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YOUNG INNOVATORS WIN TOP PRIZE AT OUR OCEAN YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

The winning team created a device to protect coral reefs and support the sustainable blue economy at the summit in Panama, which was co-hosted by Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA) and Our Ocean organizers.

PANAMA CITY, Panama - (March 2, 2023) A team of young innovators won the top prize at the 6th [Our Ocean Youth Leadership Summit](#) last night, after devising a filtering device that would protect coral reefs and support the sustainable blue economy. The team members are:

- Alice Terpereau, 24, of France
- Andrea Libertad Ruzo Garcia, 35, of Spain
- Edwin Superius Rutakumwa, 30, of Tanzania
- Josephine Joice Ndapewa Edward, 33, of Namibia
- Marina Porto Amador, 28, of Brazil
- Nasya Jones, 23, of Jamaica
- Warisara Rotsirisathit, 24, of Thailand

They proposed developing a device to filter sediments and excess nutrients from coral reefs off the coast of Jamaica, modeled after the filtering abilities of the basking shark and giant larvacean. This device, called Eutrogill, would not only protect coral reefs, but also support the local economy as those nutrients and sediments could be sold as fertilizer and construction materials. This solution would launch in Jamaica, but has the potential to scale around the world. They will present their winning solution on stage during the main [Our Ocean Conference](#) on March 3rd. You can read a recap of the full event [here](#).

"The blue economy is about bringing solutions balancing economic, environmental, and social aspects," the team said, as they were celebrating after their big win.

[Sustainable Ocean Alliance](#) (SOA) co-hosted the leadership summit once again, in cooperation with Our Ocean organizers. This event brought together 77 young ocean leaders from 45 countries to address the greatest challenges facing our ocean, and was held February 27th-March 1st in Panama City. During the summit, youth participants (ages 18-35) worked closely with expert mentors and speakers to devise solutions around [6 impact areas of action](#):



climate change, marine pollution, maritime security, marine protected areas (MPAs), sustainable blue economy, and sustainable fisheries.

Participants also attended field visits at [Reef2Reef Foundation](#), a local coral nursery and blue carbon credit program; [PanaSea](#), a sustainable sea cucumber farm and algae research lab; toured the Panama Canal Locks; and received training in biomimicry with the support of the University of Costa Rica and [Biomímesis Costa Rica](#). During the summit, participants were surprised by two guest speakers: Vice President José Gabriel Carrizo of Panama, and renowned marine biologist and oceanographer Dr. Sylvia Earle. The event culminated in a 4-hour “Solutions Sprint”, during which teams created new, nature-based solutions to address one of the 6 impact areas of action. You can find the full list of youth participants [here](#), a video featuring the participants [here](#), and more information about our mentors and speakers [here](#).

"Once again, I am blown away by the incredible solutions presented at the Our Ocean Youth Leadership Summit," said Daniela Fernandez, Founder and CEO of Sustainable Ocean Alliance. "The winning team did a brilliant job mimicking a process found in nature, and turning it into a scalable business idea that will not only protect coral reefs – but support the local economy. While there was only one winning solution, all the ideas presented have merit. I am so proud of the creativity and ingenuity of our youth."

The youth summit was created by U.S. Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry and SOA in 2016. It is an integral part of the main Our Ocean Conference – being held today and tomorrow – during which governments, businesses, and advocates will convene to discuss solutions to restore and save the ocean through measurable impacts and cooperation. For more information, visit the [event website](#), or follow #OurOceanYLS on social media. The event is supported by Our Ocean conference organizers and the Sasakawa Peace Foundation.

VISUALS: Download photos from the youth summit [here](#).

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About Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA)

Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA) is a global organization created for youth – by youth – dedicated to restoring the health of the ocean in our lifetime. We were founded in 2014 by Daniela Fernandez during her first year of college, after she attended a United Nations meeting on climate change – and was stunned to realize none of the experts had a plan to stop it. Since then, SOA has grown into the world’s largest network of young ocean leaders, innovators, and policymakers, and has accelerated [222 solutions](#) to the greatest threats facing our ocean. These solutions include for-profit startups and community-led nonprofit projects around the world.