAVE A LOCAL CONNECTION OR SENSE OF SPACE

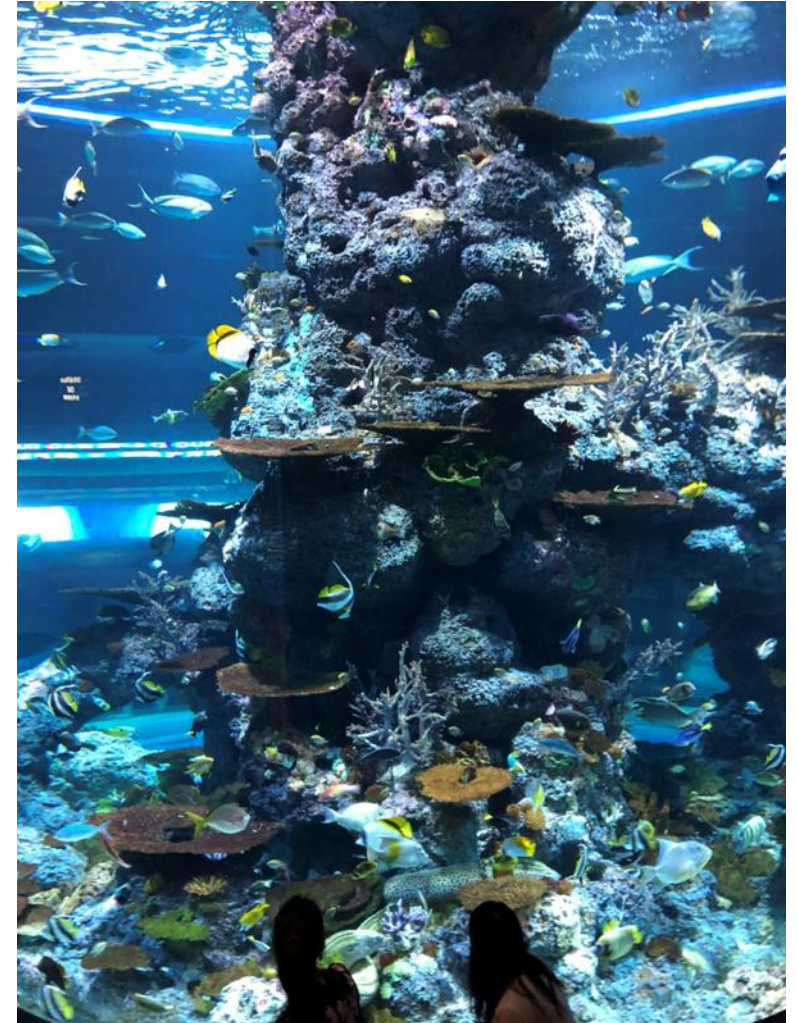
- It is important aquaria have a connection to place
- This may be historical or it may be that is show cases local fauna and flora
- Monterey Bay Aquarium is the classic case
 - Based around the old sardine factories made famous in literature (Cannery Row)
 - Doc Ricketts laboratory is just down the road
 - Displays the local fauna from shallow and deep waters in spectacular aquaria



Monterey Bay Aquarium (Rhinopias)

THE SIZE OF AN AQUARIUM DEPENDS ON FOOTFALL

Country	Aquarium	Visitors
China	Chimelong Ocean Kingdom, Zhuhai	12,520,000 (2023)
USA	Living Seas	6,300,000 (2009)
USA	Sea World Orlando	5,000,000 (2009)
USA	Sea World San Diego	4,000,000 (2009)
China	Ocean Park, Hong Kong	3,388,000 (2009)
Japan	Okinawa Churaumi Aquarium	3,023,328 (2009)
Japan	Osaka Aquarium Kaiyukan	2,495,277 (2009)
Japan	Port of Nagoya Public Aquarium	2,122,709 (2009)
Singapore	S.E.A. Aquarium	2,000,000 (2024)
Japan	Yokohama Hakkeijima Sea Paradise	1,789,309 (2009)
USA	John G Shedd Aquarium	1,710,000 (2009)
USA	Monterey Bay Aquarium	1,900,000 (2023)



Southampton Cruise Terminal: 3 million passengers a year

THE VISION: OCEAN SPACE

- An extraordinary journey from chalk streams to the deepest parts of the ocean
- Through awe-inspiring habitats, immersive storytelling, and cutting-edge technology, guests will discover the beauty, mystery, and fragility of aquatic ecosystems
- This is a space where marine life comes vividly to life, revealing the profound connection between people and the planet's water systems.
- A national and international centre for aquatic education, research, and advocacy.
- Showcasing the collections and work of the National Oceanography Centre and local universities
- Engages visitors of all ages with critical issues like climate change, food security, health, and conservation
- Interactive exhibits, digital media, and hands-on learning, guests will explore the evolution of aquatic exploration — from ancient voyages to robotic innovation — and be inspired to become informed, responsible stewards of our blue planet.



FROM HAMPSHIRE'S CHALK STREAMS TO DEEP-SEA ECOSYSTEMS EXPLORED WITH CUTTING EDGE TECHNOLOGY

- 85% of the world's chalk streams are in England with a concentration in Hampshire
- Coastal ecosystems of the Solent (e.g. salt marshes; oyster beds)
- Heritage – submarine archaeology
- From The Channel to the Deep Sea
- Updated exhibits based on the latest research
- World-leading marine science technology (Boaty McBoat Face!)



University of Winchester



NEW CENTRE FOR MARINE BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH AND TRAINING

- The Discovery Collection is one of the most important collections of deep-sea specimens in the world
- Modern new facility for housing specimens (temperature controlled, low oxygen)
- Associated laboratories for sorting, curation, taxonomy, digitisation
- State of the art equipment such as micro-CT and 3D cameras
- Major digital capability for cybertaxonomy
- UK digital centre for tracking and tracing samples under the new Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement
- Teaching with the universities
- Capacity development programme for training taxonomists / biodiversity scientists globally
- Collection integrated with the aquarium and forming a permanent exhibition



Tammy Horton, the Head of the Discovery Collection holds up a jar of crustaceans

SOUTHAMPTON AS A HOST FOR OCEAN SPACE

- Aligns with the Renaissance vision for investment in sustainable growth for a thriving city
- Local population of 650,000
- 6.9M tourist day trips a year; leading retail centre in the south
- Associated development opportunities:
 - Hotels
 - Retail and dining
 - Heritage and cultural enhancement
 - Education and events (conference) space
 - Observation deck / viewing tower
 - Art, exhibitions, museum



Southampton City Council

Benefits in the economy of the city/region

Employment

Leisure

Local education and training



WHAT WE NEED

- A Location / Land
- Funding to develop the business case; estimating footfall and income are critical in designing an aquarium that is financially sustainable
- Shared vision with the city, investors, Universities and the National Oceanography Centre
- Design and architecture



SUMMARY

**A world-class aquarium
could form a central piece
in the redevelopment of
parts of the city centre of
Southampton**

**The Ocean Space concept;
embedded in the local
environment, a journey
from Hampshire's chalk
streams to the deep ocean**

**Southampton has the
footfall to support a major
aquarium. Transport links
would be critical. World
centre for aquatic
biodiversity research and
conservation. Enormous
benefits for the city in
terms of income, business,
education and leisure**



**THANK YOU FOR
LISTENING!**

ANY QUESTIONS?



National
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