IMOCA

PURPOSE REPORT 2025

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THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE PROGRAMME

What we are trying to achieve in IMOCA is not something radical or unattainable. It's a new normal, whereby our sport works in harmony with our environment, whether that be from a natural or social standpoint.

Like many sectors, implementing change in the marine industry requires adaptation and perseverance. Our sporting sector and Class is no exception. It is through these challenges that we have been able to build a complete and holistic programme that accounts for all aspects of activity within IMOCA.

During the past four years, we have been realigning our values and implementing new strategies.

To start with, tools like Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) were questioned due to a lack of understanding. Today, an LCA is more than just a methodology to highlight emissions, it helps unlock new mindsets and opportunities, especially within our boat builds and in the creation of impact reduction rules.

The same goes for how we sail across our Ocean. It is working with groups like the Marine Mammal Advisory Group that have allowed us to develop new thinking around how and where we sail. In the past, our racecourse was seen as a limitless playground, but today our community is pushing for greater respect when we travel across the Ocean which is home to a vast ecosystem.

For us, the next cycle is going to be one where change is proven and one where we are able to develop more pioneering solutions, uncover the unknown, and delve deeper into our understanding. »

Imogen Dinham-Price,
Head of Sustainability, on IMOCA's social and environmental initiatives

Born in Brittany, I grew up to the rhythm of the tides and the harbours, with a natural and deep attachment to the ocean, guiding my choices in terms of studies and career path. Joining Sciences Po (Rennes Institute of Political Studies) allowed me to discover and understand the major global balances through a multidisciplinary approach. After initially pursuing a career in public affairs, I wanted to give more meaning to my career path by joining the Master's programme in Public and Maritime Affairs, which allowed me to combine my interest in the many aspects of governance with my passion for the maritime world.

It was in line with this that I chose to join the IMOCA Class, within the sustainable development division, on a work-study programme. I have always been fascinated by ocean racing (even though I don't come from a sailing family). Being part of this world, understanding its social and environmental dynamics, and playing a practical role in its transition towards greater sustainability is a unique experience. Working every day alongside passionate teams and committed skippers is a constant source of wonder: even though it's now part of my daily routine, I still feel that childlike excitement every time I meet them on the pontoons. »

Eline Brazidec,
Sustainability Manager, Placement Year Student on her journey to being part of IMOCA's work on sustainability and social action

THE FUTURE

THE WAY AHEAD FOR IMOCA ON THE ROAD TO 2030 WITH FRANCESCA CLAPCICH, SKIPPER OF TEAM FRANCESCA CLAPCICH POWERED BY 11TH HOUR RACING

How do you integrate social and environmental principles in your sporting approach?

"For me, sailing has never been isolated from the world around it. Every performance decision – from materials to energy choices to travel planning – has a footprint. Working with 11th Hour Racing has been instrumental in helping me integrate sustainability, both for people and planet, into the DNA of the campaign, not as an add-on but as a core principle. Social impact is just as essential: who we bring into the team, how we support young people, and how we share knowledge to help shape the future of our sport. Performance and purpose strengthen each other when they are aligned."

You have talked about "giving back to the ocean what it gave me" – what does this mean in practice for you?

"The ocean has shaped my life – it taught me resilience, gave me a career, and opened doors to experiences I never imagined. Giving back means doing everything in my power to safeguard it for future generations. In practice this means reducing the environmental impact of my campaign, supporting marine-science projects, engaging in community education, and amplifying messages around ocean health. It also means modeling behaviours that show sustainability is not a sacrifice but an enrichment of our sport and our responsibility as sailors."

You are associated with engaged partners and environmental projects. How do these partnerships embody your vision of sustainable sailing?

"Partnerships are powerful when they are values-aligned. Working with 11th Hour Racing allows me to approach sustainability in a holistic way – from technical innovations to community engagement. Their support enables us to run a campaign that is not only competitive but also forward-looking, proving that high performance and environmental stewardship can go hand in hand. The environmental and social projects we support are not side initiatives, they are part of our identity as a team and refl ect the kind of sport we want to help shape."

What legacy do you aspire to leave not only in sport, but also in terms of social impact in the sailing community?

"My ultimate goal is to leave the sport more open, more diverse, and more responsible than when I entered it. I want young sailors – regardless of gender or background – to see our sport as a place where they belong and can thrive. I hope to contribute to a culture where sustainability is a given, where ocean health is central to every campaign, and where mentorship is part of how we define excellence. If, by 2030, we have a stronger, more inclusive, more conscious sailing community, then I will feel that my time on the water has meant something beyond results."

WHAT IS IMOCA?

The IMOCA Class is the organisation behind the most exciting and innovative fleet of offshore monohull racing yachts anywhere in the world. The boats are light, strong and extremely fast – many of them featuring foils to help them fly above the water.

IMOCA yachts are the stars of the **Vendée Globe** solo round-the-world race and **The Ocean Race** crewed round-the-world race, as well as the IMOCA GLOBE SERIES of races, which crowns a champion each year. Between 2021 and 2025, our skippers took part in 18 races, solo, double-handed or fully-crewed.

Created in 1991, the Class is based on rules that guarantee sporting fairness, technical innovation and safety, to enable our sailors to race in some of the most remote parts of the world's oceans.

The Class is committed to principles of environmental and social responsibility and to assisting scientific research into what is happening to our oceans. It is playing a leading role in the maritime sector in helping to change practices and attitudes.

2025
A YEAR OF PROGRESS

IMOCA continues to redefine what progress looks like in the marine industry – proving that innovation and environmental responsibility can move in unison. Through initiatives like the Hazard Button technology developed with the Marine Mammal Advisory Group, the RISE Certified sails program that significantly reduces emissions, and a new impact reduction rule for IMOCA builds, the Class is charting a course toward measurable change.

