

Project Baseline

a global underwater explorers initiative



Credit: Richie Denmark



Credit: GUE



Credit: Claudio Provansani



Credit: Gery ter Velde

2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Project Baseline's mission is to empower passionate citizens to observe and record changes in the world's aquatic environments in a way that fosters public awareness and supports political action.

OUR GOALS

1. Document the health and vitality of the world's underwater environments.
2. Increase public awareness of the health of and threats to those underwater environments.
3. Facilitate political action to protect and conserve those underwater environments.

At a Glance

65

Volunteer-run projects utilizing our program infrastructure to actively document and share underwater conditions in **27 countries**

535

Underwater locations (Stations) being monitored in **marine and freshwater environments**

3402

Station visits by land and by sea, resulting in an aquatic documentation movement driven by **invested, skilled, and mission-oriented water lovers**

Our Programs

Visual Legacy

Our flagship program is designed to document the health and vitality of the world's underwater environments by establishing verifiable baselines of environmental conditions, achieved through systematic data collection at geographic targets at and below the water's surface. This program is comprised of several complementary objectives and program elements which demand around 48% of our staff's and volunteers' attention and participation.

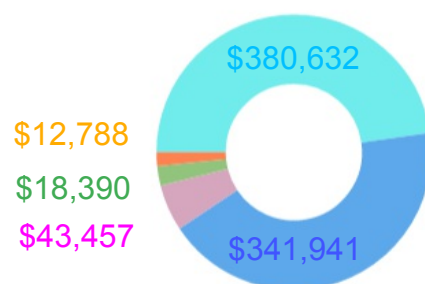
Momentum

This program prioritizes outreach, promotion, and audience engagement of underwater environments around the world. We highlight the phenomenon of shifting baselines as a philosophical concept and promote Project Baseline's impact on the underwater world. We publicize our volunteers' benchmarks of success, from operations aboard Global Sub Dive's *Baseline Explorer** to our land-based teams as well as key mission collaborators. Nearly 43% of our human resources are allocated to this program as we increase public awareness of the health of and threats to the world's underwater environments.

Awareness into Action

Our affiliates, constituents, and collaborators have access to our spatial database, to a global network of skilled divers, and to dedicated media and promotional staff. These resources allow us to deliver tangible results that matter to a range of stakeholders, from small communities of invested citizens to environmental researchers and policy makers operating at the tops of their fields. This program enables us to support entities interested in facilitating political action to improve and protect the health of the world's underwater environments. As we head into 2016, we look forward to dedicating more resources to this important program.

Allocations of Revenue to Project Baseline
Programs and Operations



Visual Legacy (48%) Momentum (43%) Awareness into Action (5%)
Fundraising and Membership (2%) Operational (2%)

*Read more about
Baseline Explorer
on page 9

Visual Legacy Program



In 2009, we embarked on a journey to capture the experiences divers have underwater and share those experiences with as many people as possible. Initially, we focused on pictures collected from very specific underwater locations. Fast forwarding to 2015, we remain committed to creating a lasting visual legacy of all aquatic environments by encouraging our volunteers to systematically take pictures, but we're also branching out. Our documentation work includes HD video as well as an emphasis on water quality and biological characterizations. This approach enables our network of volunteers and collaborators to paint a more complete picture of the surface and underwater locations we love to visit.

Project Baseline developed a proprietary SQL database that allows us to share underwater images in a spatial context, making armchair underwater exploration easy for all!



