



ESRA Conference

Financing Blue Carbon and Ocean Projects

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The Finance Gap

- **SDG 14 Life Below Water**

Least funded of all the SDGs and less than 1% (OECD)

- **\$150Bn**

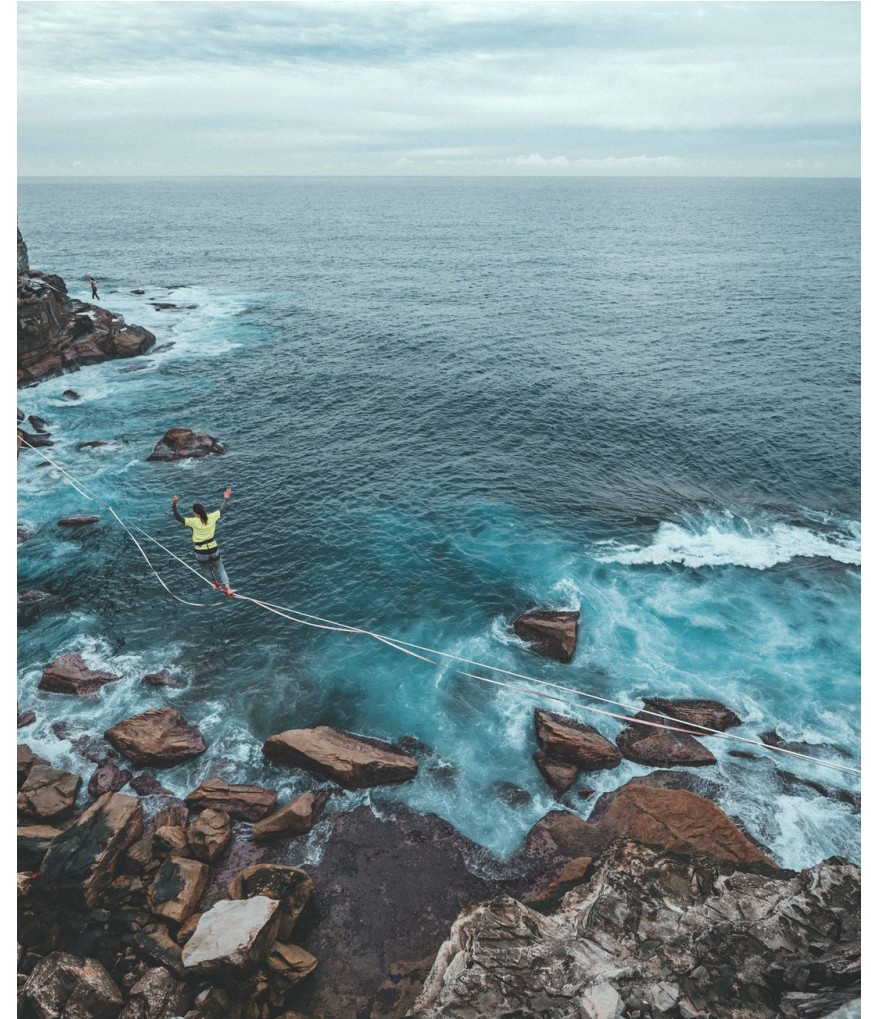
Estimated annual finance gap for ocean projects (WEF)

- **Perceived risk of projects**

Relatively new area for corporates and private finance and technical complexity is off putting (WRI)

- **Perceptions of Private Finance mechanisms**

Scepticism around the credibility of the VCM and other private finance mechanisms



Blue Carbon Finance Challenges

- **Demand Profile**

Corporate demand is high for blue carbon projects and credits but...

Lack of 'investable pipeline' and unclear line of sight to projects

Technical complexity, early-stage, and scaling challenges

- **Data Gaps**

Data gaps persist slowing methodological advancement

R&D difficult to fund - little appetite for testing or piloting (fails)

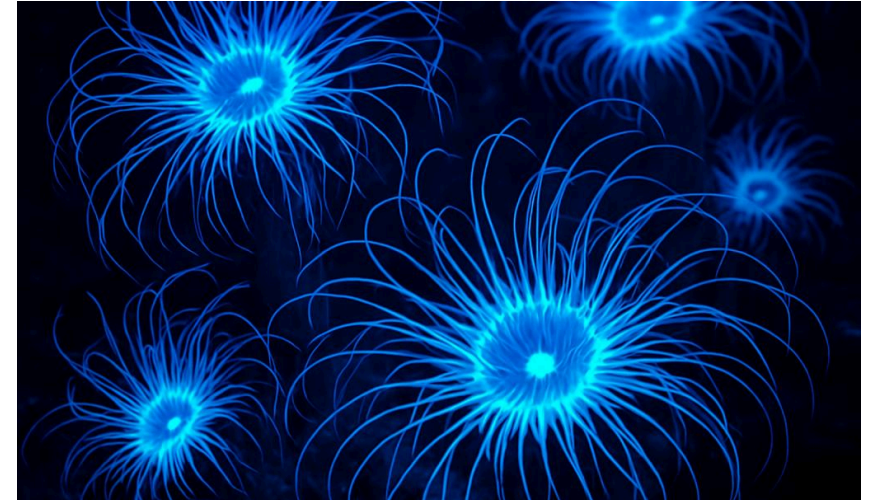
VM0033 inapplicable in many geographies and conditions

