

Let's support  
**Austral Islands**  
the marine reserve  
proposal!



Rāhui Nui nō Tuha'a Pae

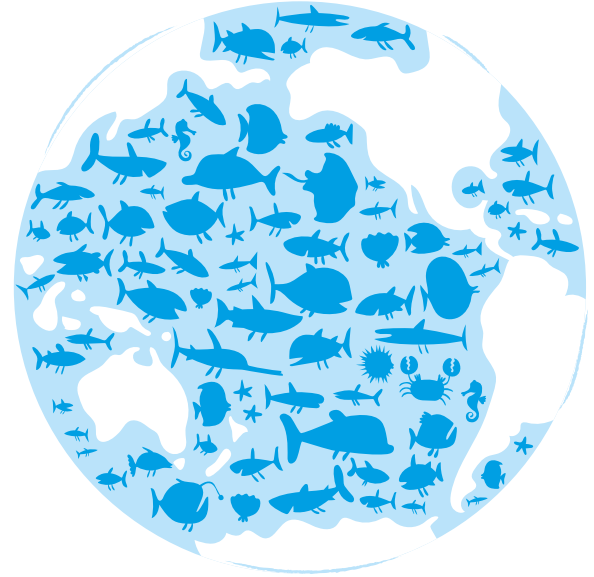
With many fish stocks facing depletion around the world and particularly in the Pacific Ocean, effective measures are necessary to ensure that island communities can continue to live sustainably off the ocean. Internationally, less than 3 percent of ocean waters are protected today. Members of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recommend boosting the amount that is highly protected to at least 30 percent. A dozen Pacific countries have already joined the international movement to create large marine reserves to help reach this goal.

Today in French Polynesia, the communities of the Austral islands have offered to join this movement to protect our seas by calling for the creation of a large, fully protected marine reserve in the waters beyond their traditional fishing zones. The marine reserve would be named Rāhui Nui nō Tuha'a Pae, a Tahitian reference to the traditional Polynesian practice of restricting access to an area or resource to conserve it. This proposal, first made by the municipal councils of the five inhabited islands, was then refined by the people of the Australs as part of an extensive consultation that included elected officials, fishermen, associations, tourism stakeholders and religious representatives. If approved by the French Polynesian government, the proposed marine reserve could become one of the largest marine protected areas in the world. It also would help spread Polynesian culture and the influence of the Austral Islands far beyond the borders of the archipelago.

We invite you to discover the proposed marine reserve through the illustrations of Benjamin Bécue. We hope you will join the people of the Austral Islands to support creation of the Rāhui Nui nō Tuha'a Pae.



The ocean covers nearly  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the planet,



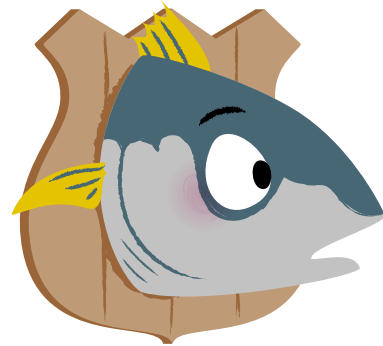
and is home to more than **2 million** species.

But the ocean is in crisis.  
Nearly 90% of global fish stocks  
are depleted, overfished  
or fully exploited.

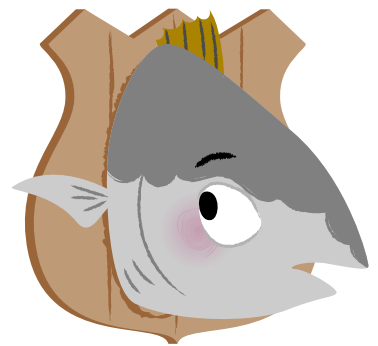


Several tuna species are  
threatened because of  
overfishing in the Pacific.

Being delicious is  
**A CURSE**



Thunnus obesus



Thunnus orientalis

Fishing boats are beginning to go farther and farther to exploit available fish stocks.



French Polynesia is home to one of the world's last near-pristine ocean spaces.





The French overseas territory has banned from its waters foreign fishermen and purse seine vessels that can pick up an entire school of tuna in one take.



Polynesian waters are home to the largest shark and whale sanctuaries in the world!