Equally inspiring is the cultural shift underway. Just one year into the Female Leadership Development Program with The Magenta Project, we're seeing real action – women taking the helm as team managers, mixed crews competing at the highest levels, and a new generation of diverse leaders shaping the future of our sport. Together, we're not only transforming how boats are designed, built, and raced – we're redefining what leadership and sustainability look like in the marine industry. »

Jeremy Pochman,
Co-founder and CEO, 11th Hour Racing – Sustainability Partner of the IMOCA Class

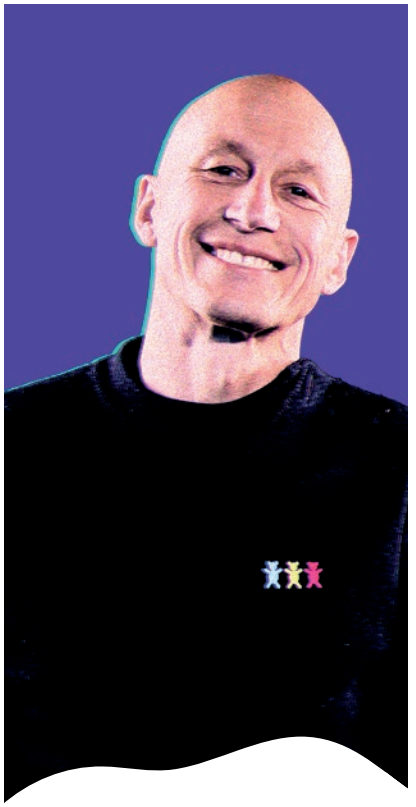
In recent years IMOCA has shifted its focus towards environmental issues, with a genuine desire to integrate these challenges into the heart of its projects.

The eco-score and the RISE programme are two essential levers: they enable us to better measure the impact of our boats and encourage progress by helping teams to think differently from the design stage onwards.

These tools are creating a collective dynamic. We share more feedback, explore new materials, and question the lifecycle of parts, the waste generated, and the possible reuse of certain structures.

Performance is no longer limited to sporting results alone: it now includes how we build, sail, and communicate. »

Armel Tripon,
Skipper Les P'tits Doudous – Racing with Purpose in the IMOCA Class



THE LES P'TITS DOUDOUS PROJECT AND OUR OBJECTIVES

Our project is fully in line with this approach. After my Vendée Globe 2020-2021, I wanted to take my thinking about building a more virtuous boat further. We therefore chose to focus on reusing aeronautical materials, particularly expired carbon fibre, and we succeeded in integrating 65% of the carbon fibre used in the build expired aeronautical carbon fibre in our build.

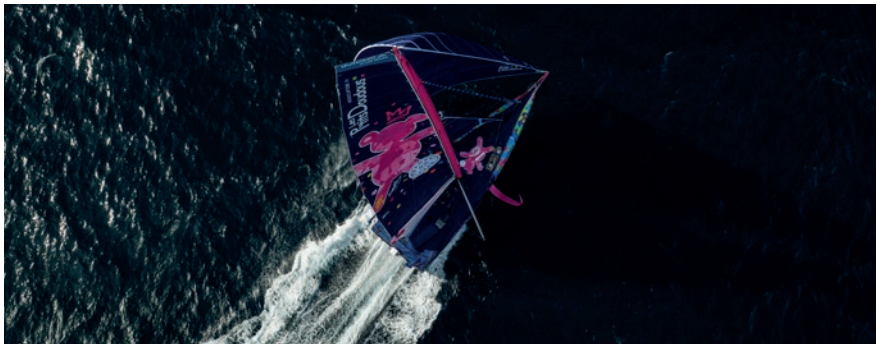
The idea is to demonstrate that there is another way: to give a second life to high-quality materials that are usually discarded.

This approach requires a great deal of experimentation, fine-tuning and collaboration between the worlds of ocean racing and industry. But that's precisely what makes it so exciting: we learn, we pass on our knowledge, and we drive the industry forward.

When it comes to waste, our goal is to minimise material loss during the construction and preparation of the boat as much as possible, but also to accurately document the quantities used in order to make progress from one season to the next.

We have implemented a thorough sorting system for 15 different waste streams, ranging from carbon to solvents, foams and metals, and 50% of our waste has been recovered or recycled. We have also published a report detailing all our actions and areas for improvement for the future, in order to share what we have learned and inspire other teams.

Finally, we have initiated a circular economy approach with the recycling of medical titanium collected by the 165 associations in the Les P'tits Doudous network. This titanium has already been used to manufacture the first part of the boat: two friction rings made from this recycled resource. This is a great illustration of the virtuous circle we want to encourage.



VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF THE IMOCA CLASS

For me, the future of the industry lies in cooperation and thoughtful innovation.

Designing boats with a lower environmental impact is not just about finding the right 'miracle' material: it's about rethinking the entire process, from design to end of life. We can imagine demountable structures, parts that can be reused from one boat to another, even more exchanges and sharing of tools, even small moulds, shipyards that share their resources, and joint impact assessments.

The important thing is that each project becomes a testing ground and that the Class remains a place for collective refl ection.

We are fortunate, in IMOCA, to be a highly visible showcase: if we can prove that it is possible to build high-performance boats while reducing their footprint, we will pave the way for the entire nautical industry.

WORKING WITH THE INDUSTRY

Innovation has always been part of the IMOCA Class's DNA. Today, this ability to experiment, test and push boundaries is no longer limited to sporting performance: it extends to environmental and social responsibility. Faced with the ecological and industrial challenges confronting the maritime sector, IMOCA has chosen to take on a leading role, mobilising the entire industry around a common ambition: to combine performance and sustainability.

Working alongside the industry means providing support for the sector's transformation, sharing knowledge, developing common tools and setting ambitious environmental standards. In just a few years, IMOCA has become the first offshore racing class to include measurable impact reduction targets in its construction and equipment regulations, thereby engaging an entire community in a collective and transparent approach.

This collaboration is based on a scientific approach, solid partnerships and a dynamic of open innovation. Each new rule, each evaluation protocol, each workshop conducted with local stakeholders contributes to building a shared vision: that of an industry capable of combining performance and sustainability.

