



FAQs PROJECT AWARE:

Protecting Our Ocean Planet – One Dive at a Time

Q: WHY THE OVERHAUL OF THE LONG-TIME ORGANIZATION AND THE NEW MISSION?

A: Ever since Project AWARE first hit the streets (and the dive sites) in 1989, it has evolved with the ever growing and changing needs of conservation. Now more than ever, it's clear that divers can play a much greater role in influencing measurable change for ocean protection. To be effective, we are focusing on ocean issues where divers are uniquely positioned to contribute the underwater perspective – completing a 360-degree view of marine issues – from land into the depths of the ocean.

Q: WHY HAVE YOU CREATED A NEW LOGO, LOOK AND FEEL?

A: Project AWARE has changed from top to bottom, and it's a perfect time to reflect these changes, encompass the new vision for the future and honor the Foundation's unique scuba diving heritage. The new logo is the third evolution since PADI first created the Project AWARE philosophy in 1989. Additionally, we wanted to distinguish ourselves as a unique organization of divers with a pinpointed focus on the ocean's future. We hope that the new logo expresses divers' unique connection with the ocean, its creatures and the passion to protect it.

Q: PROJECT AWARE HAS NARROWED ITS FOCUS FOR OCEAN PROTECTION. WHY HAVE YOU FOCUSED ON THESE TWO ISSUES – SPECIES DECLINE AND MARINE DEBRIS – IN PARTICULAR?

A: With so many issues facing our ocean planet, it's unrealistic to think one group or organization can meaningfully address them all. Narrowing our focus enables us to address issues that impact divers directly – changes in species abundance and ocean debris. Divers are qualified to describe the reality of these issues underwater, take actions beyond land, and foster a sense of urgency for global ocean protection.

Q: HOW WILL DIVERS HELP PROTECT SHARKS? HOW HAS THE FOCUS ON SHARKS CHANGED IN RECENT YEARS?

A: Sharks have a serious image problem – one that Project AWARE continues to battle. At the policy level, economics play a powerful role in shark conservation and it's time that the collective voice of millions of divers around the world is heard loud and clear. It's critical that we emphasize the role that diving and tourism plays in a nation's economic wellbeing. We'll continue to ensure scientific data and conservation recommendations are not ignored when leaders make decisions that impact shark populations.

Q: WHAT'S SO DIFFERENT ABOUT THE APPROACH TO MARINE DEBRIS NOW, VERSUS THE CLEANUP EFFORTS FROM YEARS PAST?

A: Marine debris – or trash in our ocean – has risen to the top of the marine policy agenda. Scientists, resource managers and governments increasingly recognize it as one of the most serious ocean issues of our time. Traditional cleanups play an important role but don't address the problem at its source. Collecting data about the debris found underwater is essential to our future work together and critical to filling current data gaps that exist. The marine debris community recognizes AWARE divers for their remarkable ability to provide the world with the global underwater perspective. Now, we're igniting Dive Against Debris, a comprehensive, year-round data collection program. It's the only effort of its kind to date, focused on prevention of debris underwater.

Photos: Greenpeace, Amos Nachoum

Visit our website to learn more about what you can do:

PROJECTAWARE.ORG





FAQs (continued)

Q: HOW DOES A BIGGER FOCUS ON OCEAN ADVOCACY FUEL POLICY AND MANAGEMENT CHANGE?

A: There is no limit to what divers can accomplish for conservation. However, progressive ocean policy and management also dramatically influences lasting change on the ground. This is why the relaunch of Project AWARE aims to close the loop between the powerful local actions divers take with policy and management changes – connecting the dots for our ocean future.

Q: WHAT LED TO THE NEW AWARE MOVEMENT AND ONLINE COMMUNITY PLATFORM, MY OCEAN?

A: Project AWARE's powerful movement for ocean protection starts with you. And our interconnected web of shared experience online will power our offline results. The new online community, *My Ocean* [at ProjectAWARE.org], enables us to collaborate globally within one cohesive online platform – connecting with one other, managing environmental events, recording and submitting local data, documenting our dives with photos videos and more. Together we amplify our collective efforts, shining a light on our community actions and strengthening our voice for the ocean.

Q: PROJECT AWARE HAS REFERRED TO “AWARE LEADERS”. WHAT’S AN AWARE LEADER?

A: AWARE leaders are everyday ocean heroes dedicated to protecting our ocean. They're not just sitting back, hoping others will do the work. They're rethinking what's possible for ocean protection and diving in. Whether it's engaging as an underwater data collection expert, organizing policy rallies and petition campaigns or aligning business goals with ocean protection initiatives, the Foundation recognizes leaders and supports their efforts.

Q: PADI STARTED THE AWARE PHILOSOPHY IN 1989. WHAT IS AWARE'S CURRENT RELATIONSHIP WITH PADI?

A: PADI established Project AWARE Foundation, and it continues to support the organization in-kind and operationally. The Foundation is a separate registered nonprofit organization which raises its own funds and defines its mission and goals. Our partnership with PADI is extremely important for the network of professionals around the world who power global conservation activities and programs. The in-kind donations, such as office space, advertising and the capacity to raise funds through PADI's certification card processing system are also critical.

The Foundation could not achieve its goals without PADI and the work of its dedicated dive leaders and volunteers. For more information, AWARE's financial records and details of the donated services can be seen in the online annual reports at www.projectaware.org

Q: PROJECT AWARE IS A NONPROFIT ENTITY THAT NEEDS FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO SURVIVE. WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO FINANCIALLY SUPPORT OCEAN PROTECTION THROUGH AWARE?

A: You can place ocean protection priorities at the top of your list. Make a donation in addition to your PADI certification or replacement card-processing fee, or donate to the movement directly at projectaware.org. You may also conduct fundraisers or fundraising challenges as part of your conservation activities and community initiatives. Thank you for your support!

Photo: Klaus Stiefel

Visit our website to learn more about what you can do:

PROJECTAWARE.ORG

