



Around Africa Expedition 2025 High Level Mission Summary

OceanX

OceanQuest

July 2025

Around Africa Expedition Goals

The overall goals of the transit portions of the UN Ocean Decade-endorsed Action "Around Africa" Expedition were the following:

- To utilize the unique access opportunity in data-limited regions to conduct globally significant and scientifically relevant basin-scale scientific projects, and establish OceanX and OceanQuest as global contributors to the oceanographic and ocean biomolecular observing community;
- 2. To provide opportunities for Early Career Explorers from regions-of-study (via the Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO), Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative (DOSI), UN Ocean Decade Early Career Ocean Professional Programs, and the Ocean Biomolecular Observing Network (OBON)) to conduct research using the R/V OceanXplorer in support of regional capacity exchange and training objectives;
- 3. To collect maximal scientific data possible in international waters with the goal of submission to public repositories;
- 4. To establish and build upon partnerships with global and regional organizations involved in implementation of the UN Decade of Ocean Science and other global science programs.

Around Africa Expedition Timeline

Mobe: December 15, 2024

<u>Departure Port</u>: Singapore

Expedition Duration: December 15, 2024 – April 8, 2025

Demobe: April 8, 2025

Arrival Port: Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Canary Islands

Around Africa Partners and Institutions

OceanX

OceanX is a non-profit organization supporting and conducting research and exploration of the Earth's oceans, fostering and promoting public awareness, scientific discovery, and education relating to the oceans. OceanX's mission is to unlock the ocean's sustainable potential. With more knowledge of the unknown ocean and more students pursuing careers that benefit the ocean, we can create a future that makes both ocean health and human progress possible. Our work is designed to support ocean biodiversity and uncover new, less destructive ways for people to benefit from ocean resources. OceanX believes that a healthy ocean is the foundation of human prosperity. We seek to build a global community deeply engaged in understanding, enjoying, and protecting our oceans. OceanX is an operating program of Dalio Philanthropies, which furthers the diverse philanthropic interests of Dalio family members.

OceanQuest

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is establishing a new foundation called *OceanQuest (OQ)* to advance deep ocean exploration to the world. The vision is to explore the ocean's secrets for the benefit of humanity. The mission is to accelerate ocean discovery, drive ocean-tech innovation, contribute to the blue innovation economy, strengthen global scientific cooperation, and excite the public.

Partner Institutions and Networks

Global

Challenger 150

Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative (DOSI)

Ocean Biomolecular Observing Network (OBON)

Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO)

Seabed 2030

UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development – Endorsed Decade Actions

Regional

African Network of Deep-water Researchers – Challenger 150

Partnership for Atlantic Cooperation

United States

City College of New York (CCNY)

Columbia University Climate School - Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (LDEO)

US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

US National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

US State Department

US Office of Naval Research (ONR)

Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI)

Route-Specific Partnerships by Country/Transit locations

Collaboration with OceanQuest for the Around Africa Expedition began in Moroni, Comoros and ended in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

Singapore - Maldives

Columbia University - Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (LDEO) - *USA* New York University Abu Dhabi – *United Arab Emirates* National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) - *USA* Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) - *USA*

Comoros - Seychelles - Comoros

Seychelles Island Foundation (SIF)

Seychelles Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment (MACCE)

Comoros to Cape Town, South Africa; Walter's Shoal Seamount Science

OceanOuest

Challenger 150

Columbia University - Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (LDEO) - USA

Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI) - Kenya

King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Madagascar

National Research Foundation - South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (NRF-SAIAB)

- South Africa

National Research Foundation - South African Environmental Observation Network (NRF-

SAEON) - South Africa

South African National Biodiversity Insitute (SANBI) - South Africa

South African National Space Agency (SANSA) - South Africa

Universidade de Aveiro – Portugal

Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES) - Brazil

Universidade Lúrio - Mozambique

Université de Toliara – Institut D'Enseignement Supérieur D'Anosy (IES-Anosy) - Madagascar

