



On Friday 27th of November, in the margins of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, HRH The Prince of Wales presented the award to the overall winner of ***Out of the Blue***, his Commonwealth Environmental Photography Competition. Ashley Wee, 26, a Canadian citizen from Calgary, won £5,000 for her image of a turtle gasping for a breath of fresh air. The image was taken in the Bahamas and captured the judge's attention due to its simplicity and vulnerability.

"What immediately captivated me...was the implied vulnerability of the animal. The neck stretched up to the sky, the mouth slightly open and the implied gasp for air. In many ways for me this embodies the state of our oceans. Vast, simple but vulnerable ", reflected ocean advocate and free-diver, Hanli Prinsloo, a judge for Out of the Blue.

Daniel Beltrá, also a judge for the competition, commented that this image was the "perfect winner for the "Out of the Blue" contest.... and also a cry for the ocean and its creatures."

At the award ceremony, which took place at the historic Maritime Museum in Malta, HRH congratulated Ashley and presented her with a certificate to mark her achievement. Referring to the competition, HRH remarked, "I sometimes wonder how many of us really care about the state of our global oceans, but the response to this competition from all around the Commonwealth in terms of the number of entries, their quality and thoughtfulness has left me in no doubt as to the broad support that exists for doing things differently. This is not only for the benefit of marine wildlife and our wider environment, but also for the good of the billions of people who depend on the services they provide - including all of us who breathe oxygen!"

Other prizes have also been awarded to the winners and runners up of the competition's three categories: Nature's Assets; People and the Oceans; and Human Impacts. The categories, which are separately awarded for both over- and under-18s, were designed to encourage photographers to capture different aspects of the oceans' beauty, value and vulnerability. Two extra awards are also given for the image that gained the most public 'likes' on the competition website and the best image taken with a smartphone. All the winning images, runners-up and those that were highly commended can be viewed on the [website](#).

A partnership between The Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit, The Royal Commonwealth Society and National Geographic's Pristine Seas Initiative, ***Out of the Blue*** was launched on World Ocean's Day in June of this year and was open to all Commonwealth Citizens.

Prior to the award ceremony, ***Out of the Blue*** has been on exhibition at both the Commonwealth Youth Forum and the Business Forum, taking place also in Malta from 20th November to 26th November. It will be open to the public at the Maritime Museum from 28th November until 11th December.

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Notes to Editor

For more information about the competition, please visit our website: www.outofthebluecompetition.com

BROADCASTERS, AGENCIES AND ONLINE VIDEO SITES - A free-to-use Video News Release is available for download below:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B99sotFuWzoWTUFjdFh5eVZpNjA/view?usp=sharing>

Video format: Quicktime H.264 1080i HD.

Contents:

- GVs of HRH Prince Charles viewing the exhibition
- HRH Prince Charles speaking
- HRH Prince Charles awarding certificate to winner Ashley Wee of Canada
- GVs of the exhibition
- Stills of winning image and other selected images.

Interviews/Grabs:

- HRH Prince Charles
- Ashley Wee of Canada, Overall Winner