

# Inter-American Foundation

*Helping Communities Thrive*

*"The environment is everything that isn't me". – Albert Einstein*



*Pacific Ocean, Costa Rica*

## **Responsible Use of the Oceans**

Three-quarters of the Earth are covered by oceans, an immense ecosystem stretching from every coast to the deepest points on the planet's crust. It should come as no surprise that the entire world is affected by the state of these bodies. Oceans affect weather patterns, produce oxygen, capture carbon dioxide and are indispensable links in every food chain. Hundreds of millions make their living on the ocean from fishing, sailing, tourism and research. More than 3.5 billion people depend on the seas as a source of food.

World Ocean's Day, June 8, is an occasion to reflect on their importance and the threat posed to these by chemical runoff, solid waste, overfishing, invasive species and the destruction of habitats such as mangroves, coral reefs and sea beds. IAF's first grant, in 1971, was awarded to a cooperative of 43 fishermen from Chimbote Peru. At the time, overfishing and erratic conservation efforts by the government had caused the collapse of anchovy stocks, the most important sea product for this area, leading to the bankruptcy of many fishing businesses. IAF's support helped these Peruvians and their families to endure the anchovy downturn and transition to other catches. Over the years, many other coastal communities have approached the IAF for support to overcome obstacles to dignified livelihoods from the ocean and to prevent future degradation of these waters.

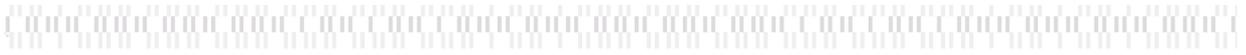
## Challenging the King of the Reef

The flamboyant lionfish, or *pterois volitans*, is a nocturnal hunter that seems to devour everything in its path. Native to the Indo-Pacific, the lionfish is fairly new to the Caribbean, where it has no natural predators, reproduces at the rate of 30,000 eggs every four days and gorges on up to 30 fry and fingerling an hour. Snappers, lobsters and other local species hardly stand a chance against this ravenous horde, which puts the ecology of reefs at risk. [Read More.](#)



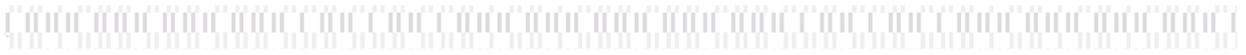
## Whale-Watching as a Community Resource

Organización para la Conservación de Cetáceos used its IAF grant to provide training and technical assistance for Uruguayan communities starting businesses that offer opportunities for visitors to observe the Southern right whales as they make their journey to feeding grounds in the freezing waters of the Antarctic. Other workshops and activities educated school children on topics of conservation, marine ecosystems, water management, waste recycling and renewable energy technology.



## Global Environment Facility – GEF 25th anniversary!

On June 6th, IAF grantee partner, Guakía Ambiente, will represent the Civil Society Network of GEF, presenting a model of micro hydroelectric power being used in Hispaniola. [Check video](#)



## Support our Grantee Partners

*Together, let's help communities thrive*



INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION

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