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# Strategic Guidance: Increasing Brand Engagement



UC SANTA BARBARA  
Bren School of Environmental  
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# Acknowledgements

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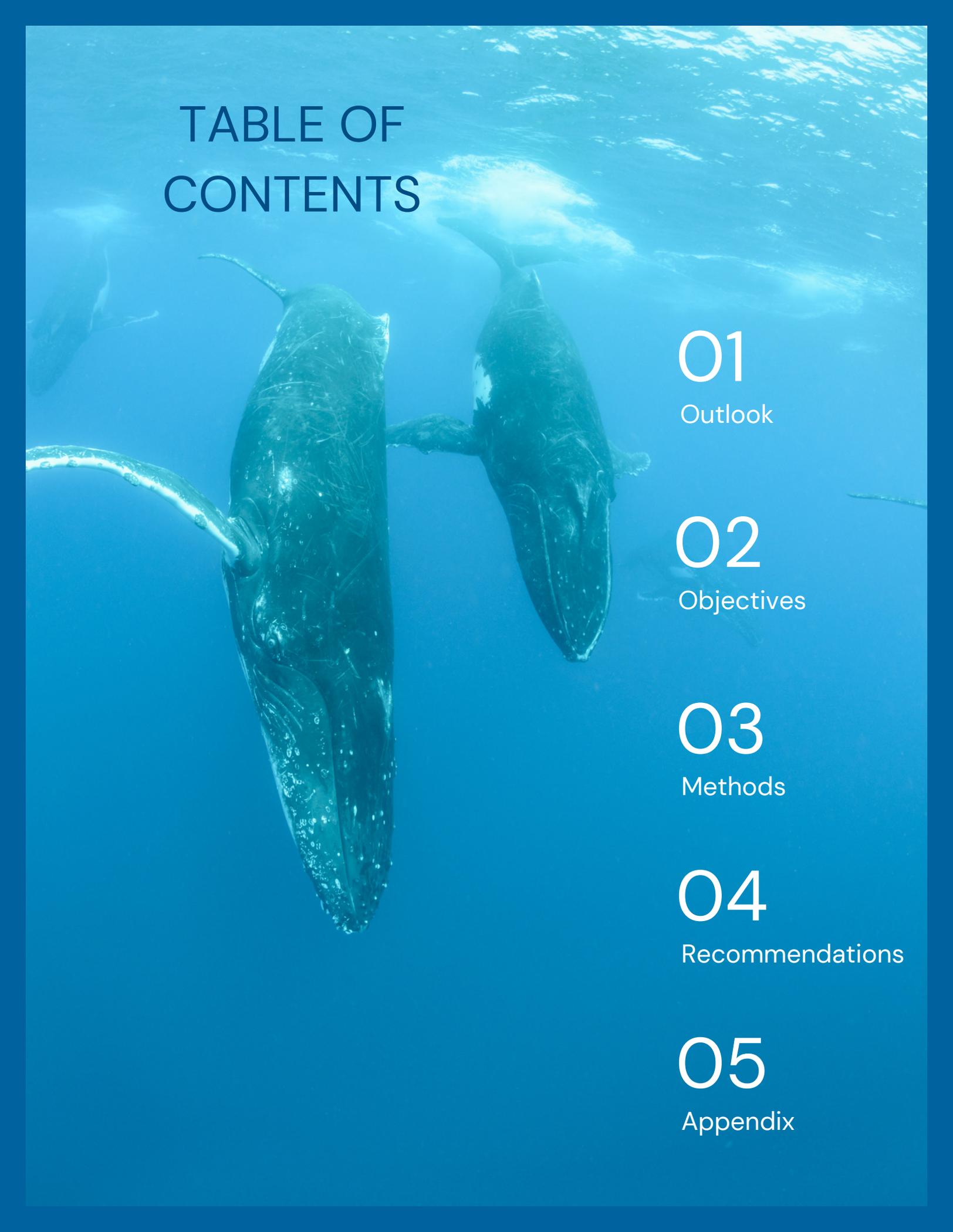
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

An underwater photograph of two humpback whales swimming in clear blue water. The whales are seen from below, with their heads pointing downwards. The water is bright and clear, with some light rays visible. The whales' skin appears dark and textured.

01

Outlook

02

Objectives

03

Methods

04

Recommendations

05

Appendix

# OVERVIEW

## Current status and considerations for programmatic expansion.

The Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies (BWBS) vessel speed reduction (VSR) program has potential to expand both geographically and programmatically. In its current form, BWBS exists as a highly localized program with designated VSR zones in northern and southern California. In the north near San Francisco, the zone extends roughly between Point Arena and Santa Cruz. In southern California, it extends from Point Conception to just north of San Diego. Previously, the BWBS VSR program has received federal and non-governmental funding used to support programmatic function and reward participating carriers. As of 2023 financial incentives will no longer be offered. This is mostly due to the trend of carriers declining them in favor of positive public relations. Funding for 2024 and beyond is not secured, presenting a major obstacle to the future stability and growth of the program which will require balancing the need to expand (becoming a state- or nation-wide program), and ensuring the necessary funding to maintain function. Expansion would increase the environmental benefits of the program, incentivize carriers and companies to get on board via increased notoriety and credibility of the program, and may help garner financial support. Outlined below are 3 tiers of expansion and considerations for each:

1

### **Status Quo:**

BWBS is currently a donation-driven program. Funding is not secured for 2024. The content of this guidance document evaluates current stakeholder engagement and offers recommendations for how to increase participation and build long term funding sources into the structure of the Brand Ambassador program.

2

### **State-wide expansion:**

AB 953 was engrossed on May 31. If passed, this bill would implement "a statewide voluntary vessel speed reduction and sustainable shipping program for the California coast in order to reduce air pollution, the risk of fatal vessel strikes on whales, and harmful underwater acoustic impacts" by 2026. This provides BWBS 2.5 years to increase brand engagement and notoriety in preparation for a statewide program. Whether there will be state appropriations is TBD.

3

### **Nation-wide expansion:**

The East Coast already has existing mandatory VSR zones to protect the endangered North-Atlantic right whales. Focusing initial national expansion efforts on these Mid-Atlantic Seasonal Management Area may be an effective and efficient way for BWBS to integrate into existing management programs.

