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## PADI Launches Suite of Sustainability Initiatives to Unite Ocean Torchbearers This Earth Day

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 22 April 2023 -Rancho Santa Margarita, California, USA** - This Earth Day, PADI® (Professional Association of Diving Instructors®) is launching two powerful and complementing sustainability initiatives designed to empower tourists to travel with a purpose and create positive ocean change from abroad and from home.

Launching both their PADI Eco Center credentialing program and Save the Ocean Pledge this Earth Day, the world's largest purpose-driven diving organization is continuing to provide impactful ways for consumers to make both sustainable choices with tourism operators and lifestyle choices that benefit our shared blue planet.

"We are committed to protecting 30% of the ocean by 2030, which is fueled by creating like-minded partnerships, mobilizing our PADI Mission Hub Members, re-envisioning the way people travel and encouraging daily changes we all can make for a better – and healthier – planet," says Julie Andersen, Director of Global Brand for PADI Worldwide.

### Launching PADI Eco Centers

Last year, PADI's long-term partner, The Reef-World Foundation, released their study [Sustainability in a Recovering Travel World](#), which found 95% of divers are looking for sustainable operators when booking a trip, but often struggle to book with confidence.

In response to this, PADI, in collaboration with The Reef-World Foundation, has established [PADI Eco Centers](#), a prestigious credential awarded to those who exhibit a continued commitment to conservation efforts that support both the goals and objectives of the [PADI Blueprint for Ocean Action](#) and the global agenda to protect the ocean.

"The PADI Eco Center credentials designate our members who exemplify environmental stewardship in their operations," continues Andersen. "The ultimate goal is to connect ocean lovers with sustainability leaders in the dive industry through a rigorous verification that gives travelers the confidence that their tourism dollars are going to make a positive impact."

"PADI Eco Centers represents the strongest backbone for environmental action and protection ever to have been spearheaded within the global diving industry, and we're really proud to be partnering with PADI on this initiative," says Chloe Harvey, Executive Director of The Reef-World Foundation. "Operators achieving the designation will have had to really work for it by making lasting and impactful changes to their daily operations to protect the marine environment."

## **PADI Eco Center Criteria**

The robust PADI Eco Center verification process is performed in conjunction with PADI's partner, The Reef-World Foundation who leads the Green Fins initiative alongside UNEP. Three sets of criteria must be achieved by PADI Members to demonstrate an exemplary level of environmental best practice above and beneath the surface.

Requiring approximately at least 12 months to establish a level of performance eligible for PADI Eco Center recognition, the process integrates the core values of conservation and sustainability across the entire PADI network.

### **1. Take Part in AWARE's Adopt the Blue**

PADI Eco Centers must adopt and protect at least one local dive site through [PADI AWARE's Adopt the Blue program](#), which is the world's largest network of ocean conservation sites on the planet and a precursor to establishing protection in the area.

By adopting a local dive site, PADI Eco Centers are extending local conservation efforts to rid the ocean of marine debris, protecting vulnerable species, restoring coral reefs and tackling the effects of climate change.

"The goal of this program is to accelerate the creation of Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and empower both divers and dive centers to protect what they love," explains Andersen. "By doing this, PADI Eco Centers are also creating opportunities for divers and non-divers alike to engage in hands-on conservation activities in the form of citizen science and data collection, local and global policy advocacy, and educational opportunities for all ages."

### **2. Being a Green Fins Member**

PADI Eco Centers must also be [Green Fins Members](#) that meet a minimum standard in environmental performance, show progress towards achieving their action plan, and engage in the Community Forum to contribute to the conversation driving the future sustainability of the diving industry.

Operated by Reef-World, the Green Fins membership exists to protect the ocean's ecosystem and can be obtained through an [in-person assessment](#) with a local Green Fins team or online self-evaluation through the [digital membership](#). As a Green Fins Member, the dive center or resort commits to annual sustainability action plans, tailored to their own operations, which will incrementally lead them towards zero impact operations in line with by the Green Fins Code of Conduct – an internationally recognized best environmental practice for divers.

