

soilash



Reversing The Tide:

STOPPING PLASTICS FROM DESTROYING THE OCEAN



Walk along any river bank or ocean beach and it's almost inevitable—

you will find a plastic bag blowing in the wind, an empty soda bottle right at water's edge or a foam cup or plastic fork from someone's picnic buried in the sand. We all see it—plastic debris fouling the ocean vistas we so enjoy.

Plastic debris devastates waters all over the world—causing injury and death to turtles, seals, seabirds and other wildlife, contaminating fish, damaging marine habitats and, quite possibly, affecting human health. It is high time to reverse this tide, and Ocean Conservancy is doing just that.

Ocean trash: far from a new issue for Ocean Conservancy

Ocean Conservancy has “talked trash” for years. Each fall since 1986, we've led the world's largest marine debris recovery efforts through our International Coastal Cleanups. Millions of volunteers have removed tons of trash from waterways and coastlines in more than 150 countries and throughout the United States and its territories.

But we've long known trash removal does not solve the ocean pollution problem. And for a number of years, we've conferred with experts, engaged renowned scientists and appealed to industry to help us develop a solution.

Four years ago, Ocean Conservancy commissioned a group of leading scientists with the National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS) at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Their scientific mandate was to examine the best available data from around the world about plastics in the ocean and quantify how much there is, where it comes from, what happens to it, and how it impacts fish and wildlife. The scientists' findings will be published in peer-reviewed scientific literature in 2015.

Over the past year, Ocean Conservancy also conducted its own research on the supply chain of plastics. Our goal was to craft a solution that will keep plastics from getting into the ocean in the first place

The situation is far from hopeless.

There are many ways to stem the tide of plastics into the ocean. All have value and they work:

- Bans on plastic bags: Countries like Bangladesh and cities like Portland, Ore., and Mexico City have passed laws banning them, and the first statewide ban recently passed in California.
- Innovative redesign of products and packaging: Using alternative materials and pressuring manufacturers to rethink their plastic footprints are increasing.
- Consumer awareness: Public-facing campaigns urge consumers to shed “disposable mentalities,” reduce consumption and reuse containers like water bottles, mugs and grocery bags.

And we need other solutions as well

While these efforts, as well as recycling products that can be used again, definitely help, we need an intervention, global in scope, to dramatically reduce the flow of plastics into the ocean.

Consider the facts:

- Ocean plastics are greatest in rapidly developing countries where waste collection is weak or absent.
- Without intervention, within 25 years the ocean will contain approximately one pound of plastic for every three pounds of fish.
- Only a small percentage of ocean plastics rest at the surface of the “gyres.”
- Evidence suggests that, over time, the plastic breaks into tiny pieces often eaten by marine mammals and fish that mistake them for food.
- Research confirms that plastics are present in more than 200 species of fish. This could have implications for animals that ingest them and for people, too.

So what is Ocean Conservancy doing about plastic pollution?

Global plastics consumption is predicted to explode to an estimated 400 million tons per year by 2025. This consumption will largely take place in rapidly industrializing countries, which also have some of the lowest waste collection rates on the planet. Without effective waste collection, an avalanche of plastic debris will enter the ocean. If we focus our efforts on managing waste in those places where plastic pollution is greatest, we can reduce ocean plastic inputs.

While plastic products have done much for the world—think medical equipment, industrial machinery, automobiles, construction—plastics producers and consumer products companies have to

Continued on page 2

INSIDE



3 **Champions for Sea Change**
We are grateful for ocean stewards who support our work with annual gifts of \$1,000 and above.



4 **A Look Back**
Reflecting on last year's achievements.



6 **Bequests for the Ocean**
We honor in memoriam supporters whose foresight and generosity create an ocean legacy for future generations.



8 **Financial Summary**
An overview of Ocean Conservancy's revenues and expenses.