In 2014,  
the government  
said

it intended  
to create large  
marine protected  
areas around  
both

the  
Marquesas

and  
Austral  
islands.



In 2016, leaders committed  
to creation of a large marine  
managed area for all of  
French Polynesia's waters.



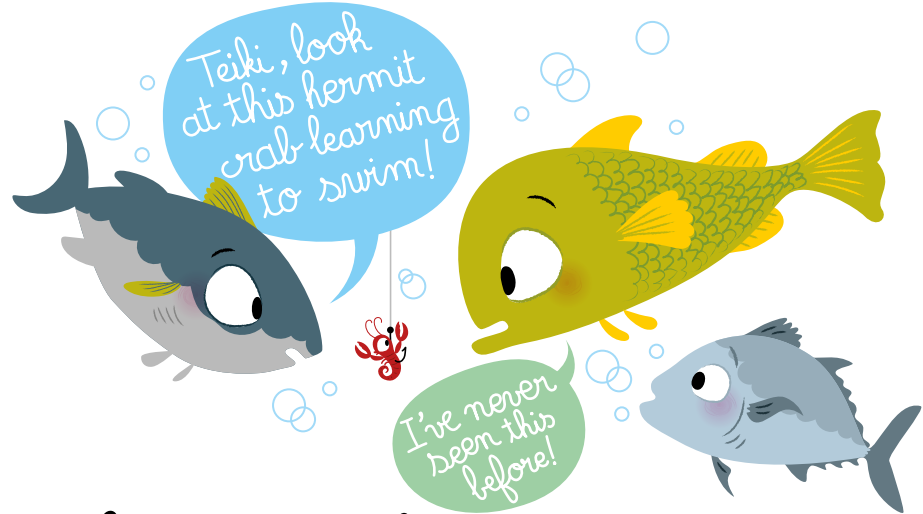
The waters around  
the Austral Islands,  
the southernmost  
group of islands  
in the French  
territory, host  
exceptional  
ecosystems.

Many coastal species of fish,  
coral, and algae around  
the Austral Islands. ✨



can be found only in this archipelago!!

Open ocean species also are  
diverse and rarely caught  
in this area.



That means they are still  
particularly well-preserved.

A rahui is a traditional Polynesian nature conservation measure

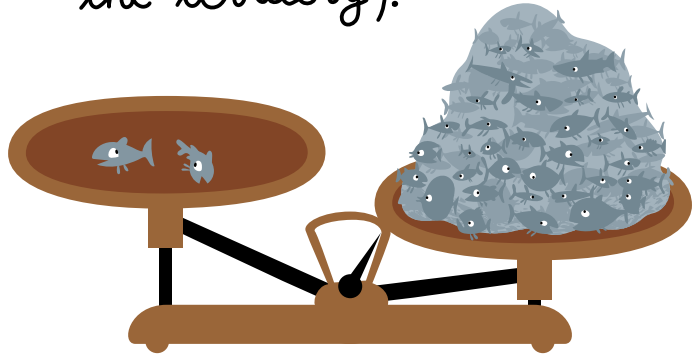


still practiced in some of the islands, including Rapa.

Coastal fishing remains essential to residents of the Austral archipelago. About 1,600 people fish around these islands.