REDUCED IMPACT RULE

Adopted in April 2024, this industry-leading measure requires all newly-built IMOCA yachts to achieve a minimum impact reduction of 60 tonnes of CO2 equivalent, representing approximately 15% fewer emissions.

This is achieved by reducing emissions linked to the mould, foil and platform construction.

In the build process of the seven new yachts in 2025, the Class was on course to avoid a further 9% impact reduction over and above what is required by the rule.

Justine Mettraux,
Skipper Teamwork-Team SNEF

You are building a new boat. Tell us about your project?

At the moment, it's still at the design stage, but the plan is to launch in May 2027.
We are doing the project with the same sponsors, Teamwork and Groupe SNEF, and working with the naval architect Guillaume Verdier and his team.

Can you explain the Reduced Impact Rule in your own words?

The Reduced Impact Rule, or eco-score is a rule, is a standard that we must respect when building a new boat to reduce the impact on the environment. There are some things we can do to lower our score – such as building sisterships, working on the materials and composites, and working with other teams to use the same foils. These are all things that are going in the right direction, so that everyone thinks about new solutions and new ways of working that are more environmentally beneficial.

Why is reducing the environmental impact of boatbuilding important to you?

We know that building IMOCA boats using carbon fibre has a big impact on the environment. It's around 400 tonnes of CO_2e to build a new boat and it costs a lot. So it's very important to try to reduce this. Even if we only use the power of the wind during our races, we are aware that building a boat is very impactful. I think it's also good to try to do our best to find solutions which can have an impact also on the rest of the marine industry.
I hope these solutions that we have to find to build our boats remain in the industry and in the shipyards and that they use them for different projects they're working on.
But for sure, the Rule makes everybody think a bit differently and, at least, it puts a limit on what you can do when you build a new boat.

RISE – REDUCED IMPACT SAIL EVALUATION

Introduced with the former ‘Green Sail’ rule, then formalised in the RISE programme, this requires each team to carry at least one ‘reduced impact’ sail.

For a reduced impact sail, the emissions are typically around 15kg CO_2 equivalent per kg of sail, compared to around 35kg CO_2 equivalent per kg for a conventional sail.

The RISE rating system calculates the impact of sails and visualises the result within pre-defined scoring criteria. Sails are given a score from A-to-G based on the CO_2e impact per kg of finished sail.

The scheme works through both a digital and a physical ‘Audit’ process, with external auditors scoring submissions based on a formal methodology, before issuing the certification.

The RISE certification has been developed both internally by the IMOCA Class and in collaboration with MarineShift360. Six world leading sailmakers are core members of the RISE scheme.

REDUCED IMPACT SAIL EVALUATION – RISE

Yoann Richomme,
Skipper of Paprec Arkéa

Do you think performance and sustainability are compatible?

"This is a subject that is often questioned. Today we have made a big effort to arrive at our level of performance and we have incredible examples of what our boats and sails can do. Sustainability is a subject which has come in a little later and we have less experience in this area, or less knowledge than that of performance.
But what we have done, to accelerate knowledge around sustainability and to couple it with performance, is integrate it into our Class rules as exemplified by RISE and the Eco-Score.
By doing this we can create transferable rules. The goal with RISE is not just to establish it within IMOCA, but for it to be used in other classes in sailing. RISE is pioneering real change in sail manufacturing and it is something that future generations can improve on. It is one of the first steps in combining performance and sustainability."

You use Incidence sails, some of which are classified with an Eco-Score of "C" in the RISE system. How has Incidence reduced the impact of these sails?

"Incidence is an excellent example of a sailmaker that has worked hard on improving its production process and eliminating excessive waste. By doing so it has reduced its emissions and moved its sails into 'C' category, via an effective waste management policy. The company also works with local suppliers as much as possible and uses renewable energy in sail production."

Could natural fibres be the future of sail manufacturing?

French sailmaker *All Purpose has been pioneering the manufacture of sails using natural fibres derived from stinging nettles. Here, All Purpose managing partner Matthieu Souben and IMOCA skipper Arnaud Boissières (4Cad-La Mie Câline) explain what has been achieved.*

Can you tell us more about your nettle fibre sail?

Mathieu Souben *"For several years, All Purpose sailmakers and the Biotex program have been developing the integration of natural fibres into Trilam membranes to reduce environmental impact, while meeting the performance requirements of ocean racing.*
This is the first time that nettle fibres, produced by Trilam-Biotex, have been incorporated into sails for IMOCA boats. This sail – a J3 with relatively classic geometry – is made from 50% bio-based structural fibres.
The Trilam-Biotex technology implemented with natural fibres has successfully completed the last Vendée Globe and this confirmed our confidence in this choice."

What motivated you to adopt this type of material?

Mathieu Souben *"We are conscious of our environmental footprint, and although our sport is carbon-free when we are sailing, this is not the case in all phases of construction. We want to support initiatives that are in line with the future of ocean racing and we were immediately attracted by the introduction of a new fibre."*

Tell us about the performance of this sail material on the racecourse?

Arnaud Boissières *"The first thing you think is, 'a nettle sail — it's going to sting,' that's the joke. But when you feel the texture, it's like a normal sail. It feels very stiff when it's new, which is a very good point.*
We sailed with it the entire season, including during three races (Course des Caps, Défi Azimut and the Transat Café L'OR). The quality of the sail is just as durable as a conventional one. Honestly, you wouldn't guess that it's made of nettle fibre; even the technicians who come aboard don't notice it — you can't tell the difference.
When you hoist and trim the sail, it feels like a synthetic-fibre sail, which is a positive. It hasn't shown any sign of weakness, in terms of shape or structure. It's held up very well, and it's a sail that can last two-to-three years."

Do you think the use of plant fibres in sails could become standard in offshore racing in the coming years?