ANDREAS MERKL
Chief Executive Officer



DAVID C. ALDRICH
Board Chair

In 2014 we celebrated a number of terrific successes—for the ocean and for Ocean Conservancy. None of them would have been possible without the tremendous support from members like you who literally make our work happen through your generosity and commitment.

From the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of Maine to the Bering Strait, fishery and ocean management practices are more effective, scientific, and well-implemented because of Ocean Conservancy and our partners in the regions. We hope you share our pride in these accomplishments.

In the center section, you will read about our victories in U.S. waters—which have occurred amidst ongoing attempts in Congress to weaken our national fisheries laws. The California coast is teeming with wildlife—we have seen wonderful recoveries, such as the return of the Northern Pacific blue whale to numbers higher than ever recorded.

But the work of Ocean Conservancy is more critical than ever, and we look forward to 2015 as we expand our work on U.S. waters and beyond. We hope you will stand with us as we work to shift fisheries management in the Pacific from a species-by-species model to one that incorporates the entire marine ecosystem. And we need

your continued support as we work with affected states to address increased acidity that threatens their shellfish industries and communities. Together, we will face the fifth anniversary of the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster in the spring, and we know that the work to restore the Gulf is far from over. We celebrated recently with the announcement of “blue water” projects to be funded to the tune of almost \$100 million, but we lamented the news in November that links oil from the spill to the decline of Kemp’s ridley sea turtles in Texas and Louisiana waters. And internationally, we have much to do in 2015. While we are heartened over the U.S. chairmanship of the Arctic Council—and the opportunity to make a real difference in protecting this threatened ecoregion, an avalanche of plastic trash is still flowing into the ocean. As you read in the cover story, we are launching a major global campaign to convince the consumer goods and plastics industry

to accept their responsibility to help solve the plastic pollution crisis. Overfishing remains a huge problem in the developing world, and we are now working with some of the best scientists around the globe to develop an entirely new approach. So we celebrate our achievements in 2014—as we plan to accomplish even more for the ocean in 2015. And we look forward to sharing our success every step of the way with you, our committed supporters.

Kind regards,

solash
SPRING 2015

ANDREAS MERKL
Chief Executive Officer

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Our Mission
Ocean Conservancy educates and empowers citizens to take action on behalf of the ocean. From the Arctic to the Gulf of Mexico to the halls of Congress, Ocean Conservancy brings people together to find solutions for our water planet. Informed by science, our work guides policy and engages people in protecting the ocean and its wildlife for future generations.

Ocean Conservancy
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Effective January 1, Ocean Conservancy’s Board of Directors appointed Janis Searles Jones as President of the organization. Andreas Merkl remains Chief Executive Officer. Over the past seven years, Janis has ably served Ocean Conservancy as Chief Counsel, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. In her expanded role, Janis oversees administration, communications and finance and jointly directs Ocean Conservancy’s programmatic efforts with Andreas, allowing him more time to focus on new program development, fundraising, and external relations.



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take responsibility for what plastics are doing to the ocean. Ocean Conservancy has developed a plan—and industries are getting on board. Through our Trash Free Seas Alliance®, we have signed up several global companies that agree we’re on the right track and have pledged to work with us. With industry, economists, waste experts, and other NGOs, we are developing a funding mechanism to establish sound waste management in countries that need it. Once implemented, these systems create the conditions that make it

possible for local communities to profitably gather, separate, sell and store plastic waste, thus reversing the tide of plastics entering the ocean—while advancing the health, economies and well-being of the communities served. We are convinced we are on to something big, bold and ambitious that can truly make a difference and help rid the ocean of plastic. We will keep you informed as this exciting project develops. And we hope we can count on your support as we go forward in 2015 and beyond to stem the tide of plastics in our ocean.

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Champions for Sea Change

JANUARY 1-DECEMBER 31, 2014

Ocean Conservancy values all of the dedicated members, volunteers and activists who believe in our mission and make our work possible. We want to thank all of our members for their generous financial support of our ocean conservation efforts.