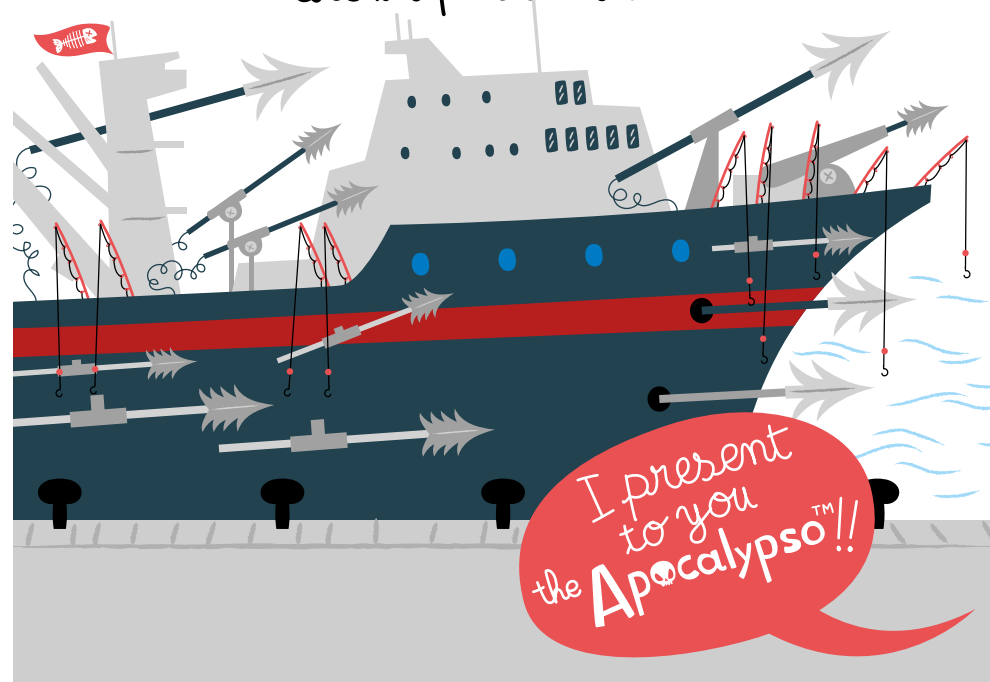
And there is almost no industrial fishing in this area (less than 2% of catches in the territory).



Austral  
Island

the rest of  
French Polynesia

But the riches of these waters are attracting business interest. Several industrial vessels that could fish here are in production.



I present  
to you  
the **Apocalypso™**!!

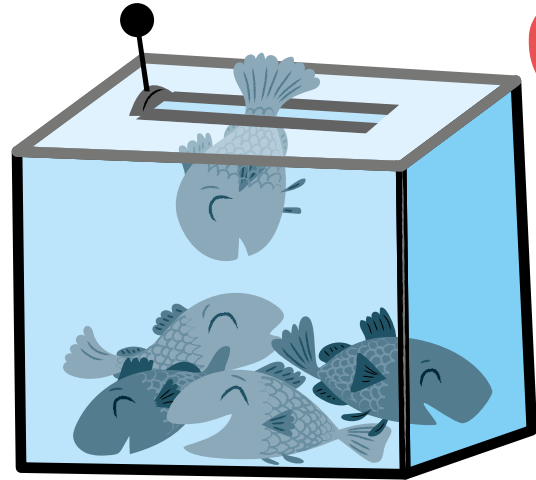
The Austral Islands communities hope to preserve their marine environment for future generations before it is too late.



Sorry!  
All that remains  
is water and  
5 stones!!



In 2014, the five Austral municipalities voted for a proposal to create a large marine reserve in the surrounding waters.



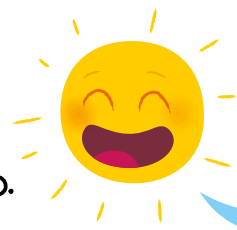
Has voted!

That same year, inhabitants of the archipelago took part in a survey so all could give their opinion on the draft proposal.



The five inhabited islands of the archipelago decided to join forces to expand their traditional coastal

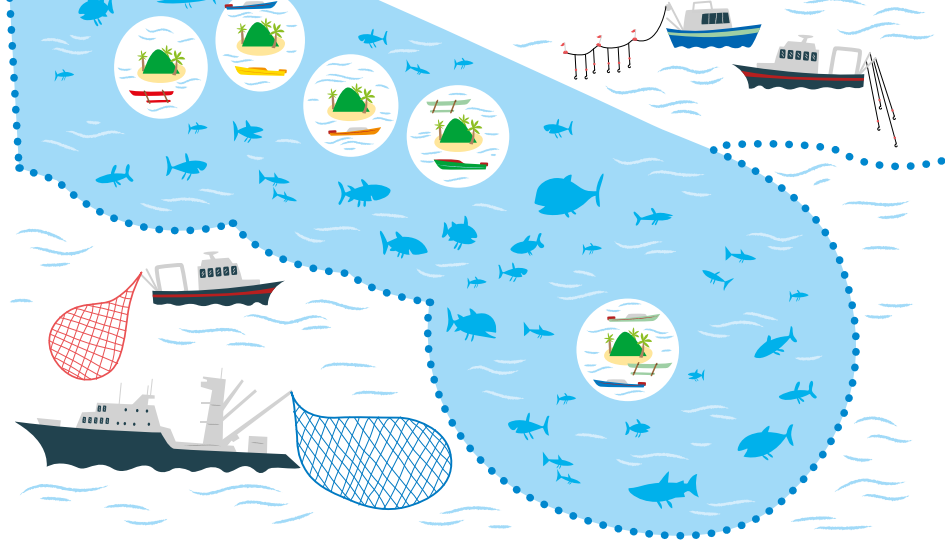
Rahui well beyond their shores.