- **Project Needs**

Delivering excellent work but mismatch between projects and corporates

Traditional funding is limited, time-bound, often too hard to fund innovation

Operational and capacity development needed to access finance and scale



Finance Opportunities

SBTi Beyond Value Chain Mitigation



Framework for Corporate Participation in the VCM

- Validates Net Zero Targets
- Validates interim targets incl use of credits
- Recommends Innovation funding in addition to carbon credits
- Linear and non-linear Innovation to carbon credits

<https://sciencebasedtargets.org/beyond-value-chain-mitigation>

Deloitte Case Study



SeagrassSpotter

A global tool for people to help locate seagrass

Sightings
7544



Users
3544



Species
32



Countries
65



Deloitte Case Study Video

Athena Blue

Closing the Finance Gap



Mission:

Unlock finance for ocean projects to scale impact



Approach:

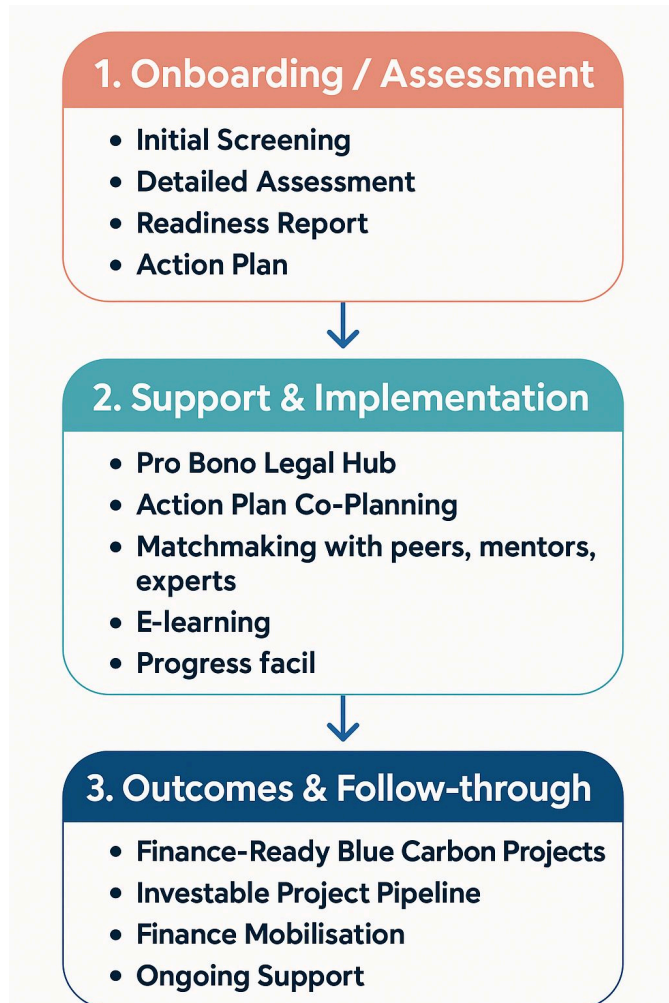
Finance readiness assessment, strategic operational support, matchmaking



Focus:

Blue carbon initially but expanding to wider ocean projects

Athena Blue Process (Beta V1)