# What are 3 aspects of a successful incentive program?

Bain & Company Consulting conducted an assessment of BWBS current market position. By comparing BWBS to successful marine certification programs, like Dolphin Safe and Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), they identified possible funding pathways and opportunities to bolster credibility. Results of their analysis are summarized below:

### Data

Digestible vessel analytics reports on company compliance with program standards

Utilize data to **increase visibility, accountability, & help companies track their progress**

Increase brand research to **understand company values**

Implementable, sustainable, and non-monetary focused. **Driven through increased consumer awareness and demand**

### Social & Political Alignment

Ensure that BWBS sustainability priorities and messaging are in alignment with target companies

### Incentives

- (1) Utilize consumer demand to increase brand participation
- (2) Highlight the value BWBS provides to Brand Ambassadors



## Data

BWBS can provide vessel analytics data in a digestible, engaging format via "Report Cards" that hold cargo carriers companies accountable for their performance. Brands can then track the progress of their respective cargo carriers to ensure continued compliance with BWBS standards. Data should be distributed regularly to increase accountability and visibility.

## Incentives

Increasing consumer demand for more sustainably-shipped products will help to lay the foundation for building funding sources into the BWBS program design. Through financial or social pressure, consumers may encourage brands to participate in BWBS. If demand is great enough, brands may be willing to pay membership fees to be a Brand Ambassador, providing a recurring source of funding for the future of BWBS.

## Social & Political Landscape

Understanding the social and political landscape of shipping is integral to BWBS success as a program. Many companies rank "packaging waste reduction" or "carbon reduction" as their top sustainability priorities, above animal welfare or reducing whale ship strikes. To increase brand engagement, BWBS may consider increasing the visibility of carbon reduction metrics over the current whale-centric strategy.

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# OBJECTIVES

The goal of this document is to provide guidance for increasing Brand Ambassador enrollment through strategic communication. Each section addresses the objectives outlined below:



### Brand Research Phase

Understand why companies may choose to participate in the program.  
Identify the most attractive aspects and greatest barriers to enrollment.



### Create Ideal Brand Profile

Characterize features of ideal companies to target outreach efforts, such as *company size, location, sector, and environmental certifications*.



### Recommended Next Steps

Increase brand engagement through strategic focus areas – enhancing targeted outreach, industry coordination, marketing, and data.

# METHODS

Our team gathered information from 4 BWBS Brand Ambassadors (Peak Designs, Summit Coffee, Nomad, and Who Gives A Crap) and 2 non-participating companies (Outer and Toad&Co) using a mixture of in-person, semi-structured interviews and email surveys (Appendix A, B). The goal of this audience research was to form an understanding of why some companies choose to participate in the brand ambassador program and identify potential barriers or obstacles to participation. We wanted to determine which aspects of the BWBS program are most attractive to current and potential ambassadors, where improvements could be made, and potential strategies to market the program and increase brand engagement. We also collected data on various aspects of the companies (size, market, etc.) to begin developing a profile of which brands are likely to participate in the BWBS Brand Ambassador program.

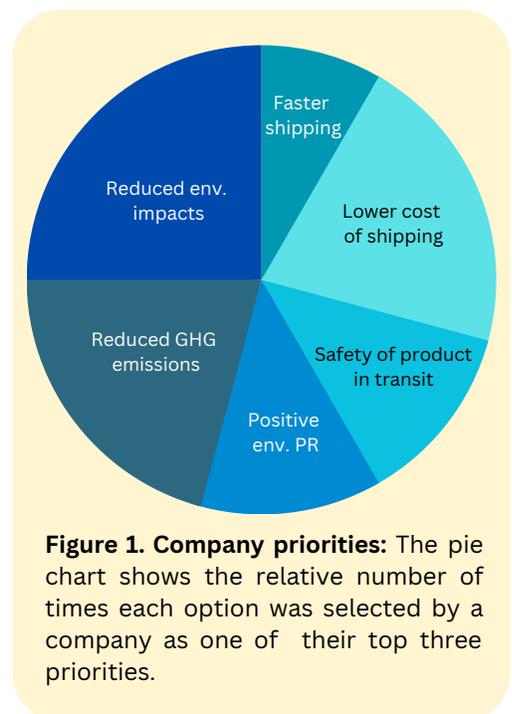


## RESULTS

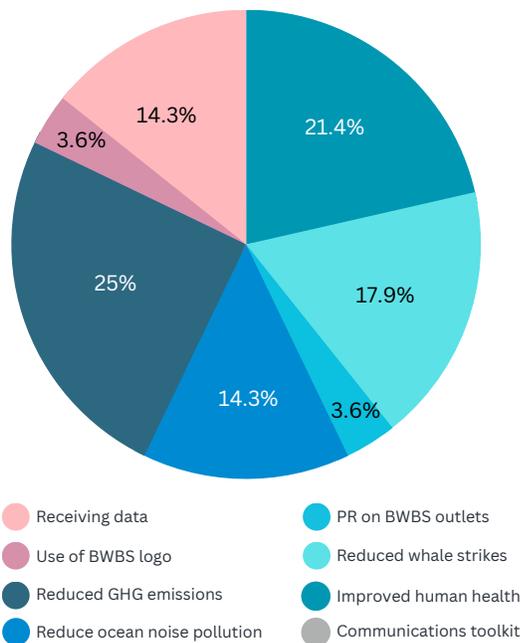
### What are companies' top priorities?

When it comes to shipping and sustainability, companies care about ...

**Reducing greenhouse gas emissions** and **lowering costs of shipping**. 21% of companies ranked these in their top three priorities. Additionally, reducing greenhouse gas emissions scored as the highest overall priority for businesses with lower cost of shipping following close behind. **Reduced environmental impacts** (whale strikes, air pollution, etc.) *most often* ranked within the top three priorities at 25% although it came in 3rd place overall.



**Figure 1. Company priorities:** The pie chart shows the relative number of times each option was selected by a company as one of their top three priorities.



**Figure 2. Benefits of the Brand Ambassador program:** The chart shows the relative number of times each feature was selected by a company as one of the top three benefits.