Université de Toliara – Institut Halieutique et des Sciences Marines (IHSM) -

Madagascar

University of Cape Town (UCT) - South Africa

University of KwaZulu-Natal - South Africa

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) - Mozambique

Cape Town, South Africa - Namibia

OceanQuest

MAGES Institute – Singapore

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) - USA

Working Ocean Strategies - USA

Namibia - Cabo Verde

OceanQuest

Instituto Do Mar (IMar), Campus do Mar - Cabo Verde

King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

MAGES Institute- Singapore

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) - United States

Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO)

Cabo Verde Science

OceanQuest

Cardiff University - United Kingdom

Challenger150

GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research - Germany

Instituto Do Mar (IMar), Campus do Mar - Cabo Verde

King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST) - Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Ocean Science Center Mindelo (OSCM) - Cabo Verde

Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO)

South African National Biodiversity Insitute (SANBI) - South Africa

Universidade do Vale do Itajaí (UNIVALI) - Brazil

Universidade Técnica do Atlântico (UTA), Campus do Mar – Cabo Verde

University of Cape Town (UCT) - South Africa

Cabo Verde - Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

OceanQuest

Columbia University Climate School - Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory - USA

GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research - Germany

Johns Hopkins University – Applied Physics Laboratory (JHU APL) - USA

MAGES Institute - Singapore

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) - USA

Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO)

Plataforma Oceánica de Canarias (PLOCAN) - Canary Islands

Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC) - Canary Islands

Around Africa Expedition

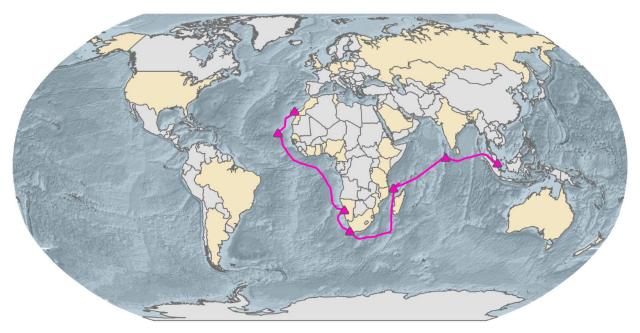


Figure 1. Around Africa Expedition Route and Partner and Participant Countries – Route is depicted by the pink line with pink triangles at port locations. Partner and Participant Countries are highlighted in yellow.

Mission Synthesis Metrics

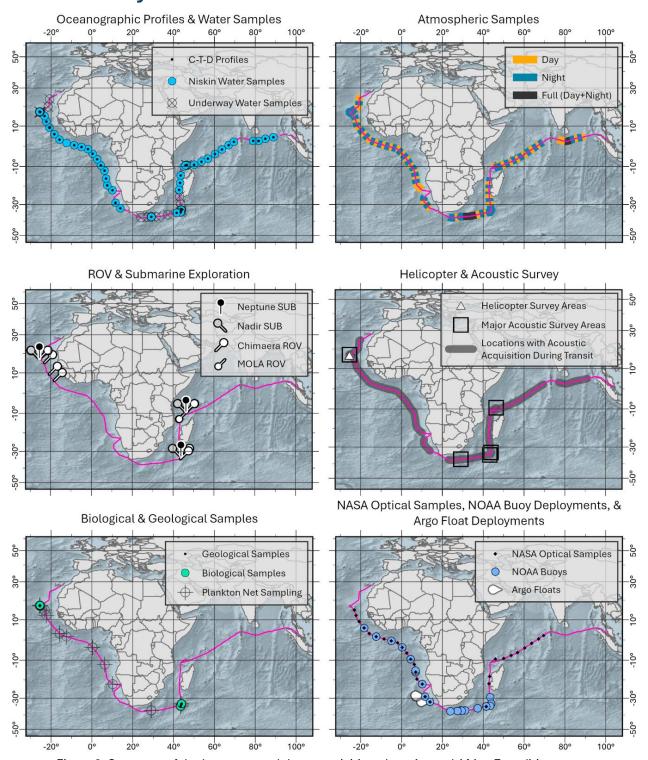


Figure 2. Summary of deployments and data acquisition along Around Africa Expedition route.

