

## Project 2 Team 1: Back To Blue

### **Game Concept:**

Back To Blue is the premier educational anti-pollution oceanic puzzle game. The game is focused around educating players about the dangerous pollutants aggregating in our earth's oceans in an entertaining and satisfying way. Players will take on the role of a single caribbean wrasse (a species of tropical fish known for using simple tools) who uses discarded fishing line and the help of other sea creatures to remove the garbage that has infested their home. Back To Blue employs environmentally and physically based puzzles to challenge the player in their quest for a clean home.

### **Target Market:**

This game is geared for sale to environmental activist organizations, but the target player base is that of kids roughly 10-12 years old to get them interested in the conservation of the world they will someday inherit. We believe that this market is the best fit of Back To Blue because our game combines accurate information about plastic and refuse pollution with a bright and approachable game world and mechanic set. While the methods of trash removal may not be 100% accurate to real life, the effect of trash on the underwater world will be as accurate as possible.

**Monetization:**

We plan for this game to be free. It is a game that could potentially help the environment and there shouldn't be a price for trying to help the environment. We do however plan on creating a website and adding a location for people to donate and raise money to help awareness of pollution.

**Marketing Approach:**

We plan to market Back to Blue by directly going to the companies we think would be able to distribute the game. Since this is a game that is about helping the environment and is targeted towards children we plan on sending multiple copies of the game for children to play while at an Aquarium. We also plan on putting the game on steam for free so that in case anyone that wants to play the game outside of the aquarium and haven't received a copy from the companies we gave it to they can play.

**Content:**

Premise: The player controls Larry, a clever caribbean wrasse on a mission to clean up his home habitat to turn it back into a healthy place to live. Wrasse are known for using simple tools to catch their prey or achieve other goals. As such Larry has learned how to use abandoned fishing line to grab and pull objects in his environment. This ability in combination with the presence of larry's oceanic friends allows him to chase his goal in the now.

Characters: Back To Blue features a collection of colorful creatures all aligned behind the goal of ocean cleanup. We of course have Larry the resourceful wrasse with his small size but powerful fishing line abilities. The game will also feature Carmen the sleepy reef shark, who will sleep among the coral until awoken by the scent of sole. Her large strong frame is perfect for towing large pieces of refuse. Also making an appearance is Chris the parrot fish. Chris is no busy body either, but the sound of a rival will rouse him and the sight of an all too tasty coral patch will send him into a feeding frenzy. Maybe a turtle too?

Level design: Larry's cleanup craze will be neatly divided into individual levels each progressing in mechanical complexity and overall difficulty. The first few levels will feature primarily small pieces of trash and will be focused around teaching players the fishing line attachment and basics of trash movement. As levels progress, the size and number of occurrences of trash will increase, forcing the players to make use of the bigger bodied animals and water currents to move trash.

### **Player Motivation:**

In Back To Blue the player is motivated primarily by the state of the environment and the information provided to them about the dangers of plastics in the environment. This on combination with the bluing/revival effect that occurs when trash is removed will serve as the players motivation for level and game completion. The Bluing/revival effect is best described as an increasing in the blue coloration of the background and environmental art as trash is removed making the level appear more natural and reef

like. We are also hoping to implement a revival system depicting schools of fish returning to the reef upon completion.

### **Game States:**

Preparation/exploration phase: Each level of Back To Blue is divided into two states, which differ only in the players abilities within the gameworld. The first state is as I would describe it the preparation and exploration phase. In this phase the player character is limited to only being able to swim through the level. The purpose of this phase is to introduce the player to the geography of the level and layout of the objects within it without the stress of a time limit. This phase occurs first and begins as soon as the level is loaded. It will also be used to present the majority of the educational information on each levels individual pollutants.

Execution Phase: This phase directly follows the preparation phase and is triggered as soon as the player character collects the fishing line within each level. In this stage the player will execute the entirety of the physical puzzle solving while on a time limit. This stage's initiation essentially represents to the player the beginning of the main gameplay phase, in which players can make use of their fishing line abilities to move and attach objects to each other. The use of abilities is one of the primary signifiers of this stage. The second major signifier of this stage is the presence of fishhooks. As soon as this phase begins fish hooks will descend from the ceiling. The area that these fish hooks arrive in indicates the goal area that trash must be moved to.

The fish hooks will also lose numbers over time, representing the timer to the player in a subtle fashion.

Win State: The complete win state in Back To Blue is only achieved by moving each piece of trash within the level to a fish hook. This can be difficult to achieve as the fish hooks will be reeled up over time.

Partial Win States: Partial win states occur when the player has attached one or more pieces of trash to the fish hooks, but some hooks were reeled up empty.

Lose State: The lose state only occurs when the player does not attach any trash to the fish hooks before they are reeled up.

### **Mechanics and Systems:**

Movement: The primary method of scene navigation in Back To Blue is of course the movement. Players move left right up and down using wasd to manipulate movement direction. In future builds the movement speed of the player will be impacted by the mass of the object being towed by the player.

Towing: The primary ability that the player character will use to solve puzzles in Back To Blue is the towing mechanic. This mechanic allows Larry (the pc) to attach a fishing line to specific objects within the environment and subsequently drag them around the play area. This mechanic is also influenced by the mass and gravity of each individual object that it is attached to, with heavier objects being harder and sometimes even impossible to tow (at least by the player character).

Tow Transferring: The player can transfer their end of a line segment to another object in order to create an independent two object connection. This mechanic becomes useful particularly when dealing with heavier objects and larger animals. For example, a large piece of trash will be immovable by the player, but with the introduction of a larger more powerful animal like a shark or turtle, the player can transfer the tow to that larger animal in order to move the object indirectly to the goal point with the baiting mechanic.

Baiting: Baiting exists as a sub mechanic to the tow and tow transfer mechanics. Baiting allows the player to guide larger animals through level to the intended location through the use of fishing line and bait objects. Bait objects are essentially specific objects hidden within the game world that are associated with game world creatures like sharks and turtles(use a dead fish to bait a shark, jellyfish for turtle etc.). In order to make use of these objects simply tow the object, and swing it in front of the desired animal to activate the bait state. This mechanic is also useful when the desired animal is already towing an object and the player must guide them to the fishing hooks.