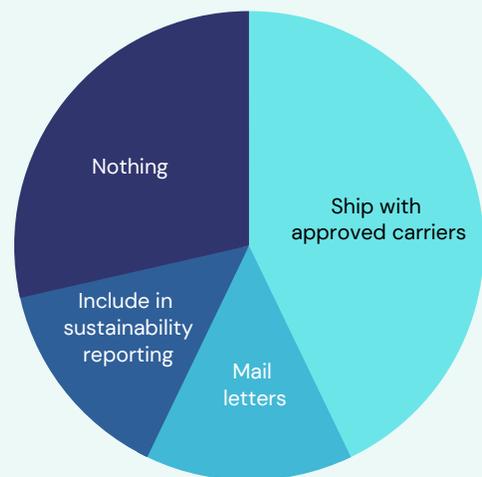
## What do companies like about the Brand Ambassador program?

Companies are most attracted to the program because of its potential to (1) **reduce greenhouse gas emissions**, (2) **improve human health** by reducing air pollution, and (3) **reduce the number of whales hit by ships**.

Although **receiving data** on reduced impacts did not make the cut as a top feature, when interviewees were asked whether receiving the data was important they unanimously agreed. This suggests that the previously mentioned top three aspects of the program may be unique draws to becoming a Brand Ambassador.

## What aspects of the Brand Ambassador program do companies find difficult to implement?

Companies find it most burdensome to **ship with approved carriers**, with 42.9% identifying this as the *most difficult* requirement of the program. However, reviews are mixed as some companies thought that participation is a "no-brainer," with 28.6% stating that there was **no difficulty in qualifying** to be a brand ambassador. Some companies struggled with **including the program in their sustainability reporting**, citing the clunkiness and untimely delivery of data resources, or reluctance to advertise not-well-known environmental programs. Those who selected **mailing letters** as a difficulty explained that it added to the myriad of administrative tasks they had on their desk.