- **Beta Version for testing**

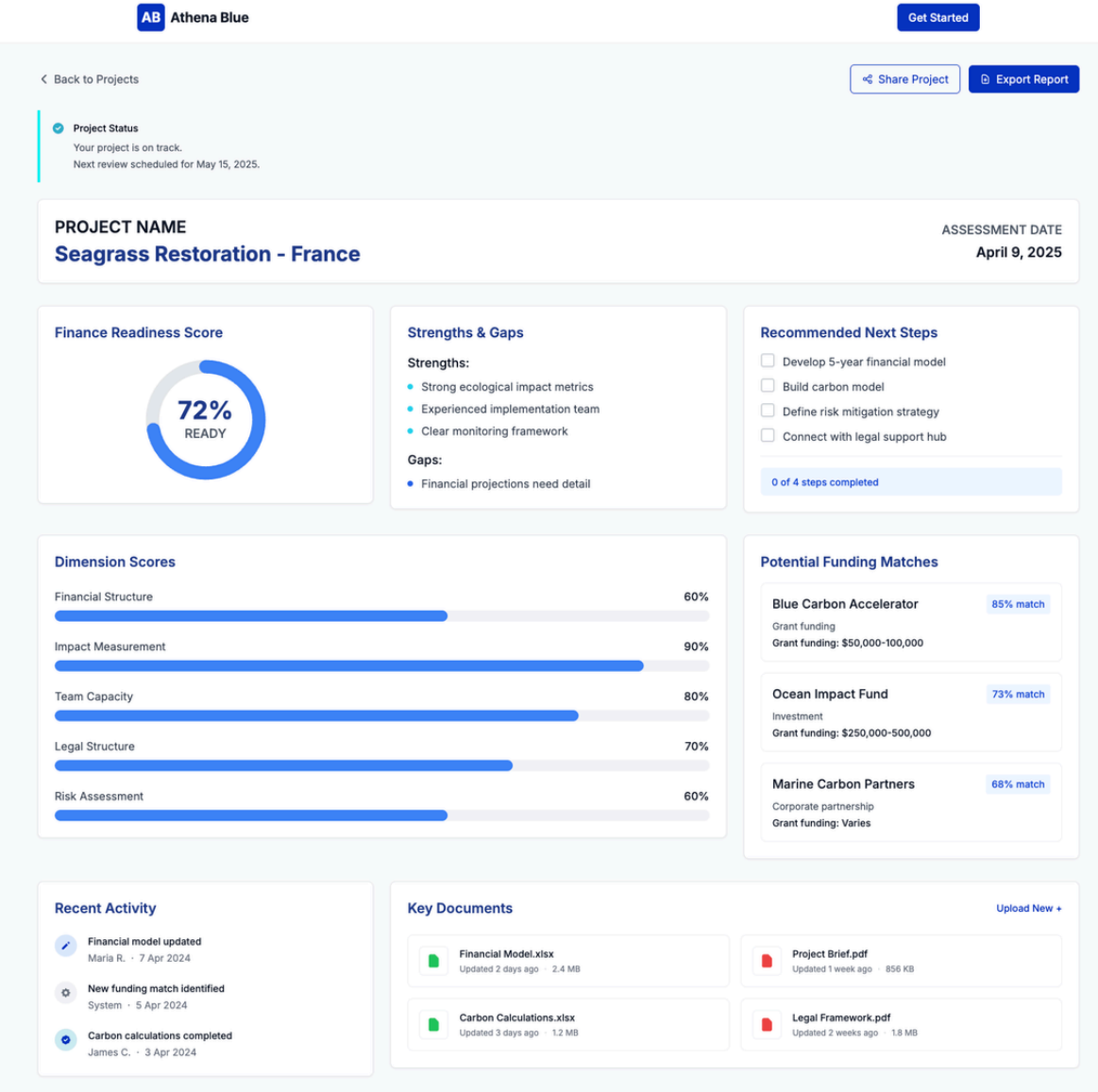
Three stages

Aim is to build the pipeline of projects to attract finance

Analysis of the 'field' to determine trends across countries and across themes

Targeted support for areas that need strengthening

Matchmaking function with finance



● Mock-up of Finance Readiness Dashboard

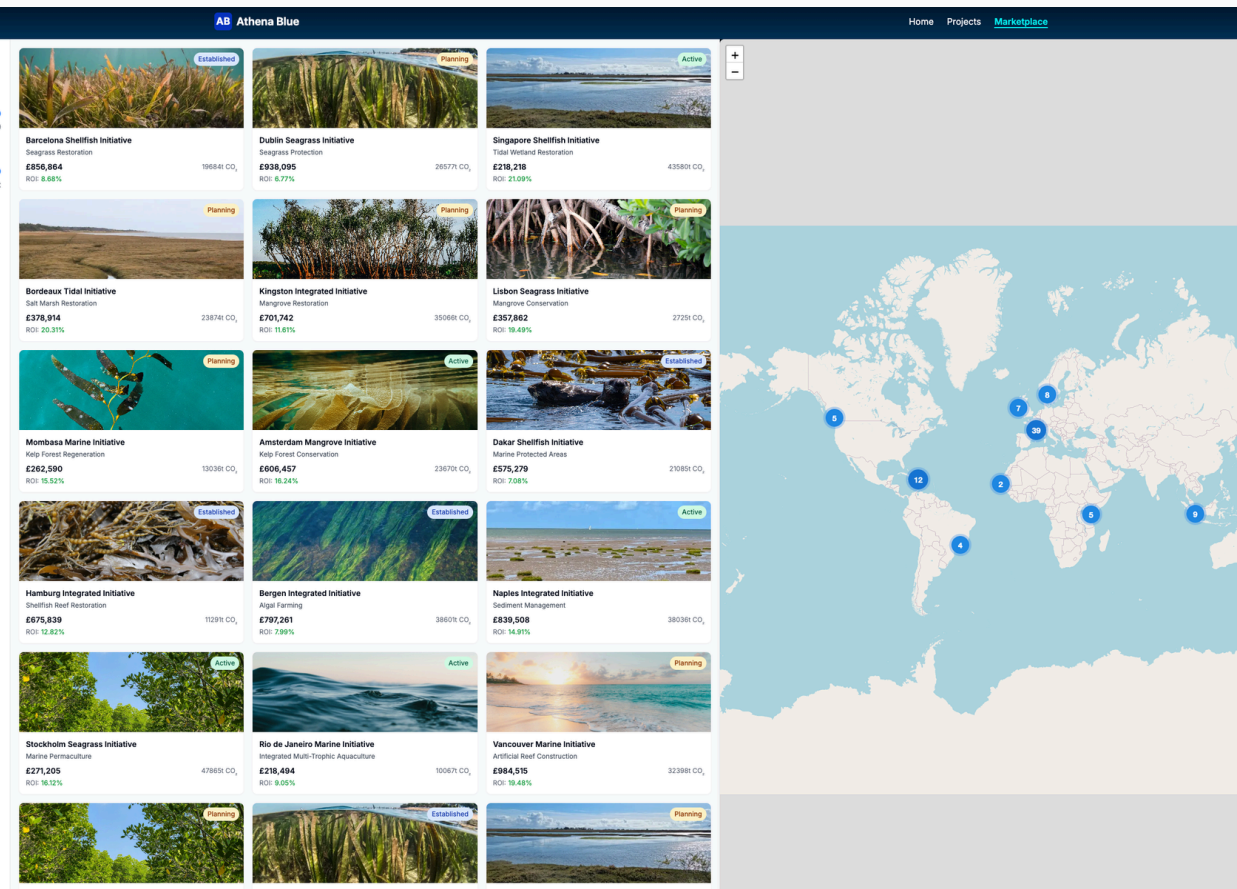
Score and recommendations for improvement

Covers Project and Operations

Match suggestions for finance

Exportable data

<https://athena.blue/projects/123>



- Mock-up of marketplace of investable pipeline

Corporate and project views linked to accounts

