



**Salvador Malheiro – Secretary of State for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs
Speech at Global Blue Job Shadow Day (Stone Soup Leadership Institute)
Lisboa, 2nd February 2026**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Decision makers, entrepreneurs, educators, and dear young leaders, friends of the ocean
It is a real pleasure to be here today.

It was by listening to Miguel's inspiring words, at an event we had a couple of months ago, that made me accept the invitation to take part in this initiative. A young voice, with a clear vision of what he wants for our collective future, and with the courage to state it.

In an increasingly challenging world, that matters a lot. If we want a sustainable future, for our societies, for our economies and for the ocean, we must take seriously the voices of the new generations who are ready to make a difference.

Since I took office as Secretary of State for Fisheries and Maritime Affairs, I have had the opportunity to meet many young people like Miguel. Young women and men with a surprisingly clear understanding of the challenges we face, particularly when it comes to the ocean: its protection, its economic potential and its role in our shared future.

Many stories, like the ones Marianne has compiled in such a good manner in her book. Young leaders taking action. What they often need is not motivation. They already have it.

What they need is leading pathways to that common goal.

Clear pathways that connect aspiration to opportunity.

Education to employment. Talent to real business activity.

This is where public policy may act as an enabling factor. Our national government is taking its part. At the end of last year, we launched the Young Fisher Bill, as a concrete enabling framework designed to remove entry barriers for young people who wish to pursue a professional career linked to the sea, unlocking financial tools to ignite activity.

It is about access, fairness, and opportunity – and about ensuring that blue careers remain viable and attractive for future generations. This initiative is part of a broader effort that includes strong investment in Ocean Literacy and in vocational and higher education institutions such as ENIDH and FOR-MAR, which play a fundamental role in qualifying the human capital that sustains the Blue Economy. But we also know that policy instruments alone are not enough.

That is why initiatives like Global Blue Job Shadow Day are so important.

We are creating real bridges between young people and entrepreneurs.

Between ideas and practice. Between ambition and experience.

They allow us to build these pathways together — not in abstract terms, but through real encounters and opportunities.

As the ocean needs committed young people, we need to enable the pathways to link the ocean economy to an idea of progress, inclusiveness and forward-looking. If we succeed, I am confident that we will not only build a more sustainable ocean. We will build a more hopeful future. And the best part is that we have made it together, as a global community we are.

Thank you very much, and I wish you all an inspiring session.