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YachtAid Global Expands Operation Swimway across the Caribbean in Collaboration with Local and Regional Partners

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In a groundbreaking initiative to advance marine conservation efforts in the Caribbean Sea, YachtAid Global has partnered with regional marine megafauna experts and local and regional entities to extend its flagship marine conservation project, Operation Swimway. This collaborative endeavor aims to safeguard critical migratory routes for marine megafauna, with an initial focus on enhancing the understanding of the movement patterns of tiger sharks (*Galeocerdo cuvier*) and silky sharks (*Carcharhinus falciformis*).

Background on Operation Swimway and YachtAid Global:

Operation Swimway, spearheaded by YachtAid Global, is a comprehensive marine conservation program designed to protect the migratory pathways of key marine species. YachtAid Global, a registered 501c3 nonprofit founded in 2006, has been dedicated to focusing the yachting community leadership and participation across humanitarian and environmental causes, operating at the highest levels of international non-profit work.

YachtAid Global's initiatives engage the generosity of the yachting community, leveraging their unique assets already in place to provide disaster relief, humanitarian aid, and conservation programs across coastal communities worldwide.

YachtAid Global runs "Operation Swimway," a conservation program featuring investments in the equipment and science of ocean conservation. This program allows interested yacht owners, guests, and crew to work closely with distinguished members of the YachtAid Global scientific team and other members of the research community, accelerating the conservation of pelagic species. The collaborative efforts are focused on the conservation of critical migration corridors for sharks, manta rays, sea turtles, whales, and billfish along routes impacted by overfishing and bycatch.

YachtAid Global conducts research and invests in ocean conservation science equipment, with participating yachts engaging in meaningful conservation work by assisting with dives, operating underwater equipment, tagging, measuring animals, and learning hands-on conservation methods and science.



Changing the World Without Changing Course

Satellite Telemetry Studies at an Unprecedented Scale in the Insular Caribbean:

Under the auspices of YachtAid Global, one of the most extensive satellite telemetry studies in the insular Caribbean is currently underway. Satellite telemetry tags have been deployed initially on tiger sharks and silky sharks to gather critical data on their migration patterns and behavior. This research, conducted in collaboration with local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), was initiated first in the territorial waters of Antigua and Barbuda, the Anguilla Channel, Saint Martin, and the Saba Bank with more locations being identified for future collaborative research.

The growing coalition of partners in this groundbreaking research includes the Sint Maarten Nature Foundation, Elkhorn Marine Conservation, Antigua and Barbuda National Parks, Environmental Awareness Group Antigua and Barbuda, the Saba Conservation Foundation, OneShark Project Saint Martin, SXM Divers, and Saba Deep.

YachtAid Global envisions future studies that will involve strategic partnerships with other partners across the wider Caribbean region. This collaboration aims to enhance data collection capabilities and ensure the sustainable implementation of conservation management actions. YachtAid Global is committed to providing capacity support at no cost to local organizations, fostering a collaborative approach to marine conservation.

Contributing to 30x30 Goals:

The research aligns with the regional 30x30 goals, where Caribbean countries aim to protect 30% of their Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) by the year 2030. YachtAid Global's efforts contribute significantly to achieving this ambitious conservation target, emphasizing the importance of preserving marine ecosystems for future generations through basing decisions on the best possible available data collected in the field.

Towards Large Scale Marine Protected Areas (MPAs):

Beyond the immediate benefits of protecting migratory corridors, Operation Swimway's research contributes essential data for advocating the establishment of large-scale Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Caribbean. These MPAs will play a pivotal role in ensuring the long-term conservation of marine biodiversity and preserving critical habitats.

YachtAid Global's science team's collaboration with local and regional partners marks a significant milestone in marine conservation efforts. The ongoing satellite telemetry studies and future collaborations underscore a collective commitment to safeguarding the Caribbean's rich marine biodiversity and achieving ambitious conservation goals.

For more information about YachtAid Global and Operation Swimway, please visit <https://yachtaidglobal.org/campaigns/operation-swimway>.

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