Around Africa Expedition Metadata

Table 1. Around Africa 2025 metrics for all mission and science related events from Singapore to Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

Metric	Value	Details				
	Mission Metadata					
Number of Days	83	From Singapore to Las Palmas				
Number of nautical miles	15046	From Singapore to Las Palmas, geodesic distance,				
traveled	10040	including systematic acoustic surveys.				
Number of Ports/ Countries Visited	8	Singapore, Maldives, Seychelles, Comoros, South Africa, Namibia, Cabo Verde, Canary Islands				
Number of Countries where		International Waters				
data was collected	4	EEZs: Seychelles, Madagascar, Cabo Verde, France				
Number of Scientists	69	Scientists from 31 countries and 29 institutions				
Number of Faculty	17	Education faculty from 10 countries and 9 institutions				
Number of YEs and ECEs	59	Young Explorers (29) and Early Career Explorers (30) on education programs from 15 countries and 29 institutions				
Number of Missions	11	7 Transit Legs, 4 Science Missions				
Number of Livestreams	12	Livestreams over 3 mission legs				
Livestream Attendance	1300	Livestream Attendees over 3 mission legs				
Number of Education Capacity	4	2 Young Explorers Programs, 2 Early Career Explorers				
Building Programs		Programs				
	S	cience Metadata				
Total Amount of Data Generated (TBs)	25	From Singapore to Las Palmas				
Total Acoustic Mapping Coverage (km²)	120036	Final mapping coverage is based on final grid resolution and utilizing the WGS84 Equal Earth equal area projection (EPSG:8857) geodesic area calculation in ArcGIS Pro (v. 3.4.2, 3.4.3).				
Total New Acoustic Mapping Coverage (km²)	95357	Our estimate of newly mapped area was derived by comparing our coverage to all direct measurement data available in the GEBCO 2024 bathymetric grid, and all direct measurement data (swath polygons and contributed grid polygons) available in the Global Multi-Resolution Topography Model (GMRT) v. 4.3.0. It should be noted that these two sources do not encompass all known mapping data and are only updated annually or bi-annually.				
Number of seamounts explored	5	Walter's Shoal, SW Madagascar Ridge Seamount, Africana Ridge seamount (E Agulhas Plateau), Nola seamount complex, Maio Rise Seamount				
Number of ROV Dives	23	ROV Dive time hours = 85				
Number of Submarine Dives	16	Submarine Dive time hours = 101				
Aerial Flight Time (hours)	10.5	Flight time for aerial megafauna surveys				
Aerial coverage (km)	1708	Aerial coverage of megafauna surveys				
Total number of sampling events	748	Total of CTD, eDNA, ROV, and Sub sample events				

eDNA samples collected	470	Total of bacterioplankton, aerosols, and specific opportunistic DNA samples
ROV samples collected	166	Seychelles, Comoros – Cape Town, Cabo Verde Science
Submarine samples collected	87	Seychelles, Comoros – Cape Town, Cabo Verde Science
CTD Casts	50	CTD casts from Singapore – Mindelo only
XBTs	140	XBT deployed for temperature profiles
Number of NOAA buoys deployed	20	10 Deployments – Science 2: Comoros- Cape Town 2 Deployments - Transit 5: Cape Town – Namibia 8 Deployments - Transit 6: Namibia – Cabo Verde
Number of ARGO Floats deployed	3	Deployed on Transit 5 Cape Town - Namibia

Data Acquisition and Submissions

Table 2. Around Africa 2025 Repositories for submission of data to public and country specific databases.

Data Type Collected	Data Repository	Country Affiliation	Amount Submitted
	NOAA National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI), IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry (DCDB)	Global	
Acoustic Seafloor	Ocean Discovery League Global Targeted Deep-Sea Exploration Goals	Global	0.2 MB
Mapping (Bathymetry, Backscatter, and/or Coverage Area)	Global Multi-Resolution Topography Synthesis (GMRT), Marine Geoscience Data System (MGDS)	Global	8500 MB
	Seabed 2030 (Nippon Foundation/ GEBCO)	Global	8500 MB
	WIOBathy Project	Regional (Western Indian Ocean)	
Water Column Acoustics (MBES, SBES, ADCP)	NOAA National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI)	Global	
Subbottom Acoustics	NOAA National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI)	Global	
Oceanographic Data	NOAA National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI) NASA Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, ocean Ecosystem (PACE)	Global	
(SST, SSS, CTD, XBT)	UK Met Office (Argo floats)	0.0000	
	NOAA Atlantic Oceanographic and Meteorological Laboratory (AOML) Physical Oceanography Division		
Underway Data (position, flowthrough, meteorology, atmospheric, etc.)	NOAA National Center for Environmental Information (NCEI)	Global	

