

**OCEAN LITERACY WORLD CONFERENCE**  
**8th June / 8 giugno**

Quotes from SEA BEYONDers

**Giovanni Chimienti (Marine Biologist and National Geographic Explorer):** “I’ve always been fascinated by the ocean, particularly by the unseen depths of our planet. Black corals are among the protagonists of the deep sea, and they can live for more than a thousand years. They’ve been through several mass extinctions and catastrophic events, and yet in the space of 200 years they’re threatened by our actions. Coral ecosystems are so important, but so fragile.”

**Elisabetta Zavoli (Photojournalist and National Geographic Explorer):** “Safeguarding marine ecosystems is the only way to protect the ocean from future invasive species. This is a complex issue, but ocean literacy plays a pivotal role because we need decision-makers to be thoroughly informed on ocean issues because the decisions we make (or don’t make today) will affect future generations. Children are the real future of the world.”

**Maya Gabeira (Big Wave Surfer and UNESCO Champion for Ocean and Youth):** “In my second book, *Maya Makes Waves*, the ocean asks Maya to be its voice. It was only in 2020, when I peaked in my sport and got my second world record, that I realised it didn’t make sense for me to be a top athlete and not be more outspoken. I want to show people you can do both – you can have big goals in life, but it doesn’t make sense if you don’t use your voice.”

**Carmelo Isgrò (Biologist and Founder of the MuMa Milazzo Sea Museum):** “The museum is not about death, it’s about life. It was built around the sperm whale, Siso, which died because of illegal fishing. The same net that ended its life has become a network, uniting people around this important cause of protecting our precious marine ecosystems.”

**Valentina Gottlieb (Environmental Advocate and Actress):** “Being a SEABEYONDER has been such an inspiring experience. I realised I had a growing audience, one that was very young. That’s when SEA BEYOND came in, as did my passion and connection to nature and the ocean. I’ve used my platform to spread the vision of SEA BEYOND and had the honour of being on the jury of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of SEA BEYOND.”