# [***£75m from UK to safeguard oceans***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:67P6-N741-DYTY-C29W-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

NEARLY £75 million will be invested in schemes to protect the world's oceans, the Government has said.

Environment Secretary Therese Coffey made the announcement at the Our Ocean conference in Panama this week, where heads of state and the private sector discussed ways to protect the marine environment. Ms Coffey said £45 million will go towards a new "Blue Tech Superhighway" project, which aims to build collaboration between communities in Africa and Asia who would develop and share technologies to help fisheries become more climate resilient and less damaging to the oceans.

The UK will also contribute £24million to the Global Fund for Coral Reefs and has become the first donor to the ***Blue Carbon*** Action Partnership, by offering £4million.

The partnership is a collection of intergovernmental organisations, state ministries, environmental groups and scientists seeking to build stronger "***blue carbon***" ecosystems and economies. ***Blue carbon*** ecosystems are coastal environments with plants that remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere - such as ***mangrove*** trees, salt marshes and seagrass - which together are present on every continent on Earth except Antarctica.

Ocean conservation groups have welcomed the news, but said the UK must strengthen the protection of marine areas at home and improve its relationships with developing countries to ensure that international negotiations to safeguard the oceans are successful.

Ms Coffey said: "It is almost impossible to overstate the importance of stepping up our efforts to bolster the resilience of the marine environment and, in turn, the economies and communities that depend on it.

"At the UN nature summit in Montreal, we made a commitment to manage our whole ocean sustainably and set a target to protect at least 30% of the world's ocean by 2030.

"The UK is leading, co-leading, and supporting global coalitions of ambition to drive forward this mission, and I urge countries to come together to deliver coordinated, impactful action on the ground."

The funding announcements will be drawn from the £154million Climate and Ocean Adaptation and Sustainable Transition programme (Coast) launched by Lord Goldsmith at the UN Ocean Conference in 2022.

Hugo Tagholm, executive director of Oceana UK, said: "We welcome the UK's international work to tackle illegal fishing and also to fund some marine conservation initiatives globally, but this must be matched by action back home."

However, Megan Randles, Greenpeace UK political campaigner, said: "These funds are pitiful and from an existing pot.

"Countries are in the final, critical, hours of talks at the UN to agree a Global Ocean Treaty - a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity - but after Coffey's announcement this morning, you could be forgiven for wondering if the minister is even aware those negotiations are taking place."

**Graphic**

Therese Coffey.

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