



HOLD YOUR BREATH AND DIVE INTO A BETTER WORLD



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SOUL OF THE OCEAN

Written and directed by **Howard Hall**

Produced by **Michele Hall**

Executive producers: **Andrea Gastgeb, Sabine Holzer**

1x50 min. + 1x78 min., 4K, 5.1 + Stereo



The undersea world has often been depicted as a dangerous place filled with lethal predators. A world where sharks are mindless eating machines. A world where the only relationship between species is that big fish eat little fish. Of course, stories of sensational danger and violent predation are seductive to wildlife film audiences. But is that what the ocean is really like?

Every year millions of scuba divers safely venture beneath the waves. Encounters with sharks, sea snakes, moray eels, and other potentially dangerous denizens are not only anticipated but sought. Expeditions to dive with sharks are especially popular. Surprisingly, divers very rarely witness natural predation. Instead, they find a world that is remarkably peaceful; where sharks swim within schools of fish that show no fear of the predators. Obviously, predation must take place. But cold-blooded creatures need to eat less often than warm-blooded terrestrial predators. The great majority of the time, predators are seen living in harmony with the creatures that surround them.

If predation was the primary law governing the undersea world, one would expect that life here would not only be violent but also short. Instead, life in the ocean can be surprisingly long. In fact, the longest-lived animals on Earth live in the sea. That so many species live peacefully in their aquatic homes for many decades seems contrary to the idea that the ocean is a violent place of ubiquitous predation.

Symbiotic relationships between species dominates life in the sea. From the tiniest coral polyp to the largest fish in the ocean, life here is governed by cooperation between myriad species. Complex marine life communities have evolved from these interspecies relationships. In these communities, citizens are dependent upon each other. And these

cooperative relationships have contributed to the high biodiversity in the ocean.

Cooperation between species is the heart and ***Soul of the Ocean***.

Coral reefs have been described as cities within the sea. High biodiversity is critical to the myriad symbiotic relationships that can be seen everywhere on the reef. Sea fans provide shelter for small schools of fish. Within the colorful branches of these corals, pigmy seahorses and gorgonian gobies may be found that exist only on that species of sea fan. If the sea fans on a reef die, pigmy seahorses, gorgonian gobies and numerous other species vanish with them. The loss of one species effects the lives of countless other.

Soul of the Ocean explores the complexity of ocean ecosystems. Spectacular underwater cinematography reveals communities of interdependent marine species and highlights the critical role biodiversity plays in maintaining a healthy ocean. The film features numerous examples of extraordinary animal behavior. Some of these behavioral stories have never been filmed before. ***Soul of the Ocean*** demonstrates the value of cooperation between species and high marine biodiversity.

We learn how biodiversity is critical to the health of ocean ecosystems. And we discover that, as humans become increasingly intimate with the ocean, we have an important part to play as well.

A production of Terra Mater Studios / Howard Hall Productions / Mark Fletcher Productions in co-production with The WNET Group in association with PBS and CPB