EDNA (Bacterioplankton, aerosols, targeted samples)	Ocean Biodiversity Information System (OBIS)	Global
Subsea Exploration Locations (ROV, SUB)	Ocean Discovery League Global Targeted Deep-Sea Exploration Goals	Global
Visual Data: Imaging and	FathomNet	Global
video (ROV, Sub)	Challenger 150	Global
All applicable data (for	Seychelles Ministry of the Environment (MACCE)	Seychelles
expedition/region	SAEON data repository	South Africa
associated with the	Madagascar Government	
repository)	French Government	
	Cabo Verde Government - IMAR	

Portside Event Metrics

Table 3. Around Africa 2025 Portside Event metrics for all ship tours led by OceanX Education.

Metrics	Number of Tours	Number of Participants	Tour Types	Key Partners
Cape Town, South Africa Ship Tours	10	144	High School and University students, faculty, government ministries	South African National Research Foundation, South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), South African Department of Forestry, Fisheries, and Environment, South African Enviornmental Observation Network (SAEON), University of Cape Town, University of Western Cape, Stellenbosch University, Cape Peninsula University of Technology
Mindelo, Cabo Verde Ship Tours	4	79	High School and University students, faculty, US Embassy	OceanQuest, IMar, ISECMAR, UniCV, Universidade Do Mindelo
Las Palmas de Gran Canaria Ship Tours	1	23	High School and University students, faculty	Oceanic Platform of the Canary Islands (PLOCAN)
TOTALS	15 Tours	246 Participants		13 Partners

Scientific Researcher Institutional Affiliations

Table 4. Around Africa 2025 Researcher Affiliations for all transit and science legs. Researcher affiliations for all external scientists participating in the Around Africa Expedition. These calculations include faculty for Education programs as researchers, as well as ECOPs (ECEs) that were part of science missions. If the same scientists were on multiple legs they are listed for both legs.

Program/ Mission	Leg	Institution	Country	Number of Participants
		NYU Abu Dhabi	United Arab Emirates	3
YE: NYU Abu Dhabi	Transit Leg 2: Maldives - Comoros	Columbia University, Lamont- Doherty Earth Observatory (LDEO)	India	1
		National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)	United States	2
Seychelles Aldabra Atoll	Science Mission 1: Seychelles	Seychelles Ministry of Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment (MACCE)	Seychelles	1
Aluabra Aloll	Aldabra Atoll	Seychelles Island Foundation (SIF)	Seychelles	8
		South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON)	South Africa	3
		University of Cape Town (UCT)	South Africa	1
		South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB)	South Africa	2
	Science Mission 2: Comoros – Cape Town	Université de Toliara – Institut D'Enseignement Supérieur D'Anosy (IES-Anosy)	Madagascar	2
		Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)	Mozambique	1
Walter's Shoal and		Universidade Lúrio	Mozambique	1
Madagascar Ridge Study		Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI)	Kenya	1
ago otaay		POGO Fellow – South African National Parks	South Africa	1
		POGO Fellow – University of Dar es Salaam	Tanzania	1
		Universidade de Aveiro	Portugal	1
		Universidade Federal do Espírito Santo (UFES)	Brazil	1
		King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST)	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	1
	-	National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)	United States	2
YE: Cape	Transit Leg 5: Cape Town, South	Working Ocean Strategies	United States	1
Town	Africa – Walvis Bay, Namibia	MAGES Studio	Singapore/ India	2
	вау, Манныа	City College of New York (CCNY)	United States	1
	Transit Leg 6:	National Oceanography Centre (NOC)	Belgium	1
ECE: Walvis Bay	Walvis Bay, Namibia – Mindelo, Cabo Verde	Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Desarrollo Pesquero (INIDEP)	Argentina	1
		University of Douala	Cameroon	1