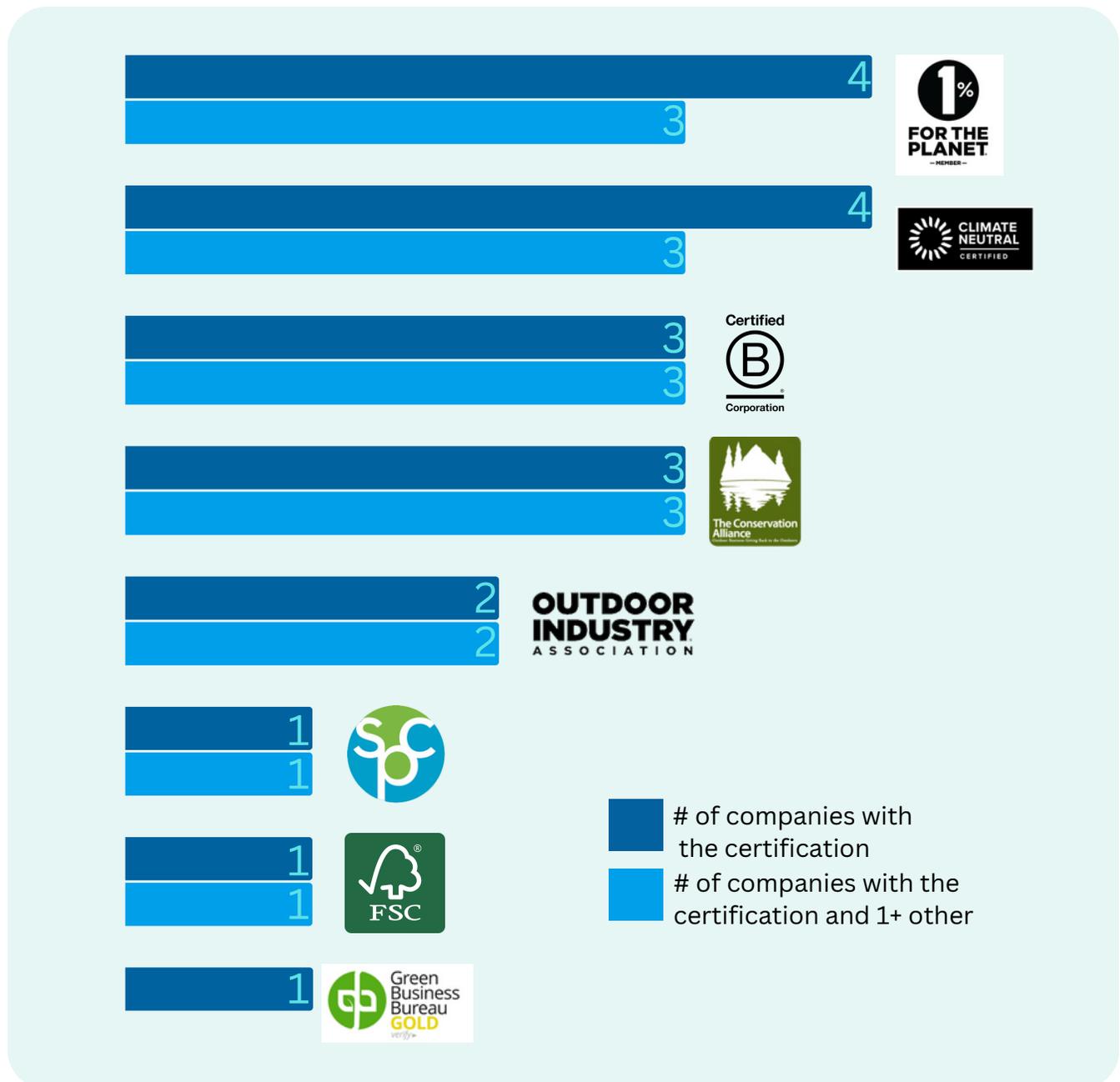


**Figure 3. Possible barriers to participation:**

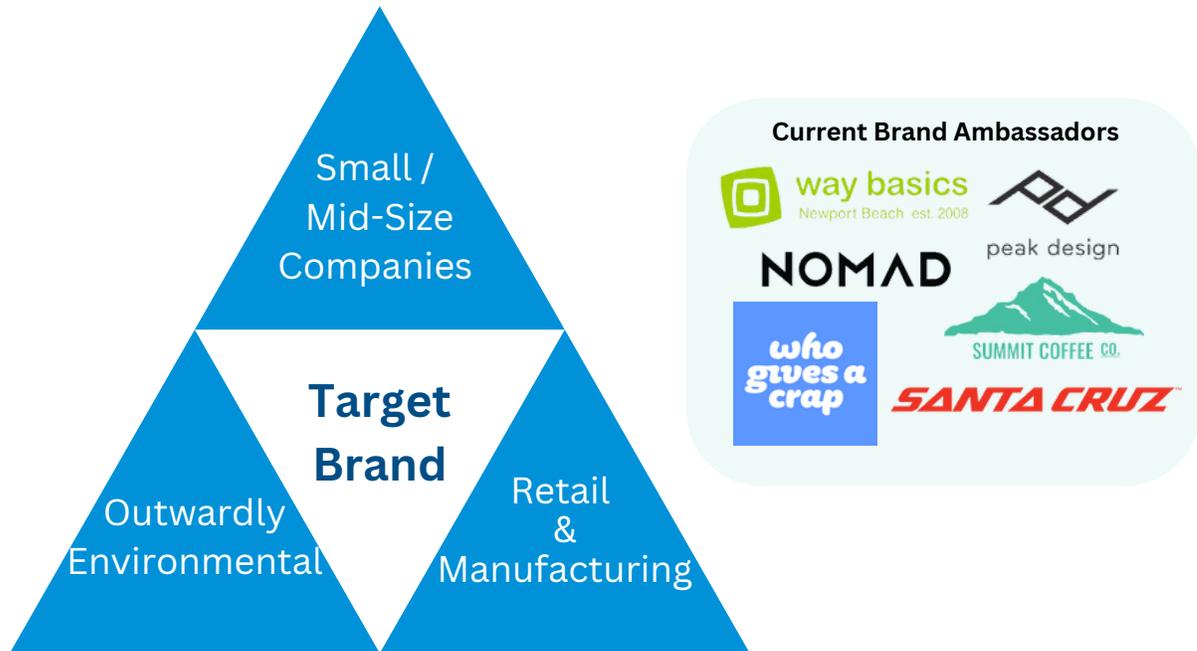
The chart shows the relative number of times each requirement was selected by a company as the most difficult aspect of the program to implement.

# What initiatives are they involved in?

The most popular certifications among companies interviewed are **1% for the Planet** and **Climate Neutral**, with 4 of 7 interviewed companies holding these certifications. Additionally, companies holding these certifications were enrolled in other certifications or memberships 75% of the time. Following closely behind are **B Corp** and membership with **The Conservation Alliance**, with 3 of 7 companies enrolled in these programs and 100% of these companies also holding other certifications or memberships. To better understand what makes a successful certification or membership program and how the BWBS Brand Ambassador program may fit within this landscape, we analyzed characteristics of the most popular programs. A summary of these certifications can be found in Appendix C.



# BRAND CHARACTERIZATION



Using the information gathered from interviews and our own investigation of company characteristics we have developed the above target brand profile. We looked at current Brand Ambassadors (above) as a "mini case study" for success while also evaluating features of other potential Brand Ambassador candidates that we contacted (Appendix E). From this information we believe that BWBS might see greater success if they narrow their scope and invest outreach efforts on candidates with the following features:

- **Size:** Small to mid-size (10 - 100 employees)
  - Smaller to mid-size companies may have less complex corporate structures to navigate, increasing the probability of finding and connecting with the "right" person. This is reinforced by the success of Climate Neutral's growth strategy (Appendix C) and our own outreach experience being more successful with small to mid-size companies.
- **Outwardly environmental:** public declaration of sustainability commitment
  - Organizations that prioritize sustainability are more aligned with the mission of BWBS. Companies may be more likely to have heard about BWBS through other certification communications channels. This notoriety could increase willingness to engage with the program.
- **Sector:** Manufacturers and retailers
  - Building on the previous point, companies in the same sector are more likely to interact, resulting in potential "word-of-mouth" name-recognition and therefore trust of the BWBS program.

# KEY INSIGHTS

Below we distill the findings from the results of our audience research, conversations with industry professionals, and our own observations into four key insights. These impressions were used to guide the formation of the strategic focus area recommendations.



**Companies care most about reducing greenhouse gas emissions – this is mirrored in what they like most about the BWBS program.**

- Current BWBS messaging is *not* optimally aligned with surveyed companies' top priorities



**There is a lot of noise in the environmental certification and membership space and companies are *busy*.**

- Even with personal contacts at companies, it can be difficult/impossible to get into contact with the right person
- Credibility, name recognition, and word-of-mouth help to cut through the noise



**Missed opportunities to increase awareness of BWBS through other certification and membership communication channels.**

- Most companies are involved in other environmental programs where they can virtually connect with like-minded companies
- Access to these communities could amplify BWBS's reach



**Data is valuable, but only if it is communicated correctly.**

- Companies expressed the need for data on the BWBS program, but did not include it in their external sustainability reporting
- Reasons cited: format of the data was not easily digestible, or "late" delivery did not allow sufficient time to incorporate it into the report

# RECOMMENDATIONS

We have identified four strategic focus areas where BWBS can make changes to increase brand engagement and program efficiency. We offer our recommendations for each target area in the following pages:

## Strategic Focus Areas

Each focus area offers a different angle to address brand engagement. We provide guidance for optimizing the impact of each of these elements.

### Targeted Outreach

How to streamline outreach efforts to increase brand engagement and ambassador network.

### Industry Coordination

Understand each player's role in this initiative to support programmatic success and growth.

### Marketing

Suggestions for rebranding, taking advantage of opportunities for growth, & tapping into funding pathways.

### Data

Optimizing timing, content, and delivery of data for maximum impact.