Mathieu Souben *"We hope so. Our sport is seen as a clean sport, and we need to live up to that image. It's a pity that more teams haven't taken this direction and are not very curious, but this is the future of offshore racing, and it's up to the rules to define what that future will be. We are waiting for strong positions to be taken in that direction."*

Arnaud Boissières *"It's already a rule in the IMOCA class to have a reduced impact sail on board. I'm against over-standardisation. It needs to happen naturally for the teams. We need to move toward this, with flax, nettle, or something else. The advantage is that the nettles we use are produced in France, in Auvergne, which gives the sail a much healthier carbon footprint. We should all naturally move toward these methods; making it mandatory may be excessive, even though one green sail is already required. I think it's important to have as many as possible, even in competition — it's proven that it works."*

ALTERNATIVE MATERIALS AND WASTE

Johanna Derennes,
Head of Communications, Logistics and Environmental Impact at Les P'tits Doudous

How does the IMOCA Class promote waste management within its community?

"IMOCA is quite interested in all aspects of waste management, particularly with the Life Cycle Assessments (LCAs) that are put in place to calculate the carbon impact of all IMOCAs. The Class also organises numerous conferences open to all teams, on waste management, composites and so on, which are very interesting and important."

Are your commercial partners involved in this approach? Is it a selection criterion for you?

"It's not really a selection criterion because of our associative approach; however, it's a big plus and we organise a lot of corporate social responsibility activities with our partners, particularly with the Airbus Technology Park, which sends us it's reused carbon. We are trying to find solutions to reduce our impact and identify which partner can help us with this project."

If you had a magic wand, what would you change today to reduce the environmental impact of ocean racing?

"For me, the biggest environmental impact in ocean racing is over-consumption. So if I could, I would make everyone understand the importance of sharing. Sharing doesn't mean losing performance by giving advice, but above all it means helping each other. And in our field, we work as a team, so we know how to share our knowledge."

And finally: is there a simple thing that everyone can do on their own level to reduce their impact?

"Yes – learn to sort your waste properly, because that's how we've managed to reduce our impact. It takes time, of course, but it's easy to do, accessible to everyone, and it can make a big difference."

IMOCA CLASS — PURPOSE REPORT 2025

UNDERSTANDING OUR MARINE ENVIRONMENT

Vidar Helgesen,
IOC-UNESCO, Executive Secretary

"The growing collaboration between the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO and IMOCA demonstrates how partnerships across sectors can strengthen our collective understanding of the ocean and support its essential role in our daily lives.

"By deepening our engagement with the sailing community, including our work with the Vendée Globe, we are creating new pathways for offshore racers to contribute valuable ocean and weather observations that benefit society far beyond the race."

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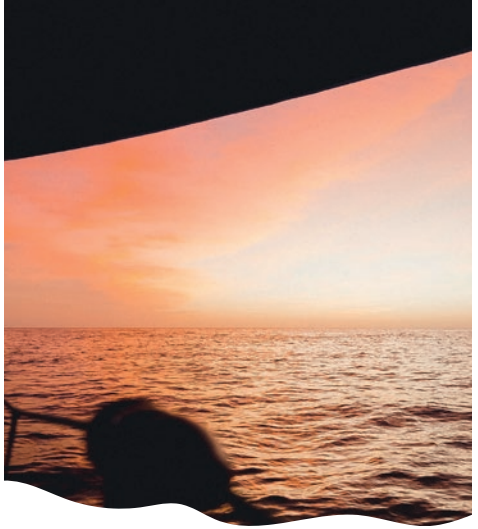
IMOCA CLASS — PURPOSE REPORT 2025



HOW THE IMOCA CLASS AND ITS SKIPPERS USE THEIR ACCESS TO REMOTE AREAS OF THE WORLD'S OCEANS TO AID SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

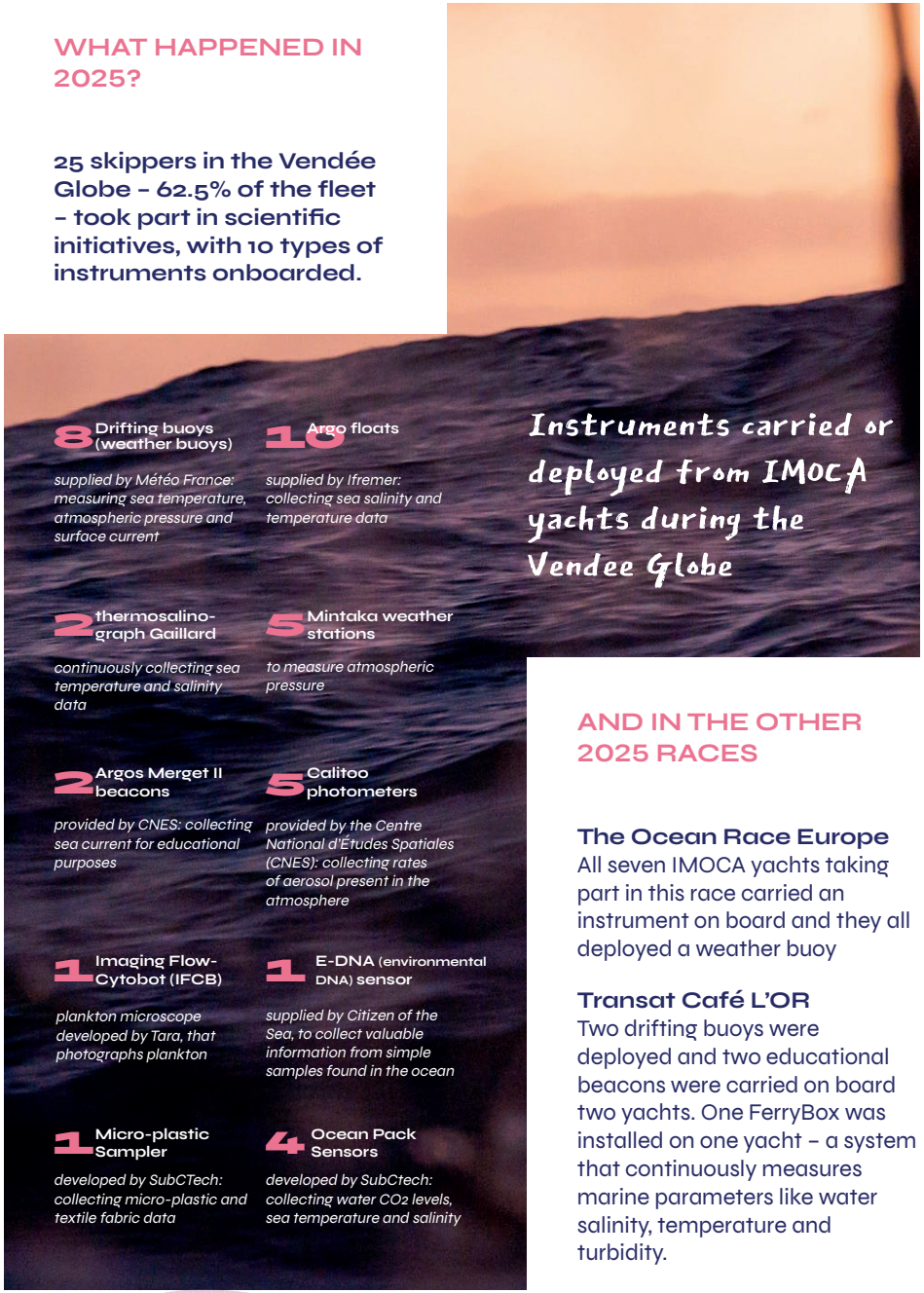
IMOCA Class yachts sail in remote and untamed areas of the world's oceans during their races – areas that are poorly served by regular maritime traffic. This is why the collection of oceanographic and atmospheric data along the course by skippers, using either on board or deployed instruments, is making an invaluable contribution to the global ocean observation system.