Ocean Conservancy is especially grateful for our Champions for Sea Change, an elite group of ocean stewards who support our work with annual gifts of \$1,000 or more.

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Ensured Gulf recovery is on track—helped to secure dollars for marine restoration and win passage of new measures to boost red snapper fishery

Since the 2010 oil disaster in the Gulf of Mexico, we've maintained a steady drumbeat of pressure to keep BP accountable, despite their attempts to shirk responsibility. We have also fought for independent scientific evaluations as the basis for funding decisions made by restoration officials—ensuring that projects to restore the Gulf are chosen based on merit, not on politics. And we have advocated for funding to support blue water restoration priorities that complement recovery of the Gulf's coastal habitats. As a result of our collective efforts with partners, Gulf states were awarded funding to protect dolphins and manatees, track the recovery of key fish species, and map the seafloor to inform sustainable fishing practices. Other advocacy efforts yielded another important win for the region with Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council approving new measures for managing recreational fishing that will help with the continued recovery of red snapper.



© SARA THOMAS

Defended the nation's fisheries law so it continues to work for healthy oceans and higher economic returns for coastal communities

For the past two decades, Ocean Conservancy has worked to defend and strengthen the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) to rebuild and protect U.S. fisheries. As a testament to the law's success, in 2014 the economic value of U.S. fisheries was higher than ever before. In an increasingly combative Congress, we've spearheaded efforts of the NGO community to thwart legislative proposals that would weaken the law and to create the relationships, political will, and coalitions to support future reforms.

Reflection

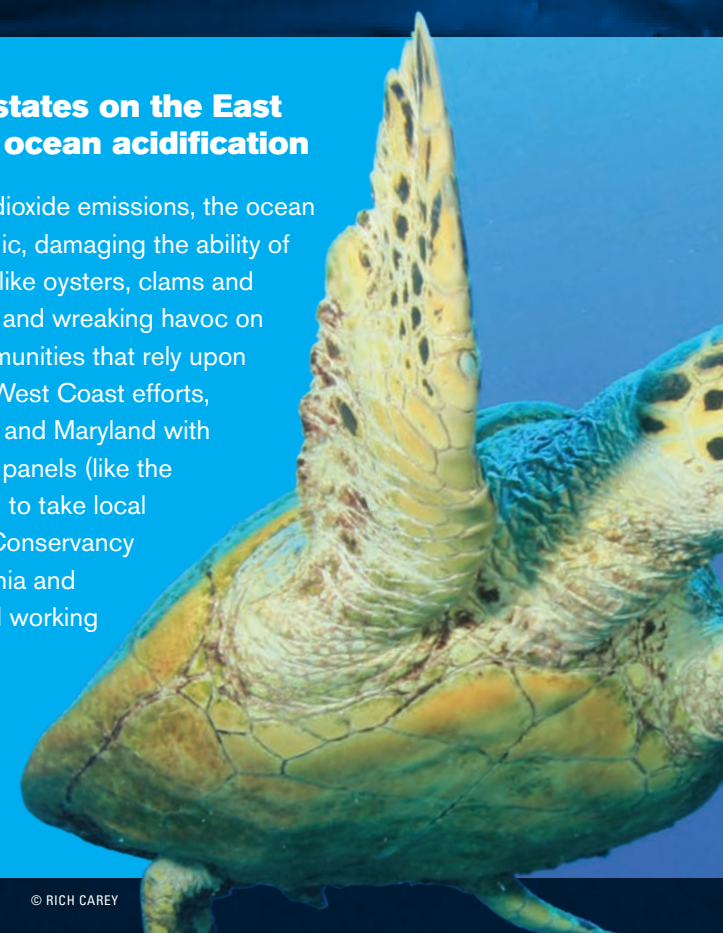
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**Thank you for all you
 a healthy ocean for
 Here are some examples
 this year—without you
 not have be**