## Example: Incorporating Strategic Focus Areas

Many companies have stated that they are interested in carbon reduction over reducing whale ship-strikes. BWBS may capitalize on this via emphasizing carbon reduction benefits during brand outreach. BWBS can partner with freight forwarders to make it easier for companies to ship with BWBS-approved carriers. BWBS branding can reflect companies' top priorities to reduce their carbon emissions (i.e., naming can emphasize "Blue Skies" and logo can focus on ship over whale tail). Annual data reports are structured to encourage increased participation with BWBS initiatives and communicate metrics that companies care most about.



# Targeted Outreach

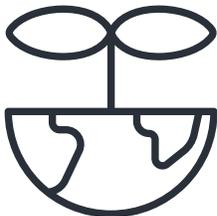
Throughout the research process, we found that certain types of companies were more accessible than others. For example, when we reached out to mega-brands like Amazon and Nike, the responses were overarching denials to our requests. We have learned that some brands are more likely to respond than others and that there are certain strategies BWBS can utilize to increase the probability of success.



## Who communicates BWBS is important!

Finding the right **spokesperson** to promote BWBS

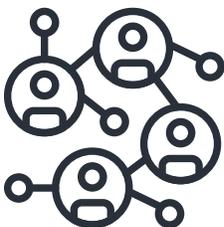
- Utilize current Brand Ambassadors to grow the network
- Outdoor Industry Association, The Conservation Alliance, and 1% for the Planet are potential organizations to collaborate with to increase visibility



## Which brands are already engaged in environmental certifications?

Target brands that are outwardly environmental

- Environmentally-facing brands utilize BWBS membership to further their sustainability agendas
- Brands enrolled in 1% for the Planet are good candidates, as a BWBS membership fee would be absorbed as part of their 1% pledge (Appendix C)



## Streamline outreach by targeting similar sectors

It's easier to build a coalition across sectors that are aligned

- Credibility and trust already exist between colleagues
- Word-of-mouth is a powerful tool
- Facilitate brand networking across similar sectors (i.e., outdoor apparel, coffee)



## What can BWBS offer brands?

Focus on advertising benefits of what BWBS offers brands

- Communicating clearly how BWBS can support brands in meeting their sustainability goals is critical

*"Ask not what your companies can do for you - ask what you can do for your companies!"*

# Industry Coordination

Streamlining industry coordination requires a clear "map" of all program elements. The following diagram outlines the role of all players – consumers, companies, freight forwarders, and cargo carriers – to increase both awareness and programmatic efficiency of BWBS. Freight forwarders are key players in facilitating a company's transition to more sustainable shipping. It is essential that internal and external program communication clearly outlines the influence of each player and the responsibility they have to program success.

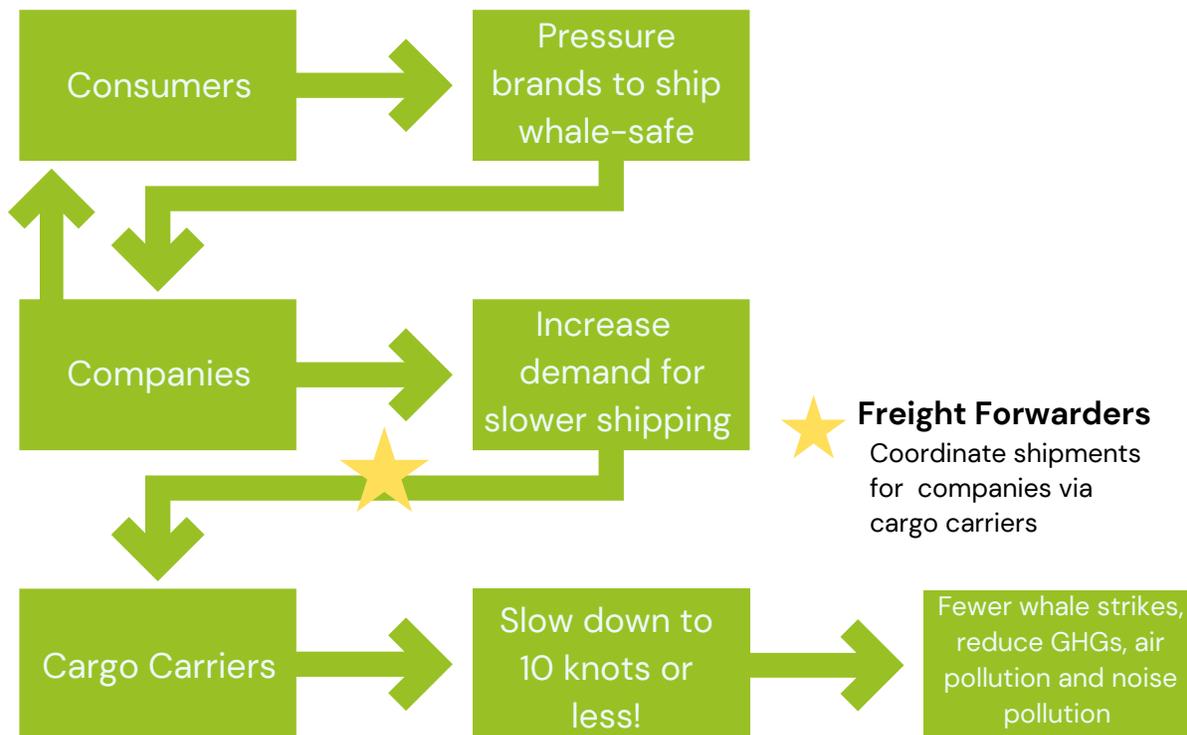


Diagram illustrating connection between consumers, companies, and cargo carriers.

Illustrated above is BWBS's theory of change involving consumers, companies, and cargo carriers. However, freight forwarders play an integral role in ensuring programmatic efficiency and industry coordination.

We recommend that BWBS attempt to **build relationships with freight forwarders** so they may directly **facilitate companies' transitions** to slower shipping. This may allow BWBS to obtain integral information such as vessel lists, which increases the credibility of existing data on fleet compliance. This has the dual benefit to decrease the guesswork in targeting potential brand ambassadors.



