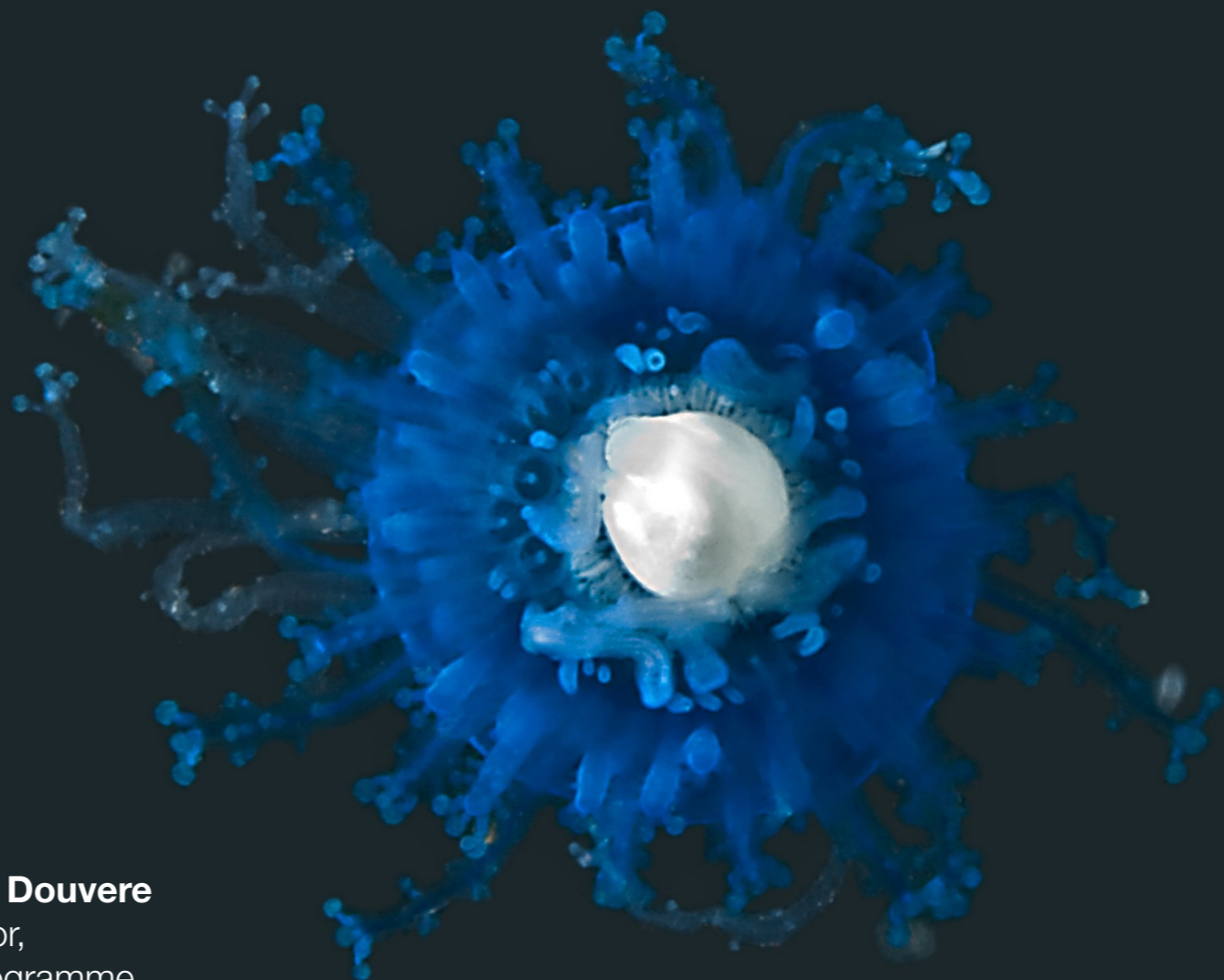


World Heritage in the High Seas : An Idea Whose Time Has Come



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



World
Heritage
Convention

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Coordinator,
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49 marine sites
inscribed on the
World Heritage List



© UNESCO

● World Heritage site in Danger ● natural World Heritage site ● mixed cultural and natural World Heritage site



World Heritage sites: What is different from other MPAs?

Part of a **prestigious** collection of iconic marine places

World Heritage Committee **reporting**

Listing in Danger or removal of the World Heritage List

What about
the other half of
the planet
not protected?