"As a neutral and nonprofit initiative with a proven track record of success, Green Fins is the perfect platform for businesses like PADI to lean on for this sustainability support. PADI has once again demonstrated their leadership within the industry by mainstreaming the Green Fins lessons and tools within their own business model," continues Harvey. "We'd like to thank the PADI team and network for

their forward-thinking approach and support in our mission to drive the industry towards a more ocean-conscious future.”

### **3. Achieving a Threshold of Conservation Achievement**

Finally, PADI Eco Centers must provide proof of their conservation actions within the Green Fins ranking system. This can range from teaching PADI AWARE courses to running citizen science initiatives or local beach clean-ups, with the dive center or resort sharing measurable progress in reducing their environmental footprint.

“Our PADI Eco Centers are not just advocating for positive ocean change, but they are actively leading the way forward to create a better future for our shared blue planet,” says Andersen.

## **Introducing PADI Eco Centers**

This Earth Day, PADI is proud to highlight a selection of the first of their kind, verified PADI Eco Centers around the globe.

“From the tropical islands of the Caribbean to the coastlines of Egypt, PADI Eco Centers in every corner of the globe are shining examples of dive industry leaders driving local initiatives for global results,” continues Andersen.

### **1. Red Sea Diving Safaris | Egypt**

With three villages along the southern Red Sea coastline in Marsa Alam, [Red Sea Diving Safaris](#) is one of Egypt’s leading environmental activists and pioneers of sustainable tourism development, offering scuba divers a chance to give back to local communities and coastlines.

### **2. Dive Ninja Expeditions | Mexico**

Marine research and conservation have always been at the heart of [Dive Ninja Expeditions](#), who is focused on bridging the gaps between tourism, science and conservation in Baja, Mexico. From supporting the local community through a scholarship program to conducting vital marine research, Dive Ninja Expeditions is creating opportunities for divers to connect, gain unique citizen science skill sets, and explore beneath the surface with a purpose.

### **3. Fifth Point Diving Centre | UK**

Believing that every adventure can protect the ocean, [Fifth Point Diving Centre](#) offers scuba divers the chance to book eco-adventure holidays as well as empowering the younger generations of scuba divers and professionals to take the leading role in saving the ocean.

### **4. Silent World | USA**

Making every dive course or adventure memorable by integrating conservation efforts and minimizing crowds, [Silent World](#) in Key Largo makes saving the ocean and exploring beneath the surface stress-free in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.

## **5. Excel Scuba | Spain**

Located in the Canary Islands, this [PADI Eco Center](#) is committed to protecting the beautiful coastlines and offering internship programs to the local community so they can enhance career opportunities and educate others about the importance of conservation.

## **6. Ceningan | Indonesia**

Recognized globally as one of the most eco-friendly dive resorts, [Ceningan Divers](#) have already won numerous industry sustainability awards and are ranked among the top three Green Fins operators in the world and operates in the Nusa Penida Marine Protected Area.

## **7. Sea Voice Divers | Malaysia**

[Sea Voice Divers](#) is a small but mighty PADI Eco Center in Malaysia determined to represent the voices of the ocean by keeping their dive groups small, running numerous conservation programs and encouraging all their customers and team members to obtain their AWARE Specialist certification.

## **8. Scuba Elite | Bonaire**

Committed to supporting their community, [Scuba Elite](#) supports educating and empowering both local youths and visitors in how to protect the coastline and coral reefs that are critical to the ecosystem through their PADI Reef Renewal Specialty Course.

## **9. Evolution | Philippines**

[Evolution](#) is a small owner-operated PADI Eco Center located on Malapascua Island who are committed to not only taking guests beneath the surface to explore some of the best dive sites in the world, but equally ensuring that every dive is a Dive Against Debris dive.

## **10. Scubacao Diving Adventures | Curacao**

Not only is [Scubacao Diving Adventures](#) a great place to learn to dive on holiday but offers divers the chance to give back to our shared blue planet through offering the PADI Reef Renewal Specialty and providing volunteer opportunities to protect the local coral reefs.

## **11. Oceans Unlimited, Costa Rica**

Located on the Pacific Coast side of Costa Rica, [Oceans Unlimited](#) is a PADI Eco Center that works alongside local non-profit Marine Conservation Costa Rica to run a coral restoration program in Quepos and provide both education and outreach opportunities to locals and visitors alike.