Worked with states on the East Coast to fight ocean acidification

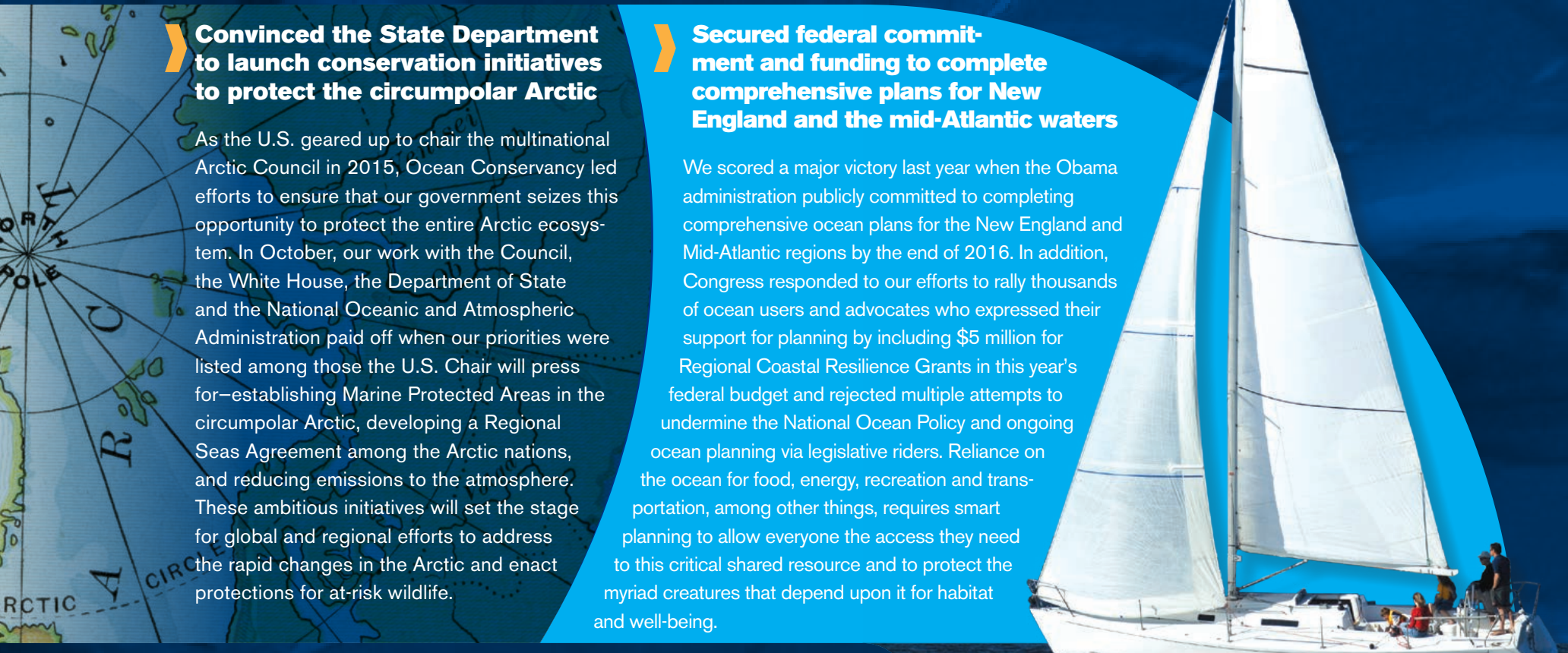
Because of carbon dioxide emissions, the ocean is becoming more acidic, damaging the ability of shell-forming organisms like oysters, clams and others to make their shells and wreaking havoc on shellfish industries and communities that rely upon them. Building on successful West Coast efforts, we celebrated victories in Maine and Maryland with passage of legislation to establish panels (like the successful one in Washington state) to take local action on ocean acidification. Ocean Conservancy is now talking with Massachusetts, Virginia and Florida to encourage similar measures and working with a coalition of Pacific states and British Columbia on a carbon pricing plan that could help reduce acidification.