		MAGES Studio Singapor India		1
		City College of New York (CCNY)	United States	1
		National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)	United States	2
		OceanQuest	Russia	1
		Instituto Do Mar (IMar), Campus do Mar	Cabo Verde	8
		Universidade Técnica do Atlântico (UTA), Campus do Mar	Cabo Verde	1
Cabo Verde	Science Mission 3: Cabo Verde Nola Seamounts	King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST)	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	2
		University of Cape Town	South Africa	1
		Cabo Verde Directorate for Marine Resources	Cabo Verde	1
	Transit Leg 7: Mindelo, Cabo Verde – Las Palmas de Gran Canaria	Universidade do Vale do Itajaí (UNIVALI)	Brazil	1
		National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) / City College of New York (CCNY)	United States	2
		Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory (APL)	United States	1
ECE: Mindelo		MAGES Studio	Singapore/ India	1
		OceanQuest	Poland, Russia, Portugal	3
		Columbia University, Lamont- Doherty Earth Observatory (LDEO)	India, United States	2
TOTALS	7 Legs	30 Institutions	21 Countries	69 Scientists

Transit Leg Educational Program Metrics

Around Africa total metrics for educational programming conducted on transit legs for students (Young Explorers), early career explorers (ECE), and faculty.

Young and Early Career Explorer Institutional Affiliations and Totals

Table 5. Around Africa 2025 transit leg Young and Early Career Explorers participant metrics. An additional 2 ECEs were on Science leg 2 Comoros to Cape Town (1 South Africa, 1 Tanzania) and 3 ECEs were on Science leg 3 Cabo Verde (2 KAUST, 1 Cabo Verde).

Program	Leg	Institution	Country	Number of Participants
YE: NYU Abu Dhabi	Transit Leg 2: Maldives – Comoros	NYU Abu Dhabi	United Arab Emirates, Sri Lanka, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Bangladesh, Jamaica, Kenya, Kazakhstan	15
		Eduardo Mondlane University	Mozambique	2
		University of Dodoma	Tanzania	2
	Transitled	Stellenbosch University	South Africa	1
	Transit Leg 5: Cape	University of Cape Town	South Africa	1
YE: Cape	Town, South	Faculty of Sciences of Tunis (FST)	Tunisia	1
Town	Africa –	University of Namibia	Namibia	4
	Walvis Bay, Namibia	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	Kenya	1
		Technical University of Mombasa	Kenya	1
		University of Seychelles	Seychelles/ Mauritius	1
	Transit Leg	Nigerian Institute for Oceanography and Marine Research	Nigeria	1
		University of Cape Coast	Ghana	1
		University of Ghana	Ghana	1
		Fisheries Scientific Survey Division - Fisheries Commission	Ghana	1
		University of Dodoma	Tanzania	1
		Kenya Fisheries Service	Kenya	1
	6: Walvis	University of Cape Town	South Africa	1
ECE: Walvis Bay	Bay, Namibia – Mindelo, Cabo Verde	Abdelmalek Essaadi University	Morocco	1
		Faculty of Sciences Ain Chock - National Institute of Fisheries Research	Morocco	1
		Faculty of Sciences of Bizerte	Tunisia	1
		University of Gaston Berger- Saint Louis	Senegal	1
		Institut Halieutique et des Sciences Marines (IH.SM)	Madagascar	1
		University of Namibia	Namibia	1
		King Abdullah University of Science and Technology (KAUST)	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	2
ECE:	Transit Leg	University of Tunis El Manar	Tunisia	1
Mindelo	7: Mindelo, Cabo Verde	National Institute of Marine Sciences and Technologies	Tunisia	1

	- Las	University of Cape Coast	Ghana	3
	Palmas de Gran	Nigeria Maritime University Okerenkoko	Nigeria	1
	Canaria	Centre International de Physique Mathématique et Appliquée (ICMPA)	Cameroon/ Benin	1
		University of Namibia	Namibia	1
		Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources	Namibia	1
		University of Dodoma	Tanzania	1
		University of San Pedro	Cote D'Ivoire	1
	Cape Peninsula University of Technology	South Africa	1	
Totals	4 Legs	29 Institutions	15 Countries	56 Participants

Education Program External Faculty Institutional Affiliations

Table 6. Around Africa 2025 transit leg Young and Early Career Explorers Faculty Metrics.