# Marketing

Although we observed general enthusiasm for the mission of the BWBS program, companies were reluctant to engage. This may be due to BWBS lacking notoriety in addition to unclear communication of benefits for participating companies. To combat this, BWBS should **build a coalition** using the network of trusted companies already enrolled in the Brand Ambassador program (industry coordination). Interviewed companies have expressed interest in this type of network. This also confers additional value to being a Brand Ambassador, motivating companies to enroll. If this positive feedback loop is established it will help to validate a membership fee. We offer recommendations to access this untapped funding pathway.

## "Rebranding" Brand Ambassadors

Create a tiered membership program:

### 1) Brand Ambassador

- Ship with *at least one* approved carrier
- Annual membership fees
- All current program requirements also apply

### 2) Super Ambassador

- Ship *exclusively* with approved carriers
- Annual membership fees
- Recruit at least one other company
- All current program requirements also apply

Implementing a tiered membership program could lead to a secure funding pathway and support programmatic growth. Competition created by the tiered system could increase engagement and notoriety. The fee may be leveraged to facilitate accountability in exchange for greater recognition or other non-financial incentives.

## Quarterly Newsletter / Email Outreach

Increase BWBS presence through including the following content:

Highlight recent BWBS growth / accomplishments

Introduce new Brand Ambassadors

Include new relevant legislation and voting opportunities

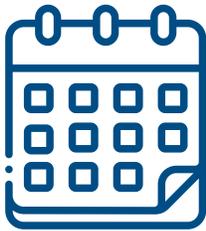
Donation announcements from "Super Ambassadors"

Consistent communication of program impact and growth will help to build the presence of BWBS, recognize the growth of the program, and create a network of Brand Ambassadors and Super Ambassadors. Regular reinforcement of the value of the program builds a greater sense of responsibility to act.

# Data

A common pitfall of program reporting is to view quantity of data as synonymous with, and equal to, quality. This is apparent in our interviews with companies in which they unanimously agreed that they wanted data, but also stated that they *had not looked at the data* sent to them by BWBS – ultimately resulting in the exclusion of BWBS in their sustainability reporting.

The following recommendations seek to take full advantage of the data communication process. To 1) encourage companies to look at and use BWBS data, 2) demonstrate alignment with their company values, 3) communicate important program achievements and encourage greater participation, and 4) build credibility for the program with accuracy and transparency. When delivering data to brand ambassadors, make sure to keep in mind the following:



## Timing

### **When brands receive data makes a difference!**

Releasing vessel analytics data well in advance of Earth Day (April 22) is critical to make sure BWBS is included in their sustainability reporting. Companies like to publish their sustainability reporting in coordination with Earth Day.



## Content

### **What kind of data do/should brands care about?**

Include data that aligns with company priorities such as greenhouse gas emissions, human health impacts, and reduction in whale strikes.



## Delivery

### **Draw attention toward what's important!**

Use simple creative design to direct attention to important metrics and to highlight program accomplishments. Take advantage of this opportunity to encourage exploration of different features of the BWBS program.



## Credibility

### **Verify data accuracy and be transparent.**

Communicate limitations of VSR and avoid inflating positive impacts that could be labeled greenwashing.

Below is an annotated example of how BWBS could use annual data reporting to:

- Update companies on their own performance
- Motivate companies to increase participation in the program
- Remind them of notable program achievements
- Acknowledge compliant carriers
- Encourage further exploration of the BWBS program

**2023 BWBS BRAND AMBASSADOR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

**3** companies joined the Brand Ambassador program this year!

**EXAMPLE COMPANY**  
CALIFORNIA ORGANIC COMPANY  
*Example company*  
THE EXAMPLE COMPANY

**AB 953 is headed to the CA Senate!**  
If passed, this bill would implement "a statewide voluntary vessel speed reduction and sustainable shipping program for the California coast in order to reduce air pollution, the risk of fatal vessel strikes on whales, and harmful underwater acoustic impacts" by 2026!

**452**  
number of whales detected in Northern and Southern California VSR zones!

**Top Performing Carriers**

1	Maersk A/S
2	Hamburg Sudamerikanisch
3	Polar Tankers Inc.
4	MSC Mediterranean Shipping Co
5	APL LLC
6	Yang Ming Marine Transport
7	Ocean Network Express Pte Ltd
8	CSL Americas
9	CMA CGM SA The French Line
10	Zodiac Maritime Ltd

**YOUR 2023 IMPACT REPORT**

**10,000** METRIC TONS OF CARBON EMISSIONS AVOIDED BY SHIPPING WITH APPROVED CARRIERS  
This number was calculated for YOU using information that you provided about which carriers you use. Want to see this number grow? Check out our full list of approved carriers at [www.bluewhalesblueskies.org](http://www.bluewhalesblueskies.org)

**2** carriers you ship with that made it on our list of Top 10 Performing Carriers

**12** average point increase in regional air quality scores.

Slower moving ships burn less fuel which means less air pollution. You helped to contribute to improved air quality by shipping with BWBS approved carriers!

**Calls attention to program growth!**

**Advertises and rewards most compliant carriers!**

**Personalized screenshot of the numbers companies care about most!**

**Highlights important news!**

**Motivates companies to ship with better performing carriers!**

\*Larger rendition may be found in Appendix D

# Appendix

## A. Interview Questions for Brand Ambassador Candidates

*\*Text in italics denotes a change/addition from the interview questions use to collect data for this report.*

**1) To better understand where sustainability initiatives sit on the list of company priorities when selecting a carrier company, please rank the following in order of importance:**

- (a) Schedule / Faster shipping speeds
- (b) Lower cost of shipping
- (c) Safety of your product in transit
- (d) Positive public perception on environmental issues
- (e) Reduced GHG emissions (scope 3)
- (f) Other environmental benefits (reduced marine noise pollution, reduced whale strikes, etc.)

**2) What environmental/sustainability initiatives does your company prioritize?**

**3) Do you use any of the following carriers to ship your products? [check all that apply]**

- CMA CGM
- Cosco
- CSL
- Eastern Car Liner
- Evergreen
- GALI
- Hapag-Lloyd
- HMM
- Hyundai Glovis
- K Line
- Maersk
- Mol ACE
- MSC
- NYK Ro-Ro
- ONE
- OOCL
- Pacific Basin
- Swire Shipping
- Wallenius

continued from question 3...