Program Elements

1. Proprietary SQL database maintenance, expansion, and data management
2. Web-based database interface maintenance and expansion (hosted on Global Underwater Explorers' server)
3. Additional mapping services (Geographic Information System, Google Earth, and Google Maps)
4. Management of global volunteer network and program affiliates
5. Mission organization and execution (includes *Baseline Explorer* operations and land-based volunteer teams)

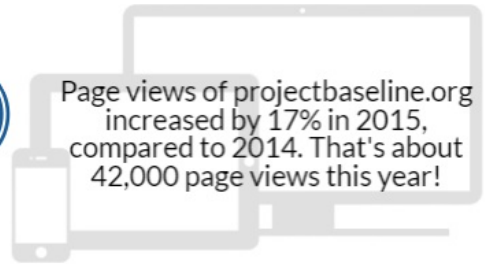
Momentum Program



One of the greatest resources we provide to our network of volunteers and affiliates is access to a dedicated media, outreach, and promotional team who increase exposure to media outlets and audiences. We believe that by sharing what we see with our continually-expanding online audience we will create a broader awareness, understanding, and appreciation of aquatic environments and the collective determination to protect these places.



Page views of projectbaseline.org increased by 17% in 2015, compared to 2014. That's about 42,000 page views this year!



Program Elements

1. Multimedia coordination and content management for web, video, social media, and print
2. Promotional material development, both print and online
3. Project Baseline website design, maintenance, and upgrades
4. Media contact management, including press corps and creative programming
5. Content dissemination across social media platforms and online, print, TV, and radio outlets
6. Media follow-ups and outreach performance tracking

Awareness into Action Program



Our third mission-supporting program is designed to empower people to take direct, hands-on action that makes a tangible and measurable difference to the places they love to play and explore. Our intimate knowledge of aquatic environments brings difficult-to-obtain information to the people shaping environmental policy on local, regional, and international scales. Project Baseline provides a structure so that anyone, from volunteers to trained researchers, can present credible, reliable, and compelling evidence to inform environmental policy and decision making.