The IMOCA Class has actively collaborated with IOC/Unesco since 2015, and scientific partners such as Ifremer, Météo France and OceanOPS since 2019.

The last Vendée Globe in 2024-25 was the most committed race regarding scientific contributions by IMOCA skippers

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2025?

25 skippers in the Vendée Globe – 62.5% of the fleet – took part in scientific initiatives, with 10 types of instruments onboarded.



AND IN THE OTHER 2025 RACES

The Ocean Race Europe
All seven IMOCA yachts taking part in this race carried an instrument on board and they all deployed a weather buoy

Transat Café L'OR
Two drifting buoys were deployed and two educational beacons were carried on board two yachts. One FerryBox was installed on one yacht – a system that continuously measures marine parameters like water salinity, temperature and turbidity.

DRIFTING BUOYS

Since the Vendée Globe in 2020, 49 drifting buoys have been deployed by IMOCA skippers during major oceanic races. The buoys provide scientists with valuable information about the ocean and the climate, often from remote areas of the globe.

The buoys deployed in the Antarctic Ocean during the last Vendée Globe by Antoine Cornic and Romain Attanasio are particularly valuable. They directly contribute to improving ocean monitoring through the European Copernicus project : Copernic

The buoys deployed in tropical regions are also positioned in areas where we have very little data, and therefore provide scientists around the world – as well as oceanographic and meteorological models – with highly valuable information.

The smartest buoy is the one deployed by Clarisse Crémer in the 2024-25 Vendée Globe. Caught in a gyre – a large system of ocean surface currents, moving in a circular fashion driven by wind movements – it is now engaged in a dance and is not likely to escape anytime soon. It's proving an impressive display of longevity.

Meanwhile a race is underway between the buoys (from north to south) deployed during the same race by Denis Van Weynbergh, Boris Herrmann, Arnaud Boissières, Manu Cousin, and Louis Burton. Their trajectories are tricky, as the beaches of the Antilles tend to attract the buoys – and who can blame them? Which buoy will, like Manu's during the Vendée Globe in 2021, manage to reach the North Atlantic and the Gulf Stream?

SCIENCE AND SEA

Fabrice Amedeo,
Skipper of FDJ United-Wewise

During the last Vendée Globe, you turned your boat into a scientific laboratory. Among all the equipment you had on board, there was an innovant sensor to collect environmental DNA. Can you tell us more about it?

"Yes, it's an exciting project developed by Xavier Pochon, a New Zealand scientist, and the Citizen of the Sea Foundation and I was able to measure biodiversity throughout the race. All living organisms leave a DNA trace of their presence in the ocean for 36 hours and within a radius of 1.5 nautical miles. The Innovent sensor detects the presence of life, from the smallest bacteria to the largest cetaceans that inhabit our oceans. And what's amazing about environmental DNA is that the analyses are computerized: there is no laboratory and no long wait times and just a few days, we have the results. Other yachts sailing between Australia and New Zealand are participating in this project, but I was the first to carry out a campaign around the world."

What are the scientific objectives behind this project?

"The global measurement campaign has enabled scientists to identify 150 million DNA sequences corresponding to 6,000 living species, a third of which are currently unknown. I find it fascinating to think that life in our oceans is not yet fully understood and remains to be discovered. This type of measurement campaign is of scientific interest, but it is also of political interest in a context where there is increasing talk – as we saw at the UN Ocean Conference in Nice in June 2025 – of marine protected areas and the need to set aside 30% of the oceans as sanctuaries so that they can regenerate. It is by gaining a better understanding of the biodiversity of the oceans that we will be able to protect it more effectively. And it is by gaining a closer understanding of this biodiversity that our leaders will be able to better determine which areas of life to protect and preserve."

What is the next step for this project?

"I financed the prototype for the Innovent sensor and sailed my first Vendée Globe with it. Now the plan is to try to convince other IMOCA teams to take it on board, then try to make this type of sensor standard on fishing boats and commercial vessels, because the resources for analyzing environmental DNA are endless. The more boats there are, the better we can cover the oceans with measurement campaigns."

MARINE MAMMALS

Rui Prieto,
A marine mammal specialist, who lives in the Azores, Rui is a member of the Marine Mammal Advisory Group (MMAG) that is working with IMOCA on the protection of biodiversity and exploring solutions to strikes and collisions with mammals

What role should the offshore sailing community play to preserve biodiversity while sailing?