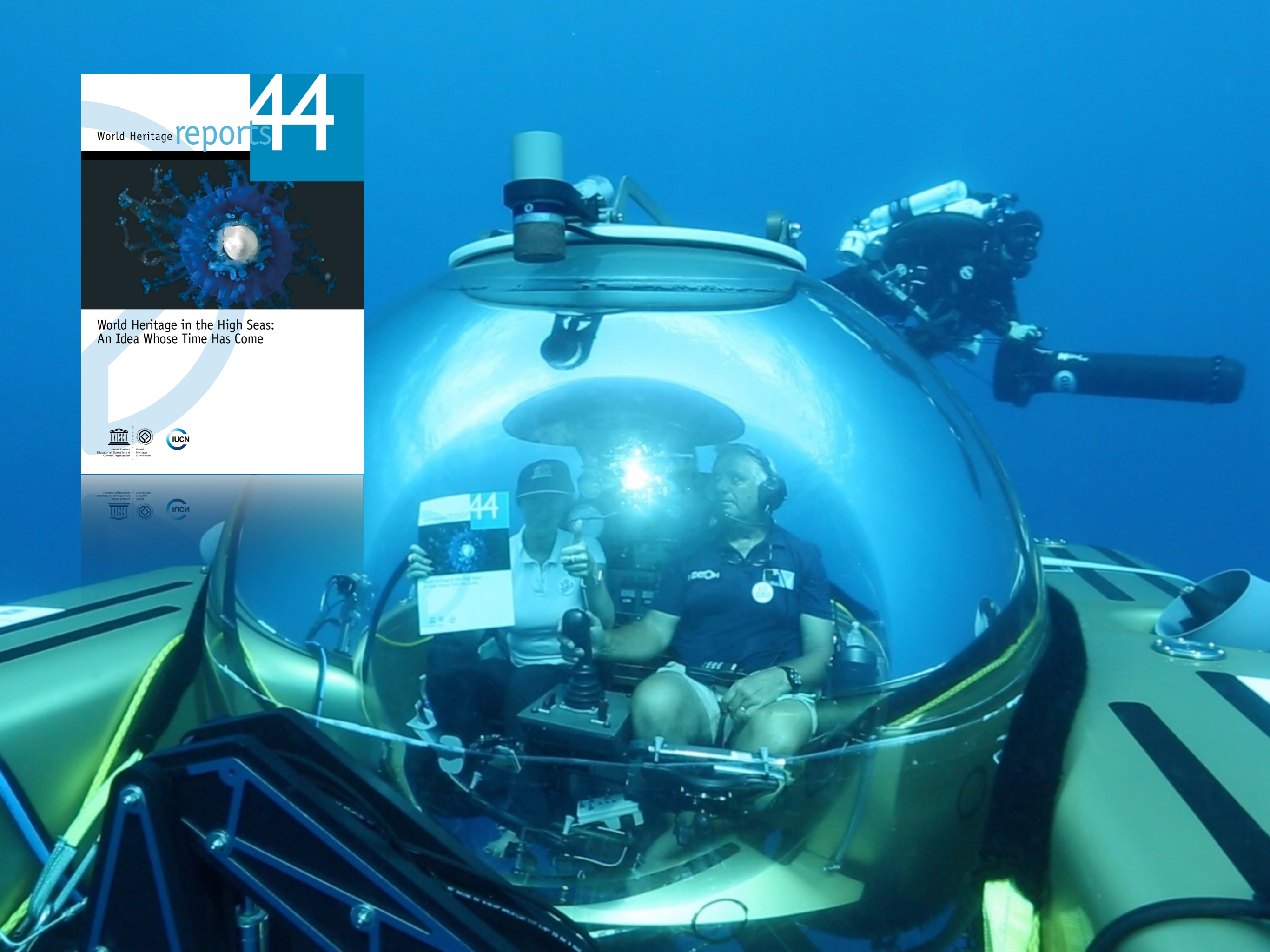
Did the Conventions founders far-sighted vision of protection envisaged a future world where we ended up excluding half of the surface of the Earth?