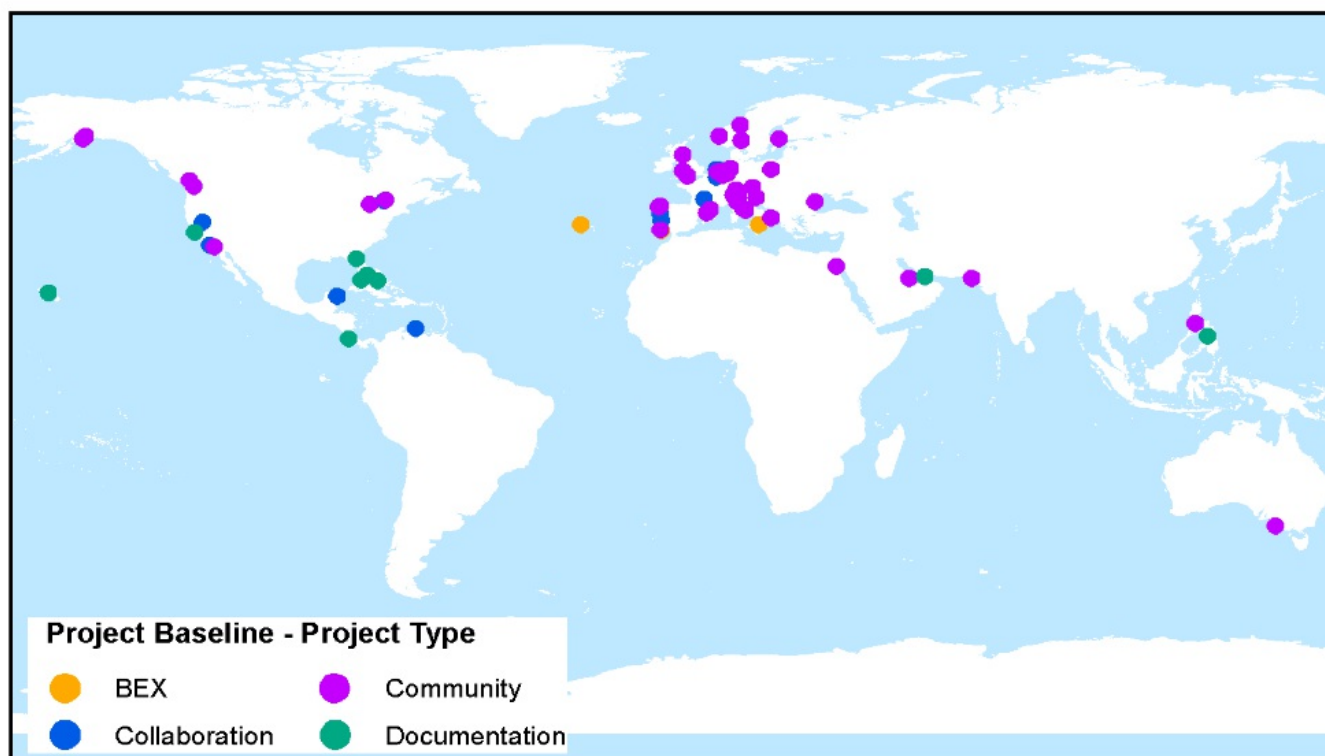


60,000+ lbs of debris was removed from underwater environments and properly disposed of by Project Baseline volunteers in 2015

Program Elements

1. Stewardship (including clean-ups, both underwater and surface)
2. Educational initiatives (introductions to the underwater world in primary, secondary and university-level learning environments)
3. Support for Call to Action campaigns
4. Research support for creation of Marine Protected Areas and archeological areas of cultural significance

“One voice can change a room, and if one voice can change a room, then it can change a city, and if it can change a city, it can change a state, and if it can change a state, it can change a nation, and if it can change a nation, it can change the world.” — Barack Obama



Project Highlights



Lake Tahoe

One of our longest running Projects, Lake Tahoe, is an excellent example of a team that established extensive collaborations with entities external to Project Baseline. 2015 was a galvanizing year for this small but dedicated group of divers. After spending 3 years developing a reputation for reliable, consistent data collection from various depths at Lake Tahoe, this team has been asked to collect samples and install monitoring equipment for two universities and has received funding from two different sources (universities and community foundations) to carry their work into 2016.



Haarlemmermeer

Growing in size and impact since 2012, this is a prime example of a community project being led by one highly motivated volunteer Project Manager who is establishing a permanent and positive presence in his local community. 2015 benchmarks for this team include 35 volunteers contributing to the annual lake cleanup effort, 11 seats offered to the public in a submersible that brought non-divers under the lake's surface for a firsthand view, and a series of community presentations about the lake at Haarlemmermeer and Project Baseline.



Florida Wrecks

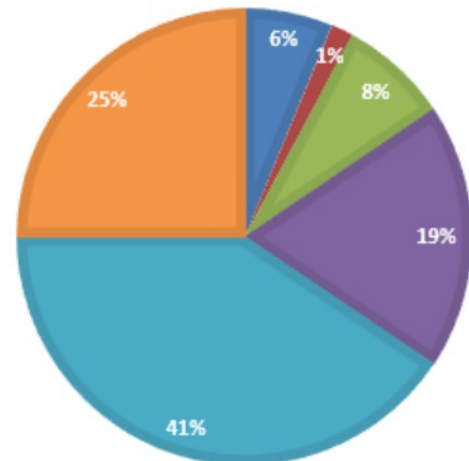
New to our Program in 2015, Florida Wrecks represents our first effort to broaden data submitted to our database, operating under our Documentation Project designation. Data submitted by the public goes through a quality assurance review before being included in our database. Our goal is to increase documentation of the underwater world by encouraging all people visiting aquatic environments to submit their observations without becoming a formal volunteer or being associated with an established team.

Projects

Over the past 12 months we've tightened up our Project initiation and participation requirements so that each Project now meets minimum data contribution requirements for new Projects. The result is an increase in the number of self-starting and self-sustaining Projects and an increase in reliable data submissions over time.

