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The Association is a learned society founded in 1884 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 2013. The Marine Biological Association (MBA) provides a unified, clear, independent voice on behalf of the marine biological community. In 1888, the MBA opened the Plymouth laboratory at Citadel Hill.

The MBA is also a registered charity with its key aims being to promote scientific research into all aspects of life in the sea, including the environment on which it depends, and to disseminate to the public the knowledge gained. The Patron of the Association is His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, who is also an Honorary Fellow. The other Honorary Fellows are His Serene Highness Prince Albert of Monaco, Dr Sylvia Earle, Sir Tim Hunt and Professor James Lovelock.

The work of the Association is controlled by the Council elected annually by its subscribing members.

The Marine Biological Association, under the direction of its Council, has undertaken research in all branches of marine science and many of the results have been published in this Journal. An account of the history of the first hundred years of the Association and Journal may be found in Volume 67 (pp. 463 and 465).

Since its foundation the Association has been supported by grants from Research Councils and by subscriptions and donations

from private members, universities, learned societies, the Fishmongers' Company and other public bodies.

The Marine Biological Association is a very active scientific learned society with a large international membership. The MBA also manages an internationally renowned research programme.

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