"Multiple roles – conservation, information and raising awareness. While at sea, the sailing community must be aware of their impacts on aquatic biodiversity and make every effort to reduce them. They must try to engage with global and local researchers and conservationists to learn how their actions may impact marine organisms and habitats. At the same time, the community may be an important source of information, either in a systematic way, through sampling schemes, or through personal experiences which are sometimes at the heart of important discoveries. Sharing information is of paramount importance. Finally, the offshore sailing community is followed by millions of people; it should harness that power to raise awareness of the dire challenges aquatic ecosystems are facing and how small changes to our habits may have large impacts in improving their state."

How do you work with the offshore sailing community, and especially with the MMAG?

"I try to engage with the community with a sense of respect and sincerity. As a specialist in marine mammals and ocean ecosystems, I am trying to help the MMAG tackle the issues of vessel strikes with large marine animals, and other less noticeable effects of sailing in marine ecosystems – habitat damage and the introduction of non-native species. My aim is to have everyone engaged in the common goal of preserving marine ecosystems for the benefit of all. For that, I must sometimes say that we are not doing the best we can. But I know that if I present the facts honestly and without being arrogant, I am working with one of the most dedicated groups of stakeholders out there."

Could you explain what the necessary steps are to mitigate strike risk whilst sailing?

"First, learn about why it matters: when you hit a marine animal on the surface, your vessel may suffer some expensive damage. That may be annoying but for the animal it may mean a life-threatening injury; and if the individual was pregnant or nursing its young, we are talking about multiple lives at risk.

Second, implement changes at the planning stage – include vessel strike risk in planning your voyage. Be aware of the areas and times where known concentrations of large marine animals are higher. For example, using tools such as https://bluecorridors.org or the work done by the MMAG. And avoid them, or at least reduce speed and increase awareness while there.

Third, implement changes while sailing like dedicated watchkeeping for animals and use crowdsourcing reporting apps and sites to relay and obtain information about animal presence.

Fourth, keep up to date with the best advice. Advice is not static and will change over time, with more information and better technological tools. There is no single silver bullet, but several parties are working towards reducing incidence of vessel strikes using multiple methods. Being aware of these efforts is important for quick uptake and improvement of best practices.

And fifth, take proactive action. You may acknowledge as an individual that this is an important matter, but only if your Class or the race organisers also acknowledges it as well, will change come about. Make your voice heard and say that you want changes implemented for real action to reduce ship strike risk."

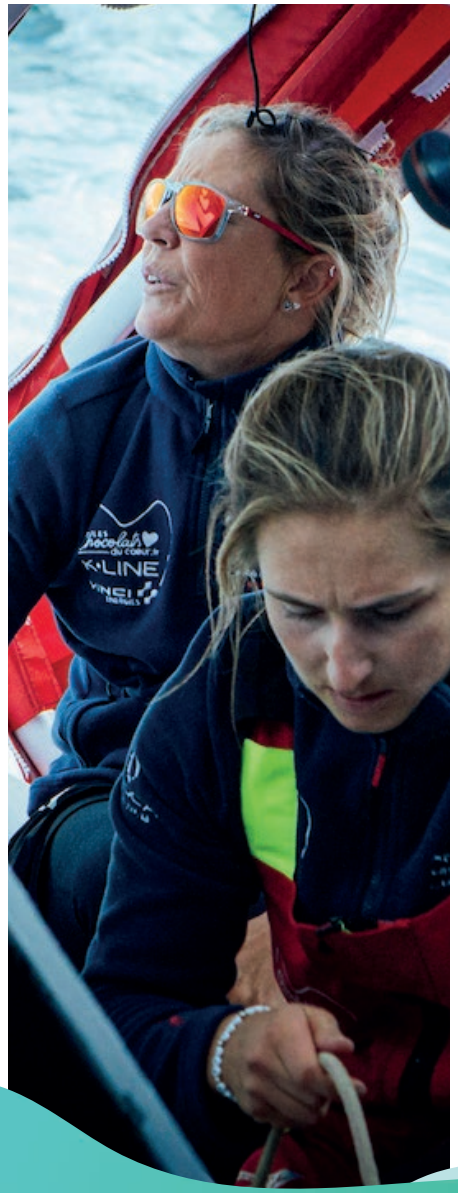
KEEPING DIVERSITY WITHIN OUR SPORT

The IMOCA Class places diversity, equity and inclusion at the heart of its strategic and social commitment, convinced that sporting performance and innovation depend on a wealth of talent and profiles.

In a traditionally male-dominated world, the Class strives to create pathways open to all, enabling women, young talents and people with disabilities to get involved in ocean racing and the marine industry.

This vision is translated into real action: mentoring and women's leadership programmes in collaboration with The Magenta Project and Bretagne Next; educational initiatives to raise awareness among young people about technical professions; and new IMOCA initiatives, such as the Café Joyeux project, which uses competition as a vehicle for social inclusion.

IMOCA thus acts as a laboratory for change, demonstrating that sporting success can go hand in hand with a positive impact on society and the entire marine sector.



PROGRESS IN 2025

The place of women in the IMOCA Class has undergone a notable evolution over the last 12 months, even if certain areas still need to be strengthened. Today, women represent more than 50% of team managers, but still less than 10% of technical directors. This contrast highlights a balance that is still being established, refl ecting an environment in the midst of transformation.

During the first race of the 2025 IMOCA Globe Series – the Course des Caps – this dynamic was clearly evident. Each team had to have at least one woman on board, a target that was greatly exceeded. Out of a total of 55 participants – 44 sailors and 11 On-Board Reporters (OBRs) spread across 11 boats – 19 were women. They represented 34.5% of the total, made up of three skippers, 12 co-skippers and four OBRs, representing four nationalities. This strong female presence marked a significant step forward for gender diversity in offshore sailing.