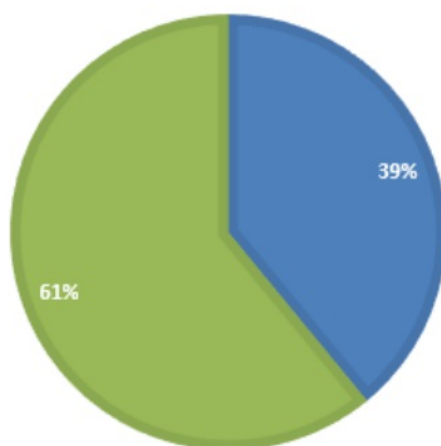
PROJECTS BY INITIATION DATE

■ 2010 ■ 2011 ■ 2012 ■ 2013 ■ 2014 ■ 2015



FRESHWATER VS. MARINE (ALL PROJECTS)

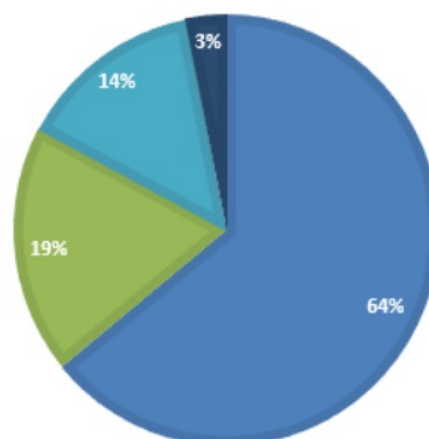
■ Fresh ■ Marine



Project Baseline is dedicated to the systematic documentation and public support of all underwater environments. We support projects operating in the following aquatic environments: marine (deep sea and coastal), lakes, rivers, springs, and flooded caves. By focusing on this wide range of environments we are drawing a comprehensive picture about the common challenges and beauty that connect all water environments.

PROJECTS BY TYPE

■ Community ■ Collaboration ■ Documentation ■ Baseline Explorer



In 2015, we expanded the ways in which volunteers and program collaborators are able contribute to Project Baseline by designating four distinct project types:

Community

Collaboration

Documentation

Baseline Explorer (sponsored by Global Sub Dive)

Spatial Database Summary

159

Sites established within Projects

535

Stations established within Sites

3402

Station visits

2303

Visibility estimates uploaded

1261

Images uploaded

Credit: Martin McClellan

Data collected by our volunteers, in order of frequency

1. Water temperature
2. Visibility
3. Images
4. Flora and fauna observations
5. Human impacts

The technology behind Project Baseline

There are two main technology products required to make our vision of hosting and organizing underwater observations a reality:

1. The database where data is organized and stored.
2. The web-based public interface that allows anyone with an internet connection to search and view data from our database.

When combined, these technology components deliver one of the most significant resources offered to our network and the public as we work together to know and understand these underwater environments.

*database statistics reflect all years, 2010-2015

Baseline Explorer (BEX)

A research vessel that is privately owned and operated by Brownie's Global Logistics and provides all the necessary equipment and personnel required to explore and document the underwater world, at depths up to 1000', in support of Project Baseline's mission, scientific research, conservation, public education, and exploration missions.

1.

A 146' ocean support vessel (OSV) equipped with dynamic positioning capabilities, an A-frame crane, knuckle crane, and at least three supporting tenders.

Credit: Pilar Barrera



2.

Hosts and operates a variety of submersible human-occupied vehicles (HOVs) to provide a first-hand view of the underwater world to students, researchers, media personalities, and political representatives.

Credit: GUE



3.

Hosts and supports highly skilled technical dive teams to complement HOV missions and assist in creating compelling media focused on the human experience underwater.

Credit: GUE



255

Submersible dives launched from *Baseline Explorer* (2014-2015)

187

Technical scuba dives safely and successfully completed from *Baseline Explorer* (2014-2015)

Baseline Explorer (BEX)

In 2015 we continued to update an online map tracking the location and progress of BEX and her related missions. We produced and released three promotional videos demonstrating BEX capabilities and mission overviews that took place in Florida. Two BEX operations received media coverage by local and national outlets, including CBS.

