It is well known that 70 percent of the world's surface is covered by oceans, but much of their beauty, biodiversity and value for the overall environment is less well known. The marine program of the World Heritage Centre exists to bring attention to this patrimony and help protect it.

An effort is being made to encourage and develop additional marine sites and areas to help protect them.

The ocean's resources are under threat. The seas are littered with the debris of dead and dying coral and other marine life. Much of the world's fishing capacity now targets only the most easily accessible areas of marine life. As a result, the entire marine environment is under threat.

The World Heritage Centre is working to develop the Total Marine Protection Network to help safeguard the world's oceans and coasts.

The network will bring together countries from around the world to establish and manage marine protected areas that are protected as part of the World Heritage system.

It is hoped that the network will help to ensure that the world's oceans and coasts are protected for future generations.

The network will be a key part of the World Heritage Centre's efforts to protect the world's natural heritage.

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