© RICH CAREY

In June, we joined world leaders, scientists, and other ocean advocates at the Our Ocean Conference, hosted by U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry. Our CEO Andreas Merkl, spoke on a panel about ocean trash and Ocean Conservancy Senior Policy Advisor Dr. Sandra Whitehouse presented on smart ocean planning.

© KRDIJAK



Convinced the State Department to launch conservation initiatives to protect the circumpolar Arctic

As the U.S. geared up to chair the multinational Arctic Council in 2015, Ocean Conservancy led efforts to ensure that our government seizes this opportunity to protect the entire Arctic ecosystem. In October, our work with the Council, the White House, the Department of State and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration paid off when our priorities were listed among those the U.S. Chair will press for—establishing Marine Protected Areas in the circumpolar Arctic, developing a Regional Seas Agreement among the Arctic nations, and reducing emissions to the atmosphere. These ambitious initiatives will set the stage for global and regional efforts to address the rapid changes in the Arctic and enact protections for at-risk wildlife.

Secured federal commitment and funding to complete comprehensive plans for New England and the mid-Atlantic waters

We scored a major victory last year when the Obama administration publicly committed to completing comprehensive ocean plans for the New England and Mid-Atlantic regions by the end of 2016. In addition, Congress responded to our efforts to rally thousands of ocean users and advocates who expressed their support for planning by including \$5 million for Regional Coastal Resilience Grants in this year's federal budget and rejected multiple attempts to undermine the National Ocean Policy and ongoing ocean planning via legislative riders. Reliance on the ocean for food, energy, recreation and transportation, among other things, requires smart planning to allow everyone the access they need to this critical shared resource and to protect the myriad creatures that depend upon it for habitat and well-being.

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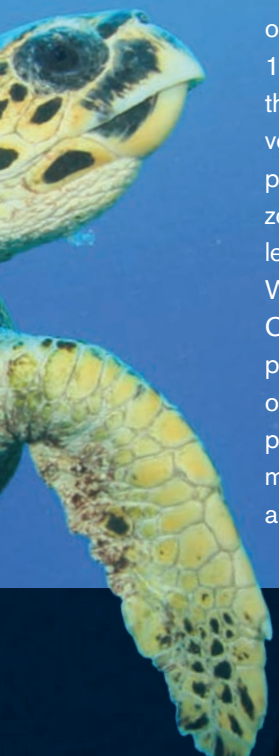
do to help us secure future generations. of what we accomplished your support, they would en possible.

Built the case to protect vital parts of the U.S. Arctic from oil and gas development

In 2014, Ocean Conservancy invested time and knowledge in identifying the places most critical to ocean health in the U.S. waters of the Chukchi and Beaufort seas, where potential oil and gas activity poses an enormous threat. We collaborated closely with partner organizations to pull together the best science on those marine ecosystems, and we sponsored an innovative project by the University of Alaska to document and map the infrastructure associated with oil and gas development and commercial transportation in the Arctic. We will be using this critical research to press the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to make informed, responsible decisions through BOEM's nationwide offshore oil and gas leasing program that will last from 2017 to 2022.



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Launched new efforts to protect beaches—and sea turtles—from harmful debris

In 2014, we expanded our sea turtle-marine debris monitoring program from one North Carolina area in 2013 to over 16 sea turtle nesting beaches throughout the southeastern U.S. In total, turtle volunteers removed more than 54,000 pieces of harmful debris from beach zones where loggerhead, green and leatherback sea turtles made their nests. We also launched the “Last Straw Challenge” which asked people to pledge to “Skip the Straw” when dining out. More than 25,000 people took the pledge, which will keep more than 5 million plastic straws out of our ocean and landfills in the coming year alone.