Filters by category, stage, methodology, location

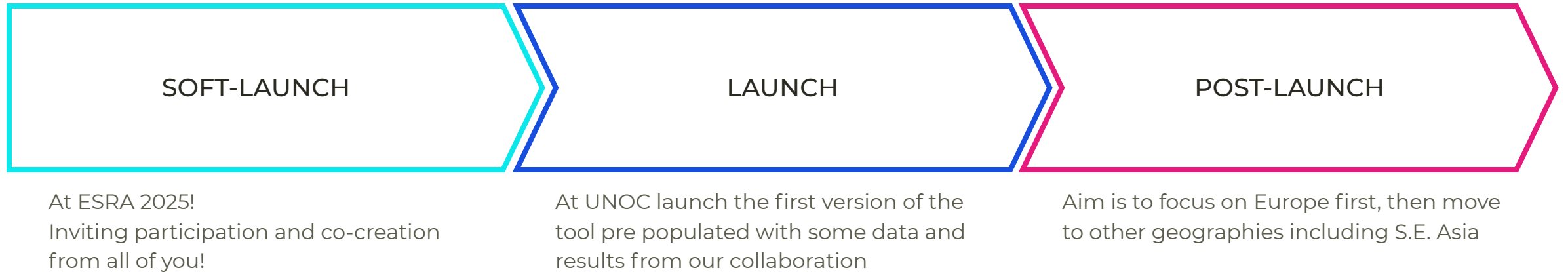
Corporate view can filter in advance (so they see the 'prepared' pipeline) or view whole marketplace

Feedback: private unless a verified user?

<https://athena.blue/marketplace>

Athena Blue Finance Readiness Tool

Launch Timeline



SCAN QR CODE TO SIGN UP



- **ESRA participants are invited to sign-up to test Beta version of the tool**

Free consultation with me

Full assessment completion with opportunity for co-creation

Free analysis and recommended next steps

Connection to the pro-bono hub

Marketplace positioning

Thank you!



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