- Wan Hai
- Yang Ming

**4) Do you use freight forwarding companies to schedule your shipments? If so, which one(s)?**

**5) Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies Description from Website:**

*We monitor the speeds of hundreds of vessels that pass through the vessel speed reduction (VSR) zones off California each year. Utilizing a fleet-based approach, we assign a recognition level to each of our shipping company participants based on the percentage of their vessels that travel at a speed of 10 knots or less. Traveling at this speed has been found to significantly reduce both the risk of fatal whale strikes and harmful air pollution emissions such as smog-forming chemicals and greenhouse gases. The program runs each year from May 1 to December 15 to coincide with peak ozone and whale feeding and migration. The program covers two geographic regions, one along the Southern California coast and one outside the San Francisco Bay Area. Participants in the Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies program (BWBS) range from companies with a handful of vessels to the largest shipping companies in the world. Together they account for over 90% of all cargo traffic that passes through the Vessel Speed Reduction (VSR) zones.*

*The Brand Ambassador Initiative was launched in March 2022 to help companies advocate for more sustainable shipping. Ambassadors are committed to reducing air pollution, regional greenhouse gas emissions, underwater noise, and ship strikes to endangered whales. Any company that ships with one or more of the VSR cargo carrier participants is eligible to become a Brand Ambassador. Enrolling is free and does not require any changes to your shipping.*

**6) Based on the above description, do you think this is a worthwhile program for your company to take part in? [Yes/No/Unsure; I need more information]**

**7) Based on the above description, do you believe this program will positively impact the environment? [Yes/No/Unsure; I need more information]**

**8) Please explain why you answered yes or no to either of the two questions above. [Free Response]**

**9) What aspects of this voluntary environmental program are most important to you? [Rank in order of importance]**

- (a) *Improved human health impacts due to reductions in air pollution*
- (b) Reduction in whale strikes from cargo ships
- (c) Good PR for your company (BWBS website & media outlets)
- (d) Reduction in ocean noise pollution
- (e) Reduction in GHG emissions
- (f) Communications Toolkit
- (g) Ability to display the BWBS logo/program on your website
- (h) Receiving data about reduced impacts of cargo carriers you use that may be included in your Corporate Social Responsibility reporting
- (i) Other (please specify)

**10) Do you think that any of the following requirements of companies participating in the Brand Ambassadors program would be difficult to implement? Check all that apply.**

- (a) Ship products with one or more of the participating carriers – directly or via your freight forwarder
- (b) Mail pre-written letters to your participating cargo carriers to thank them for their participation
- (c) Grant BWBS the use of your company name and logo to post on the website and use in awareness campaigns for vessel speed reduction
- (d) Include the environmental benefits of the program in your sustainability reporting
- (e) Other (please specify)

**11) Why might your organization choose not to participate in the Protecting Blue Whales and Blue Skies Brand Ambassador program?**

**12) How could the BWBS Brand Ambassador Program be improved for your company to sign on as a Brand Ambassador?**

**13) If BWBS became a certification program, would your company seek certification?**

## B. Interview Questions for Current Brand Ambassadors

*\*Text in italics denotes a change/addition from the interview questions use to collect data for this report.*

**1) How did you hear about the Protecting blue Whales and Blue Skies Brand Ambassador Program?**

**2) Briefly describe any other environmental initiatives your company is involved in.**

**3) To better understand where sustainability initiatives sit on the list of company priorities when selecting a carrier company, please rank the following in order of importance (1 = highest, 6 = lowest)**

(a) Schedule / Faster shipping speeds

(b) Lower cost of shipping

(c) Safety of your product in transit

(d) Positive public perception on environmental issues

(e) Reduced GHG emissions (scope 3)

(f) Other environmental benefits (reduced marine noise pollution, reduced whale strikes, etc.)

**4) Which of the following carriers do you use to ship your products? [Check all that apply]**

- CMA CGM
- Cosco
- CSL
- Eastern Car Liner
- Evergreen
- GALI
- Hapag-Lloyd
- HMM
- Hyundai Glovis
- K Line
- Maersk
- Mol ACE
- MSC
- NYK Ro-Ro
- ONE
- OOCL
- Pacific Basin
- Swire Shipping
- Wallenius
- Wan Hai
- Yang Ming
- Other (please list)

**5) Do you use freight forwarding companies to coordinate your shipments? If so, which one(s)?**

**6) What aspects of the BWBS Brand Ambassador Program are most appealing to your company?** Please rank in order of importance (1 = highest, 9 = lowest)

- Positive human health impacts
- Reduction in cargo ships hitting whales (*whale strikes*)
- *Positive* PR for your company (via BWBS website & media)
- Reduction in ocean noise pollution
- Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
- Communications Toolkit
- Ability to display the BWBS logo/program on your website
- Receiving data about reduced impacts of cargo carriers you use that may be included in your Corporate Social Responsibility reporting

**7) Is there any other aspect of the BWBS Brand Ambassador Program that is appealing to your company? Please describe.**

**8) Was there any aspect of the Brand Ambassador Program that was difficult for your organization to implement?** Check all that apply.

- (a) Ship your products with one or more of the participating carriers – directly or via your freight forwarder
- (b) Mail pre-written letters to your participating cargo carriers to thank them for their participation
- (c) Grant BWBS the use of your company name and logo
- (d) Include the environmental benefits of the program in your sustainability reporting

**9) If BWBS was a certification (fees, stricter requirements, etc.) instead of a free program, do you think your organization have *been more or less inclined* to sign up initially?**

**10) Is there anything you think BWBS could do to make the Brand Ambassador Program or a future certification program more enticing?**

**By completing this survey you consent to have the information collected here used to inform BWBS efforts to further develop the BWBS Brand Ambassador Program. The answers you provide will not be shared with the public. Any reports generated will be kept internally. Your organization name and responses to this survey will remain anonymous.**

- Agree
- Do not agree (Please exit out of this survey and do not click the "Submit" button! If you accidentally submit after selecting this option, we will omit your answers from any reports.)