However, progress remains uneven across different events. In the two-handed Transat Café L'OR, there were six women out of 36 sailors competing in the IMOCA Class. Five of the six finished in the top-10, demonstrating both the skill and competitiveness of female sailors.

SAFEGUARDING

Mathilde Grenet accompanied the IMOCA Class as a consultant specialising in protection against violence in sport with En Garde.

Here she explains the development of the new safeguarding strategy for the IMOCA Class.

IMOCA appointed the safeguarding consultancy EN GARDE in 2023 to support the development of a comprehensive prevention and response strategy.

SEVERAL KEY ACTIONS

- Creation of a Code of Conduct for Class members, integrated into IMOCA regulations.
- Establishment of a reporting system, including a dedicated email address and reporting form.
- Formation of an independent case management unit, managed by EN GARDE, providing moral support and guidance to victims and whistleblowers, and co-ordinating with relevant disciplinary bodies (the IMOCA Board, FFVoile, World Sailing, The Ocean Race).

The IMOCA Class also introduced annual safeguarding training, delivered by EN GARDE in 2024 and 2025 for all members.

DEVELOPED FOR THE CLASS

- A comprehensive Safeguarding Policy for the offshore racing environment.
- New safeguarding rules governing case management.
- Recommendations for the creation of an independent Case Management Group, composed of qualified experts ensuring impartial and confidential handling of reports and removing this responsibility from the IMOCA Executive Board.

To continue this work in 2026, the IMOCA Board is expected to approve the Safeguarding Policy, the new disciplinary rules, and the establishment of the independent Case Management Group.

EN GARDE
KEEP SPORT SAFE

PROJECT SOLIDARITY

Amy Munro,
Director at Sustainability Consultants, Foxall Munro

Can you explain the origins of Project Solidarity which now works with IMOCA on safeguarding?

"Project Solidarity was developed in collaboration with a working group of safeguarding experts, key stakeholders, and individuals with lived experience. Through extensive research, stakeholder discussions, and direct interviews with individuals affected by abuse, harassment, and other forms of non-accidental violence, the initiative identified critical gaps in existing safeguarding policies, procedures, and survivor support. These insights helped shape a co-ordinated, sport-specific approach grounded in the principles of prevention, response, and remedy.

How is Project Solidarity providing support to IMOCA teams?

By putting the principle of 'prevention' into practice: As this project has progressed, it has become clear that lasting change requires a cultural shift toward prioritizing safety and wellbeing. With input from survivor voices and collaboration with IMOCA and other partner organisations, Project Solidarity has co-developed a suite of sailing-specific resources to help teams and individuals identify risks early and maintain safe working environments.

Through the Project Solidarity centralised platform, IMOCA teams can access safeguarding checklists, procedure templates, and educational resources to embed wellbeing into daily operations. Individuals can also access a welfare toolkit, which includes a checklist of topics to consider when starting a new role within the sailing sector, along with guidance on how to prevent, identify, and respond to harassment and abuse.

What are the next steps?

In 2026, Project Solidarity will offer access to emotional, psychological, legal, and practical support through independent advisors and a Legal Support Network. This will provide response and remedy pathways for individuals affected by abuse and harassment in the sport.
To access Project Solidarity resources and learn more about the program, visit SailingSolidarity.org.

FEMALE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Run in collaboration with The Magenta Project, 2025 was a transition year for the Female Leadership Development Programme, with three teams taking part.

The Malizia team welcomed Chantal Ferrero, who had the valuable opportunity to join Malizia during The Ocean Race Europe under the supervision of team manager Holly Cova.

The Szabi Sailing team welcomed Nadine Kessler to help with preparations for the start of the Transat Café L'Or and also the next Vendée Globe campaign alongside Szabi Weöres.

Team Francesca Clapcich Powered by 11th Hour Racing, meanwhile, took Louise Clayton on board, joining Francesca Clapcich for the delivery to Le Havre for the Transat Café L'OR, and then the transatlantic voyage back from Martinique to Lorient.

One of the main objectives of the Female Leadership Development Programme is to enable the community that supports the inclusion of women to grow by allowing people to meet and exchange ideas. To this end, and in order to promote the programme widely, a launch event was organised at the Transat Café L'OR start village. This brought together 50 people, including sponsors, team members and mentees, as well as companies from the sector such as Multiplast and GAC.

Audrey Rouaux,
Project Manager for Communications and Events at Bretagne Next

What the FLDP-Industry Pathway aims to achieve

"The programme aims to change the image of the offshore racing and sailing industry among young girls and women and attract them to this sector. We want to convey the image of a caring, inclusive ecosystem where diversity and performance go hand in hand. The offshore racing industry can offer women tremendous career opportunities. We want to inspire women to join this sector so that together we can build the industry of tomorrow, which will provide solutions to major societal challenges."

Victoria Low,
CEO The Magenta Project

What the FDLP is all about

"The Magenta Project exists to drive greater equity and inclusion for women in the sport of sailing by dismantling the systemic barriers that limit their participation and advancement.

Our partnership with IMOCA through the Female Leadership Development Programme is rooted in this mission — to increase visibility, expand access, and challenge the cultural norms and unconscious biases that continue to frame leadership through a masculine lens. By creating meaningful pathways and role-model visibility, the programme empowers emerging leaders both on the water and within the wider ecosystem of professional sailing.

Through structured mentorship, skills development, and ecosystem-wide collaboration, the Programme provides the support, networks, and competencies required for modern, inclusive leadership. It not only celebrates the women who have already shaped the IMOCA class but also reinforces IMOCA's pioneering commitment to lasting systemic change.

This is more than a training initiative; it is a collective movement to ensure the next generation sees women not as exceptions, but as leaders in their own right."

If you had to sum up your experience in three words, what would they be?

Chantal Ferrero,
Mentee with Team Malizia during The Ocean Race Europe

How did you find out about the FLDP and what made you want to apply for it?

"I found the project on the Magenta WhatsApp group chat, where they posted the opportunity to apply for the mentoring programme. As soon as I saw it, I knew it was the perfect opportunity to take my first step into the sailing industry, making my first connections in the professional world."