Helped establish the world's largest network of marine reserves and ensure lasting legacy for California's underwater parks

In September, with Ocean Conservancy's support through a coalition of environmental organizations, President Obama expanded the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument. This action places over 400,000 additional square miles of ocean under permanent protection from activities like offshore drilling, undersea mining, and commercial fishing. This expansion makes the Monument the largest protected area of any kind—on land or water. The expansion also permanently safeguarded over 130 undersea mountains—known hotspots of biodiversity and home to threatened and endangered species like green and hawksbill turtles, reef sharks, parrotfish, dolphins, and whales. In addition, in California, after spending a decade to make the nation's first statewide network of underwater parks a reality, we shifted gears to ensure a lasting legacy. Specifically, we worked with key state agencies to improve coordination of proposed coastal and ocean planning projects to ensure they do not interfere with the state's newly protected areas.

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Fay Woodruff
Wayne Wright
Stanley A. Wtulich
Patricia C. Wyse
Ernest Yagel
Mary Yazel-Muska
Dr. Lynne Yeannakis
Kent Yee
Gail Yenny
Susan York
Brian D. Young
Ina Young
David and Judi Zaches
Christine Zahm
Alan Zaslow
Scott Zelenski
Kendra Zell
Lilly Zhang
Arlene C. Zimmer
Jill Zimmerman
Roger L. Zinnecker
Anonymous (44)

Revenue and Expense Summary

For the Year Ended June 30, 2014

REVENUES

Contributions, grants and bequests	\$18,483,469
List rental income	31,928
Royalties and other	283,890
Total revenues	18,799,287

EXPENSES

Gulf of Mexico restoration	3,474,352
Ocean policy, science and governance	3,193,331
Trash-free seas	1,715,315
Marine wildlife and ecosystem protection	1,947,792
Communications and outreach	3,547,337
Total program expenses	13,878,127

Fundraising and membership development	3,436,996
General and administration	2,022,354
Total supporting service expenses	5,459,350

Total expenses **19,337,477**

GAINS AND LOSSES

Investment gains and interest income, net 2,204,625

Change in net assets **1,666,435**

Net assets, beginning of the year **21,942,708**

Net assets, end of the year **\$23,609,143**

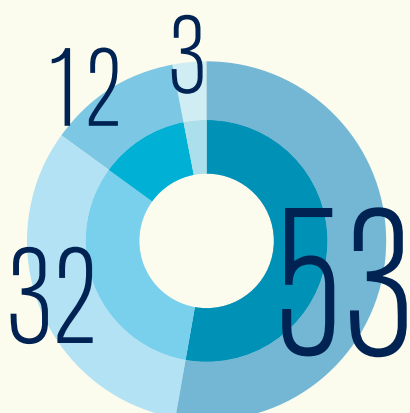
Financial Summary

Ocean Conservancy continues to deliver high impact programmatic results in an operationally efficient and cost-effective manner. This impact is made possible through the ongoing commitment, involvement and financial contributions of individuals, foundations and corporations who understand the critical importance of protecting and preserving the ocean.

Ocean Conservancy's fiscal year 2014 revenue totaled \$18.8 million. Investment income and gains totaled \$2.2 million and expenses totaled \$19.3 million. Eighty-two percent of expenses were for ocean conservation programmatic activities and administrative services, and 18 percent of expenses were for fundraising.

Ocean Conservancy meets all twenty standards for charitable organizations established by the Better Business Bureau's Wise Giving Alliance, and is proud of its reputation as a good steward of the resources entrusted to it by its supporters. The financial results depicted are derived from Ocean Conservancy's June 30, 2014 audited financial statements. Copies of the complete audited financial statements are available upon request or on the Ocean Conservancy website: www.oceanconservancy.org.

REVENUES



EXPENSES



Foundations **53%**
Individuals **32%**
Corporations **12%**
Other **3%**

Program and Administrative Services **82%**
Fundraising **18%**



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Annual Report

