

Protecting the Ocean, a difficult but necessary mission

While working on a project on the protection of the ocean and the different endangered species that it contains, we interviewed Byron, captain of a ship of Sea Shepherd, an organization which principal goal is to protect and preserve marine wildlife.



Personal information

Byron was captain of the MV Bob Barker ship. His job consisted in making sure everyone is doing their job and is safe. He loves his job and found that there are a lot of advantages to it like: being able to travel over the world; see the sunset, the sunrise, whales and dolphins etc. His favourite species are little things especially like frogfish.

Carreer

His first time working at sea was at 22 years old and at 37 he joined Sea Shepherd. On his 1st day he was afraid, because he started a new job on a boat with people he didn't know.

He saw sea shepherd on a discovery channel and had a friend who worked there. Now he wants to continue this activity for the rest of his life. Byron also told us that his job is dangerous because of piracy.



Studies

At school, he studied subjects like science, physics, history and geography. In the Interview, he said his favourite subject at school was history and geography, because he is passionate about the world.

About Sea Shepherd:

The organization sea shepherd has two logos. They protect all the marine species and are present in many countries, like Gabon, South Africa, Benin, Nigeria, Liberia, Mexico and France. That organization works with governments and private companies (for example with Scottish fisheries). They also fight overfishing physically, by being the active front. To catch poachers, they get close to them by night, undetected with speed boats and send marine national and marine inspectors to catch them in the act, and after that they get prosecuted. Some countries have no regulation at all to check how much they can catch, so they use legislation to fight overfishing.



The ship's flag with the organization's logos.



The two logos of Sea shepherd.



To help them we can control how much fish we eat, it's not necessary to eat fish everyday and to waste it.

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About marine species:

In Gabon, there's the largest community of Leatherback turtles in the world. Leatherback turtles have come for thousands of years in Gabon, they like the weather and environment (Nice and warm contrary to the UK). Moreover, the beaches are large and unspoiled so it's a good breeding ground.

FACT TO KNOW: Leatherback turtles are the most endangered species in Gabon with sharks and whales.



Threats:



There are a lot of threats for marine species.

First, there's bycatch. Bycatch is when a fishing boat accidentally catches sharks, dolphins, turtles...

Sometimes, they release what they catch but not always. For example, 90% of what a shrimp boat catches is bycatch.

After there's poaching. Poaching is illegal or unregulated fishing. So poachers are people who fish without a licence. It's very important in Gabon. It's less of a problem than in the past but it still happens a lot.

Another threat, there is overfishing. Overfishing is not sustainable. 40% of the fish caught are not eaten. If a species disappears, it affects the rest of the ecosystem which can collapse.



And finally, there's the pollution and especially plastic.

But there are a lot of solutions like creating national parks like on the land, reduce our consumption of plastic, for example, we could ban plastic bags like in Tanzania and establish fishing rules to avoid overfishing.