Program	Leg	Institution	Country	Number of Participants
YE: NYU Abu Dhabi	Transit Leg 2: Malé, Maldives – Moroni, Comoros	NYU Abu Dhabi	Russia, United States, South Africa	3
YE: Cape	Transit Leg 5: Cape Town, South Africa	Working Ocean Strategies	United States	1
Town	– Walvis Bay, Namibia	MAGES Institute	Singapore/ India	2
		National Oceanography Centre (NOC)	Belgium	1
ECE: Walvis Bay	Transit Leg 6: Walvis Bay, Namibia – Mindelo, Cabo Verde	Instituto Nacional de Investigación y Desarrollo Pesquero (INIDEP)	Argentina	1
		University of Douala	Cameroon	1
		MAGES Studio	Singapore/ India	1
		OceanQuest	Russia	1
	Transit Leg 7: Mindelo, Cabo Verde – Las Palmas de Gran	Columbia University, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory (LDEO)	United States	1
ECE: Mindelo		Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory (APL)	United States	1
	Canaria, Canary	MAGES Studio	Singapore/ India	1
	Islands	OceanQuest	Poland, Russia, Portugal	3

TOTALS 4 Legs 9 Faculty Institutions 10 Countries 17 Participants

Education Livestreams

Table 7. Around Africa 2025 Education Livestream Metrics.

Program	Leg	Number of Livestreams	Number of Livestrea m Attendees	Description
Cape Town Events	Site-Specific Events: Cape Town, South Africa	1	50	University of Cape Town partners
YE: Cape Town	Transit Leg 5: Cape Town, South Africa – Walvis Bay, Namibia	1	50	Student friends and family
ECE: Walvis Bay	Transit Leg 6: Walvis Bay, Namibia – Mindelo, Cabo Verde	10	1200	Student classrooms around Southeast Asia and the United States
TOTALS	4 Legs	12 Livestreams	1300 Attendees	

Around Africa Expedition Route Schedule

Dec 15 – 24, 2024 Singapore – Malé, Maldives

Jan 8 – 17, 2025 Malé, Maldives – Moroni, Comoros

Jan 18 – 29, 2025 Site Specific Mission: Seychelles – Aldabra

Atoll

Jan 29 – Feb 23, 2025 Moroni, Comoros – Walter's Shoal – Cape Town,

South Africa

Feb 23 – 28, 2025 Site Specific Events: Cape Town, South Africa

Feb 28 – Mar 4, 2025 Cape Town, South Africa – Walvis Bay, Namibia

Mar 4 – 25, 2025 Walvis Bay, Namibia – Mindelo, Cabo Verde

Mar 25 – Apr 2, 2025 Site Specific Mission: Cabo Verde Seamounts

Apr 2 – 8, 2025 Mindelo, Cabo Verde – Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

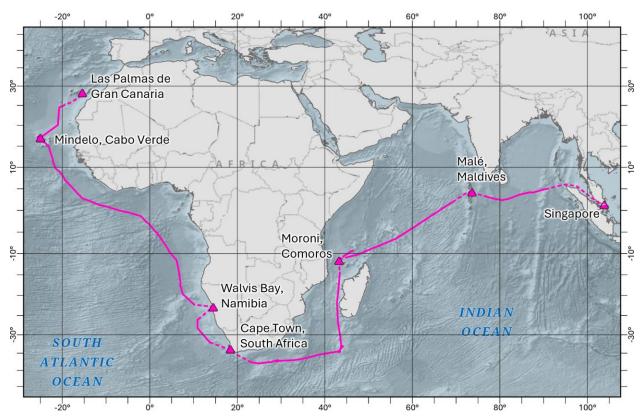


Figure 3. Route Map of 2025 Around Africa Expedition from January – April 2025 from Singapore to the Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. Labeled pink triangles represent port stop locations.