2015 Missions

Fish sampling methodology development in Southeast Florida with Nova Southeastern University (December)

Worked towards developing a robust sampling methodology using manned submersible and advanced technical scuba diving teams that will measure fish populations inhabiting deepwater shipwrecks off the coast of Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Research support in Southeast Florida with Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute (June)

Researchers investigated *Oculina* coral presence and documented and collected algae samples from the Florida Keys, Miami, Hollywood, and Ft. Pierce coastal areas.



- 1 Memorandum of Understanding** signed between Project Baseline and Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute, forming an official partnership to jointly fund research missions.

Collaborators working to support our mission



Our Media Reach

42113

page views on projectbaseline.org

13223

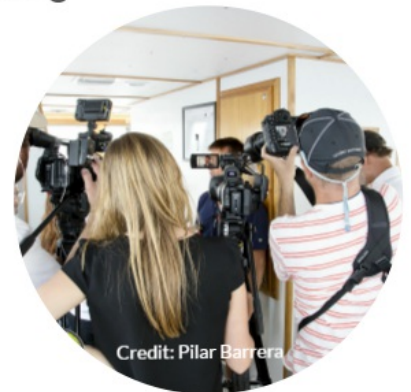
new and returning visitors
to projectbaseline.org

29

curated Project and
mission update posts to
projectbaseline.org/blog

1

feature story on the National Geographic
Ocean Views Blog



Slate

Featured on



likes

904 added (2015)
4,573 lifetime likes



views

16,566 (2015)
51,022 lifetime



subscribers

387 lifetime
38,600+ (Impressions)



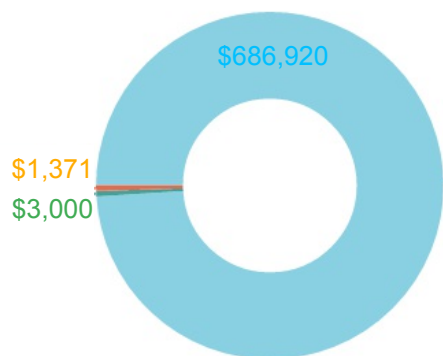
followers

Established in 2015
813 lifetime

Financials - 2015 Q1-3

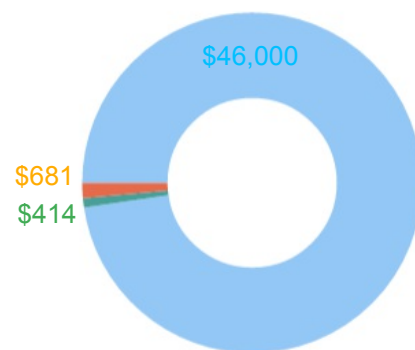
Revenue

In-kind Support



■ Brownies Global Logistics (99%) ■ GeoHydros, LLC (1%)
■ Halcyon (1%)

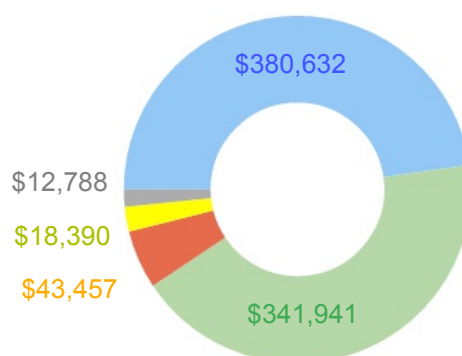
Cash



■ GUE - Membership (98%) ■ Donations - Individual (1%)
■ Merchandise - Sales (1%)

Expenses

Programs and Services



■ Visual Legacy (48%) ■ Momentum (43%)
■ Awareness into Action (5%) ■ Fundraising and Membership (2%)
■ Operational (2%)