



## **Dingle Oceanworld Aquarium: Conservation Policy**

Since opening in 1996, Oceanworld Aquarium has been committed to the protection of marine biodiversity through meaningful action, collaboration, and education. As one of Ireland's leading aquariums, we aim to inspire a deeper connection to the ocean while actively supporting species recovery, habitat conservation, and sustainable practice.

***Our core objectives are*** - to protect marine species and ecosystems, support sustainable practices, and promote responsible stewardship of the ocean through the following key areas of conservation action:

### **1. Species Preservation, Rescue, Rehabilitation, and Research**

- Maintain and expand breeding and rehabilitation programmes for native and endangered marine species, contributing to population recovery efforts – including natterjack toad rearing, sea turtle rehabilitation, and the European lobster hatchery.
- Collaborate with research institutions to monitor the health of marine populations and their habitats.
- Participate in the European Endangered Species Programmes (EEP) for Humboldt and gentoo penguins, as well as Asian short-claw otters, contributing to structured breeding plans that promote genetic diversity and long-term population viability for endangered wildlife.

### **2. Education and Public Awareness**

- Conservation education is central to our mission. We will continue to implement educational programmes highlighting marine conservation topics such as habitat loss, pollution, and the importance of biodiversity, across all audience types and learning styles.
- Continuously develop school outreach and community initiatives that foster empathy, care, and action through hands-on learning experiences.
- Raise awareness about local marine wildlife and encourage the reporting strandings or distressed animals.

### **3. Sustainable Operations**

- Continuously improve our environmental footprint, through prioritisation of eco-friendly and sustainable practices throughout all avenues in the aquarium, including waste reduction initiatives, energy-efficient systems and sustainable sourcing of food and materials.
- Be an example to other businesses and the community about sustainable practices

#### **4. Collaboration and Community Engagement**

- Partner with local organisations, conservation groups, and academic partners to strengthen community efforts and awareness of marine conservation.
- Build conservation literacy and encourage participation in citizen science projects among visitors of all ages and abilities, through inclusive interpretation and engagement during activities like beach cleans.

#### **5. Habitat Restoration and Protection**

- Work towards creating and supporting local and regional marine conservation projects that focus on the restoration of critical habitats on the Dingle Peninsula and surrounding areas.
- Foster community involvement in clean-up events and awareness campaigns to help protect the health of local beaches and marine environments.

### **Commitment**

This policy guides our conservation priorities and reflects our ongoing dedication to protecting marine life and habitats. By combining direct action, public engagement, and sustainable practices, Dingle Oceanworld Aquarium is proud to contribute meaningfully to marine conservation.