

EYES IN THE OCEAN

PROJECT SUMMARY
2026 Q2



WHAT IS THE EYES IN THE OCEAN PROJECT?

The Eyes in the Ocean (EITO) Project is a collaborative initiative between the National Oceanography Centre (NOC) and Subsea7, reflecting our shared commitment to advancing deep-ocean science through long-term industry research partnership.

By combining NOC's scientific expertise with Subsea7 and Seaway7's global offshore operations, the project enables unprecedented access to remote deep-sea environments that would otherwise be difficult and costly to study. EITO utilises existing remotely operated vehicle (ROV) technology onboard operational vessels, and marine life observations are captured during routine offshore activities before being uploaded to the EITO digital database.

With access to a global fleet of over 120 ROVs, this approach unlocks significant additional scientific value from existing operations. The database enables direct feedback between offshore crews and NOC scientists, improving understanding of species distribution and abundance in the deep sea and supporting long-term research outcomes, and evidence-based conservation and future scientific publications. The imagery here highlights the best images from Q2 2026..

WINNERS

To celebrate the exceptional quality of submitted photography and footage, we have introduced a quarterly competition highlighting the most impactful imagery. Winners are recognised in three categories:



MONKFISH SCIENTIFIC VALUE AWARD

LOCATION | Norway

SPECIES | *Lophius Piscatorius*

DEPTH | 101 m

OBSERVED BY | Seven Viking

Monkfish are ambush predators that lie motionless on the seabed, relying on exceptional camouflage to blend into their surroundings before striking unsuspecting prey. Although typically associated with sand and mud seafloor habitats, we often observe them feeding around offshore structures, where smaller fish are known to congregate for shelter.

Through the Eyes in the Ocean project, 15 monkfish observations have now been recorded, providing valuable evidence of this behaviour. This particular sighting captures a monkfish seemingly feeding near subsea infrastructure, raising questions about how artificial structures may influence predator-prey interactions.



GREY NURSE SHARK EXPANDING OBSERVATIONAL CAPACITY AWARD

LOCATION | Australia

SPECIES | *Carcharias Taurus*

DEPTH | 167 m

OBSERVED BY | Seven Sisters

Grey nurse sharks, also known as sawtooth sand tiger sharks, are slow-moving coastal predators that are considered among Australia's most endangered marine species.

Despite their formidable appearance, they are generally non-aggressive, and sightings in tropical deep-water environments are exceptionally rare.

Only a handful of observations of this species have been recorded in the Timor Sea, and this particular sighting is believed to show a juvenile female. It represents the deepest recorded observation of the species in the tropics that we are aware of, providing valuable insight into its distribution and supporting conservation efforts for this Endangered (IUCN) shark.



MUUSOCTOPUS ARTIFICIAL STRUCTURE INTERACTION AWARD

LOCATION | Brazil

SPECIES | *Muusoctopus*

DEPTH | 1,834 m

OBSERVED BY | Seven Merlin

This observation shows Muusoctopus, a type of deep-sea octopus, in a characteristic posture of an individual crawling over the seabed. Despite being found in oceans around the world, relatively little is known about them.

Recent discoveries have revealed that some species in this genus form remarkable deep-sea 'octopus nurseries' around warm hydrothermal springs, where thousands gather to brood their eggs. Eyes in the Ocean has recorded eight observations of Muusoctopus on subsea artificial structures from the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, all at depths between 912 and 2,025 m depth, raising questions about the role of structures in the ecology and behaviour of these elusive deep-sea octopuses.