High Seas scientists convene in Paris to explore World Heritage protection



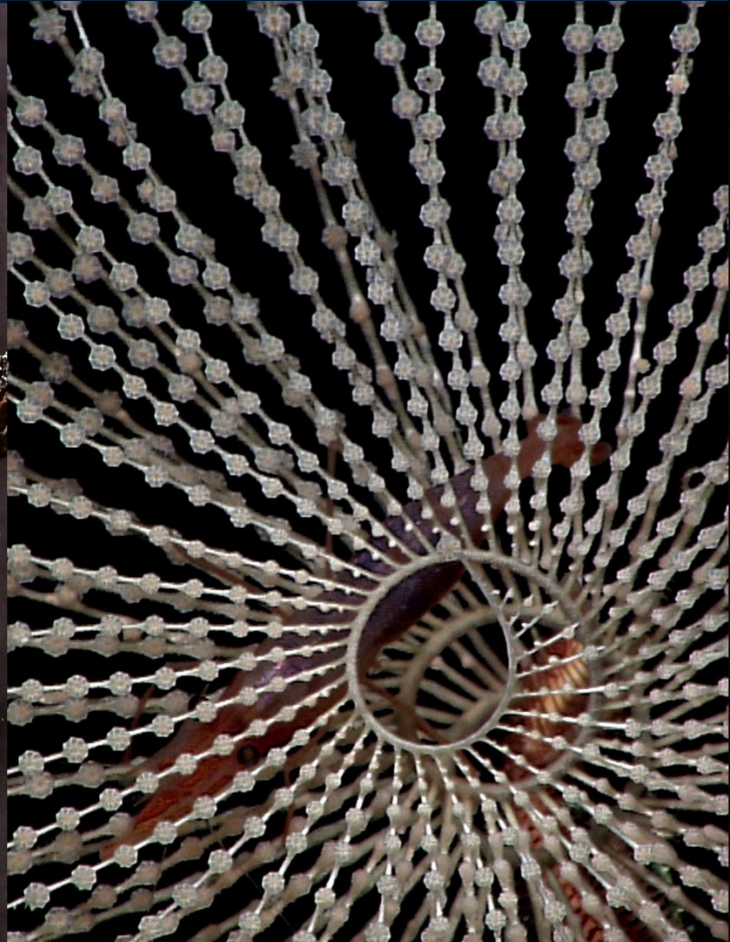
World Heritage in the High Seas:
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World Heritage Criteria (natural):

- vii.** Phenomenon/area of exceptional natural beauty;
- viii.** Outstanding major stages of Earths history
- ix.** Iconic ecological/biological processes
- x.** Unique natural habitats and biodiversity



Sunken fossilized islands...

Giant volcanoes forming vast seamounts...

A floating golden rainforest...

60 metre high white spires of rock...



The Sargasso Sea

4

1

The Lost City Hydrothermal Field

2

The Costa Rica Thermal Dome

3

The White Shark Café

5

The Atlantis Bank



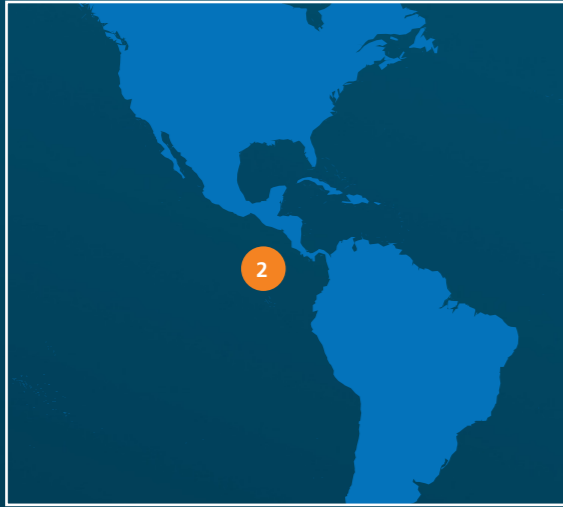
The Lost City Hydrothermal Field

Discovered in 2000 and unlike any other ecosystem yet known on Earth.

Sits at 800m depth with serpentinite cliffs weep hot fluids producing delicate finger-like outgrowths and chimneys which has been going for

120,000 years.





