

ENGLISH VERSION

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Portugal's Secretary of State for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, Salvador Malheiro, to Receive the Prestigious 2026 Cronkite Ocean Award in Cascais

Stone Soup Leadership Institute honours Portugal's Blue Economy leaders; Portuguese Olympic sailor Carolina João joins an international gathering on 29 October.

CASCAIS, Portugal, 23 October 2026 – The Stone Soup Leadership Institute announced today that Salvador Malheiro, Portugal's Secretary of State for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, will receive the 2026 Cronkite Ocean Award in recognition of his exemplary leadership in promoting Portugal's sustainable Blue Economy. The award ceremony will take place on Thursday, 29 October 2026, from 18:00 to 19:00, at the historic Clube Naval de Cascais.

Named in honour of Walter Cronkite—a legendary CBS news anchor, environmentalist and lifelong sailor, widely recognised as America's most trusted man, who served as the Institute's honorary chair for more than a decade—the Cronkite Ocean Awards recognise visionary leaders who advance ocean stewardship on the international stage. Previous honourees include oceanographer Dr Sylvia Earle of Mission Blue, Henk Rogers, founder of Blue Planet Alliance, and Melissa Hoffer, the first Climate Chief of the United States.

"The Blue Economy plays a decisive role in the future of our nation," stated Secretary of State Malheiro. "Portugal is a maritime nation par excellence, and bringing together youth, ocean literacy and economic opportunities is essential. Your success will be Portugal's success."

According to data from Statistics Portugal (INE) and the Directorate-General for Maritime Policy (DGPM), Portugal's Blue Economy is a growing sector, accounting for 4.3% of national gross value added (GVA), according to the Satellite Account for the Sea. This subsector employs more people and generates more exports than the Portuguese economy on average. The 2026 award therefore highlights Portugal's dynamism in transforming ocean resources into sustainable economic opportunities.

Portuguese Olympic sailor Carolina João will share what it takes to become a champion, alongside a delegation of Blue Economy business leaders, education leaders and ocean literacy organisations, gathered to celebrate Portugal's strong role as a global leader in the Blue Economy.

During the ceremony, Miguel Roque, the Stone Soup Leadership Institute's Blue Economy Youth Ambassador, will present Secretary of State Salvador Malheiro with the Youth Ambassadors' manifesto for Portugal's maritime future: **Invest in our Youth. Invest in Portugal. Invest in our Future.**

The event will feature an educational exhibition highlighting organisations at the forefront of transforming ocean industries, as well as recognition of local leaders who spearheaded the Institute's Blue Economy Initiative Call to Action to develop Blue human capital by empowering young people in Portugal.

Event Details

- **Event:** 2026 Cronkite Ocean Awards
- **Honouree:** Salvador Malheiro, Secretary of State for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs
- **Date and time:** 29 October 2026 | 18:00–19:00
- **Venue:** Clube Naval de Cascais, Cascais, Portugal

About the Cronkite Ocean Awards

The Institute launched the Cronkite Awards in 2010, following Walter Cronkite's passing, to honour his wisdom and leadership. Historian David McCullough noted: "Mr. Cronkite was an anchor on TV, as a

sailor and for our world.” First held on Martha’s Vineyard with Cronkite’s CBS colleagues Bob Schieffer and Nick Clooney, the awards have since been presented in New York City during Climate Week and at the United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) in Nice, France. In 2026, they come to Cascais for the first time.

The awards serve as a platform for honourees to launch major initiatives. In 2014, oceanographer Dr Sylvia Earle received the award as she launched her film *Mission Blue* and her Hope Spots campaign in support of marine protected areas worldwide. In 2023, the Institute honoured Melissa Hoffer, Massachusetts Climate Chief, who went on to co-sign Pope Francis’s Planetary Call to Action for Climate Resilience, endorsed by world leaders at the summit “From Climate Change to Climate Resilience”. Recent honourees have also included Henk Rogers, founder of Blue Planet Alliance (2024, New York City), and James Ellsmoor, founder of Island Innovations (2025, Nice).

The 2026 Award and Portugal’s Blue Economy

Portugal’s Blue Economy is growing rapidly. It contributes to the delivery of €8.7 billion in funding for sustainable ocean governance pledged at UNOC3 in Nice in 2025.

Secretary of State Malheiro has supported the Stone Soup Leadership Institute’s work to ensure that Portugal has the skilled workforce needed to realise this growth. In February 2026, he joined business, education and government leaders at the Institute’s Global Blue Job Shadow Day™, held at the Luso-American Development Foundation (FLAD) in Lisbon and connected with partners in Peniche, Newport, Rhode Island, and the San Francisco Bay Area. The resulting Call to Action—to develop Blue Economy human capital by empowering young people in Portugal—directly led to the Institute’s Blue Economy Initiative, whose Youth Ambassadors will present their findings to the Secretary of State at the Cronkite Ocean Awards.

About the Stone Soup Leadership Institute

The Stone Soup Leadership Institute is a global nonprofit organisation founded in Massachusetts in 1997. It develops workforce development initiatives with business, education and government leaders to empower young people, particularly those from coastal and island communities in the United States, Asia, the Caribbean and the Azores. Its Blue Economy Career Pathways Platform maps local employment projections, training requirements and salaries to help educators guide students towards well-paid careers in the Blue Economy. The Institute’s work in Portugal began in 2023, with a delegation from Terceira, in the Azores, participating in the intensive week of the 19th Sustainability Summit.

The Blue Economy Youth Ambassadors Final Report (August 2026) is available upon request.

www.stonesoupleadership.org • www.BlueEconomyGeneration.org/Portugal