## C. Summary of popular certifications

### 1% for the Planet

Members of this program commit to donate the equivalent of 1% of gross sales through a combination of monetary, in-kind and approved promotional support directly to approved Environmental Partners in addition to annual membership fees. If a certification or program is listed as an approved Environmental Partner, companies may count membership or certification fees as part of the 1% of their sales donated. The program offers flexibility, allowing companies to register their whole company, a single brand, or a product line. In return, participating companies receive advising services on which Environmental Partners best align with their values. The program helps companies to legitimize their environmental commitments through 1%'s annual review and confirmation of their sales and donations. Finally, membership grants companies exclusive access to a global network of over 5,000 member companies on 60 continents, trade shows, and networking events like Global Summit. Studies show that 28% of consumers recognize this brand.

### Climate Neutral

BioLite and BWBS Brand Ambassador **Peak Design** co-founded this certification with the mission of eliminating greenhouse gas emissions from the supply chain. To do this they require that brands 1) measure their emissions, 2) develop a plan to reduce value chain carbon emissions, and 3) compensate for the previous year's emissions through the purchase of eligible verified carbon and clean energy credits. Companies are provided resources for certification and learning, access to a carbon credit directory, access to a certified brand directory, and Climate Neutral label marketing assets. Currently, there are 322 Climate Neutral certified brands. Advice from Peak Design's Head of Environmental and Social Impact, Annie Nyborg, advises new incentive programs to start recruiting smaller brands as they are more likely to need an environmental certification. A look at Climate Neutral's certified brands confirms that this growth model was employed when building the certification. BWBS should look to this strategy for inspiration.

### The Conservation Alliance

This program utilizes membership contributions to fund their grant programs and advocate for the protection of North America's wild places. Their focus is to provide grassroots conservation projects with the resources they need to succeed. Membership dues are manageable for any size company, determined by the company's annual revenue. On the lower end, companies making < \$1 million only need to pay \$500 annually. On the other end of the spectrum, companies making < \$100 million are charged a \$20,000 annual membership fee. In return, members gain the ability to collaborate with 270 conservation forward companies, and can increase their conservation efforts without increasing headcount.

## **B Corporation**

This may be the most trusted and rigorous certification. It is a well known fact that it is not easy to achieve B Corp certification as its comprehensive nature measures the entire environmental and social performance of businesses that may require participants to restructure aspects of their company to meet the requirements. However, the certification offers some flexibility by offering multiple categories in which companies can acquire points toward their certification with a minimum threshold of 80 points to qualify. One of the better known certifications with 37% of US adults reporting being aware of at least one element of B Corp branding, companies are motivated to get this certification because of the strong signal it sends to consumers that they are a trustworthy and ethical company. The brand helps companies to attract employees and sell products (63% of those aware of the certification say they seek out B Corp products). Additionally participants gain access to the B Hive, an online platform of over 4,000 B Corps, 25,000 mission aligned professionals, and collective action groups.

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## **D. Example impact report template**

The following two pages contain a mock-up of what a personalized annual data report may look like.

# 2023 BWBS BRAND AMBASSADOR PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

**3** companies joined the Brand Ambassador program this year!

**EXAMPLE  
COMPANY**

CALIFORNIA ORGANIC COMPANY

*Example  
company*

THE

EXAMPLE  
COMPANY

## AB 953 is headed to the CA Senate!

If passed, this bill would implement "a statewide voluntary vessel speed reduction and sustainable shipping program for the California coast in order to reduce air pollution, the risk of fatal vessel strikes on whales, and harmful underwater acoustic impacts" by 2026!

### Top Performing Carriers

1	Maersk A/S
2	Hamburg Sudamerikanisch
3	Polar Tankers Inc.
4	MSC Mediterranean Shipping Co
5	APL LLC
6	Yang Ming Marine Transport
7	Ocean Network Express Pte Ltd
8	CSL Americas
9	CMA CGM SA The French Line
10	Zodiac Maritime Ltd

# 452

number of whales detected in Northern and Southern California VSR zones!

# YOUR 2023 IMPACT REPORT



**10,000** METRIC TONS OF  
CARBON EMISSIONS  
AVOIDED BY SHIPPING WITH APPROVED CARRIERS

This number was calculated for YOU using information that you provided about which carriers you use. Want to see this number grow? Check out our full list of approved carriers at [www.bluewhalesblueskies.org](http://www.bluewhalesblueskies.org)

**2**

carriers you ship with that made it on our list of Top 10 Performing Carriers

**12**

average point increase in regional air quality scores.

Slower moving ships burn less fuel which means less air pollution.  
You helped to contribute to improved air quality by shipping with BWBS approved carriers!



## E. Sample Postcard Materials

\*These materials were used at Santa Barbara Earth Day 2023 (see photos on previous page)

# Want to protect whales, oceans, and air?

**TAKE ACTION NOW: WRITE A POSTCARD!**

**Step 1**  
Grab a blank postcard

**Step 2**  
Tell companies why you want them to slow down. Inspire them with a picture or a poem!

**Step 3**  
Drop it in the box!

**Step 4**  
We'll address it, stamp it & mail it for you!

Visit [bluewhalesblueskies.org](http://bluewhalesblueskies.org) to learn more about California Marine Sanctuary Foundation's voluntary speed reduction program




# Shipping ... It's a Whaley Big Deal!



When cargo ships go too fast ...



Whales get run over



Ocean gets noisier



They emit more CO2



Your health is compromised

How can **YOU** help?  
Write a postcard to tell companies to ship responsibly!

POSTCARD

Dear (Company),

Join us to protect whales, oceans, and our health by shipping more responsibly!



We'll mail it for you!

# Shipping ... It's a Whaley Big Deal!

The Santa Barbara Channel is home to many different whales!

Fast-moving cargo ships can hit and kill whales.

Ship noise is loud and makes it hard for whales to communicate and navigate.



Blue



Humpback



Fin



Gray

**Tell companies to slow down!**

Slower ships reduce fatal ship strikes on whales and make less noise.



# Participating Companies

Does your favorite company ship whale-safe?  
Tell them thank you for slowing down!



way basics  
Newport Beach est. 2008

NOMAD



SUMMIT COFFEE CO.



who gives a crap



SANTA CRUZ



peak design



The Port OF HUENEME