“Wherever you find them, PADI Eco Centers reliably ensure that the cost of their marine adventure goes hand in hand with the protection and restoration of natural resources and the well-being of local communities,” says Andersen.

To find a PADI Eco Center visit [padi.com/dive-shops/](https://padi.com/dive-shops/)

To become a PADI Eco Center visit [pros-blog.padi.com/padi-eco-center-launches-on-earth-day/](https://pros-blog.padi.com/padi-eco-center-launches-on-earth-day/)

### **Sign the Ocean Torchbearer Pledge**

To further encourage everyone on the planet to join PADI in creating positive ocean change, the organization has also launched the [Save the Ocean Pledge](#) this Earth Day.

Designed to unite Ocean Torchbearers who share a love for the blue and a desire to protect it for generations to come, the pledge is a commitment of five actions to take regardless of where in the world you are exploring.

“Our conservation mission is driven by people taking unified conservation actions at a local level,” explains Andersen. “By taking the Save the Ocean pledge and joining forces with the [Ocean Torchbearer](#) community, anyone can join us in growing the swell for a more hopeful future.”

To sign the Save the Ocean pledge, visit [padi.com/conservation/save-the-ocean-pledge](https://padi.com/conservation/save-the-ocean-pledge)

### **About PADI**

PADI® (Professional Association of Diving Instructors®) is the largest purpose-driven diving organization with a global network of 6,600 dive centers and resorts, 128,000 professional members and more than 29 million certified divers to date. Committed to our blue planet, PADI makes the wonder of the underwater world accessible to all, empowering people around the world to experience, explore and take meaningful action, as Ocean Torchbearers™, to protect the world beneath the surface. For over 50 years, PADI is undeniably The Way the World Learns to Dive®, setting the standard for the highest quality dive training, underwater safety and conservation initiatives while evolving the sport of diving into a passionate lifestyle. For divers by divers, PADI is obsessed with transforming lives and, with its global foundation, PADI AWARE™, creating positive ocean change. **Seek Adventure. Save the Ocean.**<sup>SM</sup> [www.padi.com](https://www.padi.com)

### **About Reef-World**

The Reef-World Foundation is a registered UK charity which delivers practical solutions for marine conservation around the world. The charity promotes the wise use of natural resources - particularly coral reefs and related ecosystems - for the benefit of local communities, visitors and future generations. It is dedicated to supporting, inspiring and empowering governments, businesses, communities and individuals around the world to act in conserving and sustainably developing coastal resources.

Reef-World leads the global implementation of the UN Environment Programme’s Green Fins initiative, which focuses on driving environmentally friendly scuba diving and snorkelling practices across the industry globally. As such, the charity provides low cost and practical solutions to local and industry-wide environmental challenges associated with the marine tourism industry. It provides education and capacity building assistance to empower environmental champions (within the diving industry, local communities, authorities and governments) to implement proven coastal resource management approaches.

Please visit [www.reef-world.org](https://www.reef-world.org) to learn more or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

### **About Green Fins**

Green Fins is a proven conservation management approach – spearheaded by The Reef-World Foundation in partnership with the UN Environment Programme – which leads to a measurable reduction in the negative environmental impacts associated with the marine tourism industry. The initiative aims to protect and conserve coral reefs through environmentally friendly guidelines that promote a sustainable diving and snorkelling tourism industry. It provides the only internationally recognised environmental standards for the diving and snorkelling industry and has a robust assessment system to measure compliance.

Green Fins encourages and empowers members of the diving industry to act to reduce the pressures on coral reefs by offering dive and snorkel companies practical, low-cost alternatives to harmful practices - such as anchoring, fish feeding and chemical

pollution – as well as providing strategic training, support and resources. By reducing the local direct and indirect pressures tourism puts on coral reefs, it helps make corals healthier and more resilient to other stresses such as the effects of climate change. Look for the Green Fins logo when booking your next dive trip.

Please visit <https://www.greenfins.net/> to learn more or follow the initiative on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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