Costa Rica Thermal Dome

First observed in 1948, the 500km wide oceanic oasis is created through an interaction between wind and currents which promotes blooms of surface plankton that nurture a globally exceptional environment for highly migratory marine predators



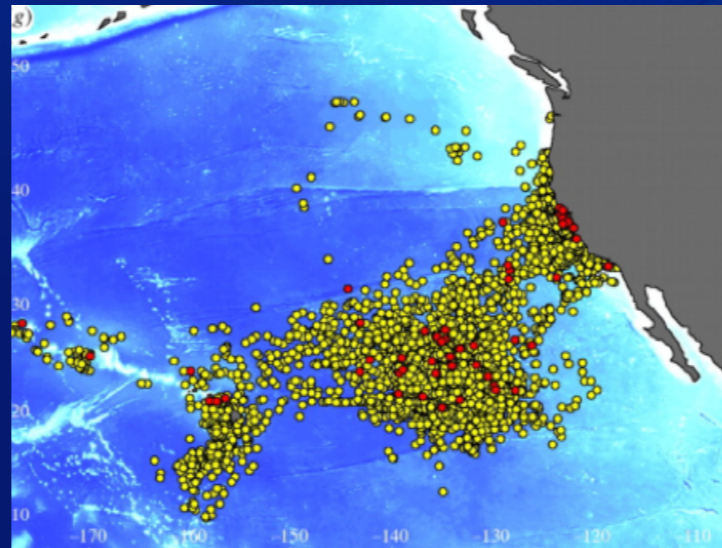
White Shark Café

Halfway between North America and Hawaii,

white sharks

congregate to this spot, likely to feed and mate.

No other place like it is known on Earth.

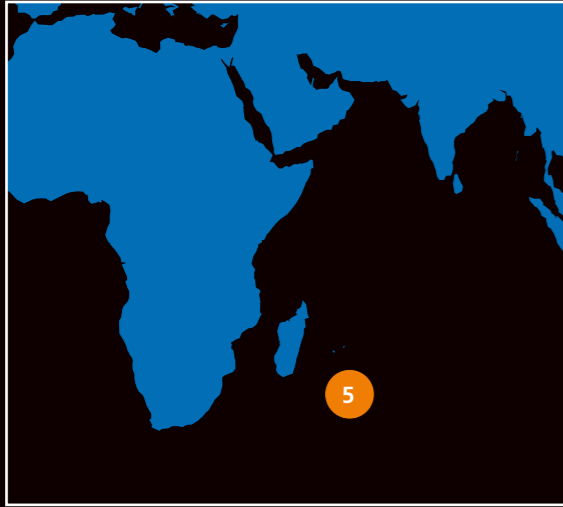




Sargasso Sea

First viewed by **Columbus on his first voyage in 1495** and has been a place of myth and legend ever since. Commonly called the **Golden Rainforest of the Ocean**, it is home to an iconic pelagic ecosystem built around the floating Sargassum seaweeds, the worlds' only holopelagic algae





Atlantis Bank

Uniquely remarkable tectonic featured
created by uplift

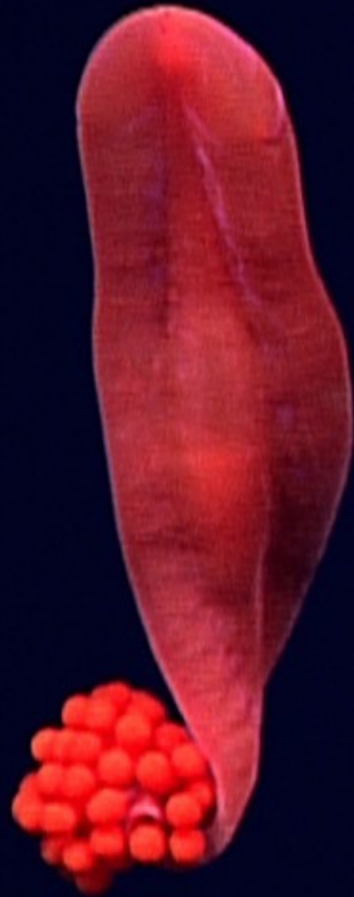
Southwest Indian Ridge

that harbours highly diverse and stunning

coral gardens and
complex sea-cliff deep
sea communities

like armchair sized sponges, predatory sea
spiders and many unknown species yet to
be named by science





How could the World
Heritage Convention
protect these
unique deep sea
treasures?



Nothing in the inspirational vision of the 1972 World Heritage Convention suggests that nature or cultural heritage beyond national jurisdiction should be excluded.

The lack of
procedures
to nominate, manage and protect a
site of Outstanding Universal Value
in the High Seas is a
historical oversight.



The World Heritage Convention beyond **National Jurisdiction**

1. Evolutionary development of the World Heritage Convention application
2. Provisions in the Operational Guidelines allow addressing thematic gaps
3. Synergies with UNCLOS BBNJ negotiations
4. Next steps: Costa Rica Dome & Sargasso Sea / OG amendments

For information:

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