I declare you united by the big Rahui Nui no Tuha'a Pae of the Austral Islands!!



The proposal includes a coastal fishing zone that goes up to 20 nautical miles from each island plus the large reserve area farther off shore..



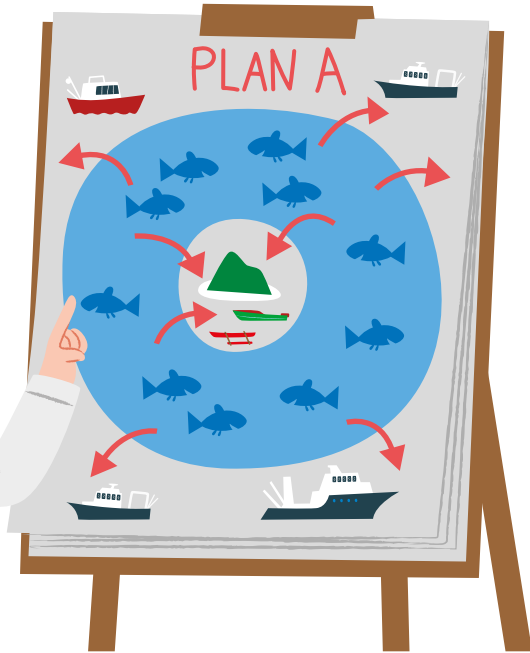
At **1 million Km<sup>2</sup>**,  
Rahui Nui No Tuha'a Pae could become  
one of the largest marine reserves  
in the world!!





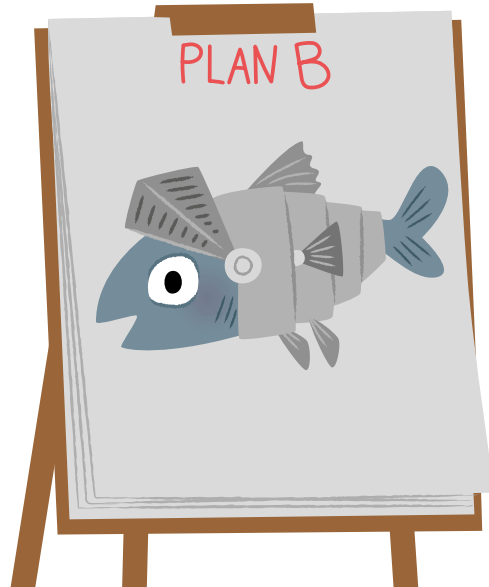
The reserve would maintain coastal fisheries, essential for the people of these islands.

That's easy!



It also would help preserve threatened fish species and ensure more sustainable fishing areas elsewhere in French Polynesia.

Otherwise, I was thinking of a fish with armor. No?



The reserve also would promote ecotourism in the Australis focused on our internationally recognized ocean conservation legacy.



And it would perpetuate and promote the culture of the rahui, an ancient Polynesian tradition.



French Polynesia could join cousins in Hawaii, Rapa Nui, Australia, New Zealand, Pitcairn, Kiribati and Palau that have already created or announced plans for large marine reserves.



This ambitious project will help confirm French Polynesia's status as a **leader in ocean conservation.**



Let's support  
Rāhui Nui nō Tuha'a Pae,  
the proposed marine reserve  
of the Austral Islands!



**For further information, please visit:**  
[globaloceanlegacy.org](http://globaloceanlegacy.org)



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Yes to the marine  
reserve



of the

**Austral  
Islands**

for future generations!!