What would you say to a woman who is hesitating to apply to the FLDP?

"I think if being in the sailing industry is what she is looking for, and she doesn't know how to start or where to find those first connections, then there should be no hesitation in applying. It's an amazing platform and a great way to make those dreams come true, connecting teams and candidates through a trusted community, with the right people for the roles and job opportunities within the circuit."

Can you describe your immersion in the IMOCA team and how this experience changed you?

"I joined the Management & Partnerships department, under the supervision of my mentor, Holly Cova. But, as we all know, things can change within teams while traveling, and sometimes other departments needed help, so I also supported the logistics side. This experience gave me the opportunity to realize that I am capable of adapting myself to the different needs of the team, moving across departments, and completing different tasks as needed. It strengthened me personally because you start learning the dynamics of the team, learning how to interact with partners, to delegate, and organise tasks efficiently all while working under pressure. The Ocean Race Europe was really fast-paced and everything had to be ready on time for the next stopover."

The Magenta Project

INCLUSION AT EVERY LEVEL IN THE IMOCA CLASS

THE EXAMPLE OF CAFÉ JOYEUX AND SKIPPER NICOLAS D'ESTAIS

What does inclusion mean for you?

"It means having the chance to build a diverse team. It's about thinking carefully about how to bring different people together. The more varied the team profiles, the broader the range of skills and perspectives. Out of seven Café Joyeux team members, three are women and it's a young team with everyone under 38 years old.

There's a mix of profiles – some have IMOCA experience, others don't. Anouk Laurens is a boat preparer and a dinghy sailing coach, Berend Cabanes has travel experience and our team manager, Thomas d'Estais has sailed in the Mini Class. It's a dream to hire a person with a disability one day. The main goal is to surround ourselves with passionate people who have 'stars in their eyes."

How does the IMOCA Class promote inclusion within its community?

"There's a clear commitment to creating mixed teams, with a better gender balance between men and women. We'll be taking part in the Female Leadership Development Programme next year. Mentorship plays an important role – helping women sailors enter the world of offshore racing. The IMOCA Class has a key role to play: giving women a first opportunity to 'get a foot in the stirrup' and become part of the network."

Your project is based on inclusion: can you explain how it works?

"We have a partnership with Café Joyeux which is a network of inclusive cafés based at 30 locations in France, the USA and Portugal and employing 215 'joyful members', all living with disabilities. Its mission is to provide stable employment for people who are far from the job market. Profits are reinvested to open new cafés and hire new team members. The connection with the IMOCA project is to use the boat to put inclusion in the spotlight. Our goal is to promote Café Joyeux through a positive communication campaign and through boat visits and activation events.

"Our inclusive approach brings tremendous human value: We do it for others, but also for ourselves."

THE FUTURE

Since 2018, the IMOCA Class has placed the transition of our sport, to an increasingly responsible, open and sustainable offshore racing environment, at the heart of its priorities.

Step-by-step, alongside our skippers, teams, commercial partners and suppliers, we are moving forward with the desire to inspire, learn and share.

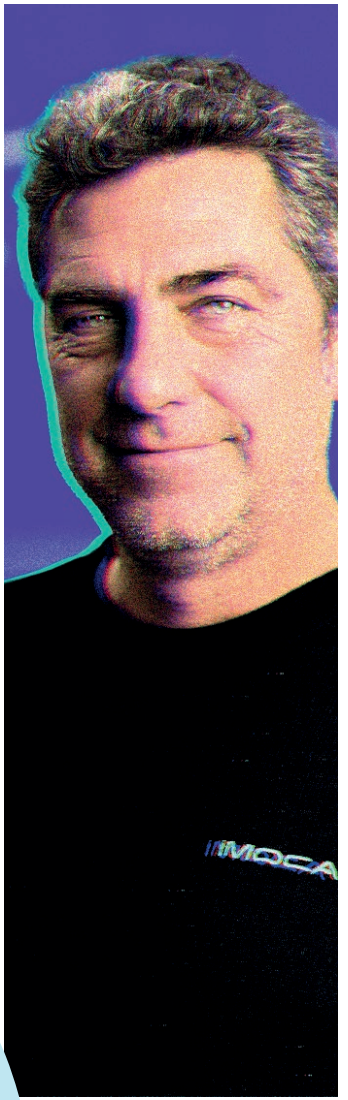
We are committed to encouraging the entire offshore racing community to get involved in this dynamic, convinced that working together is not only the key to progress, but also to the future of our sport.

Going forward, our aim is to continue to lead the way, to experiment and to share what we learn.

And this year, our championship saw, for the first time, four women climb into the top-10 positions in the IMOCA Globe Series ranking. Not only is this a welcome evolution, but it is also a strong reminder that IMOCA's legacy is based on our people and their achievements, and the trace they leave for future generations.

2025 has been another wonderful year for the Class with some compelling fully-crewed and double-handed racing. As we look forward to the return of solo racing in 2026, and the completion of the latest new builds – all of which are achieving significant emissions savings – I am determined that IMOCA should continue to lead the way both on the water and off it. »

Antoine Mermod,
IMOCA Class President




IMOCA
THE OCEAN RACE

A PROGRAMME SUPPORTED BY 11TH HOUR RACING, OUR OFFICIAL SUSTAINABILITY PARTNER

ABOUT 11TH HOUR RACING

11th Hour Racing works to mobilize sports, maritime and coastal communities with an innovative approach to inspire solutions for the ocean.

11th Hour Racing promotes collaborative, systemic change through three primary areas of engagement: sponsorships, grantees and ambassadors.
These philanthropic activities are provided through 11th Hour Racing, Inc., 11th Hour Racing Charitable and 11th Hour Racing Action.

Learn more at : www.11thhourracing.org.

To find more about them visit our IMOCA website

ALL THIS WORK WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE WITHOUT OUR AMAZING PARTNERS

Partnerships were built with MarineShift360 - the Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) tool designed specifically for the marine industry.

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