

Marine Debris Tourism Program

Coral Reef Bleach Reversal Project

Case Studies

Marine Sanctuary Improved Their Overall Approach to Strategic Initiatives

OVERVIEW:

Marine Sanctuary is a non-profit organisation that closely partners with the federal government. They are a leading voice for U.S. protected waters, working with communities to conserve and expand those special places for a healthy ocean, coasts, and Great Lakes.

Like many organisations, for or non-profit, they faced significant challenges in aligning teams, gathering meaningful input, and driving strategic initiatives effectively. Their work environment required coordination across multiple stakeholders, including senior leadership, often resulting in delays and misalignments in project execution. They also had the added challenge of having many government and statutory stakeholders which brought a different culture of alignment and innovation.



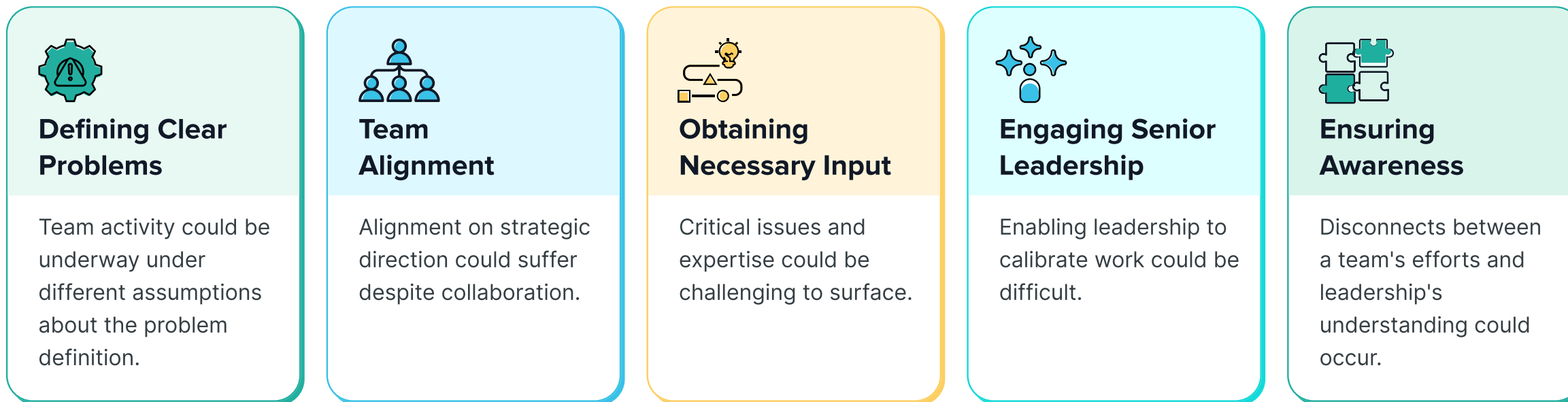
To move from OKR's to actionable plans, Marine Sanctuary sought to improve these project capabilities.

- ALIGNING AROUND A CLEAR PROBLEM
- BUILDING MOMENTUM THROUGH EXPLORATION
- BUILDING CONFIDENCE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

THE CHALLENGE

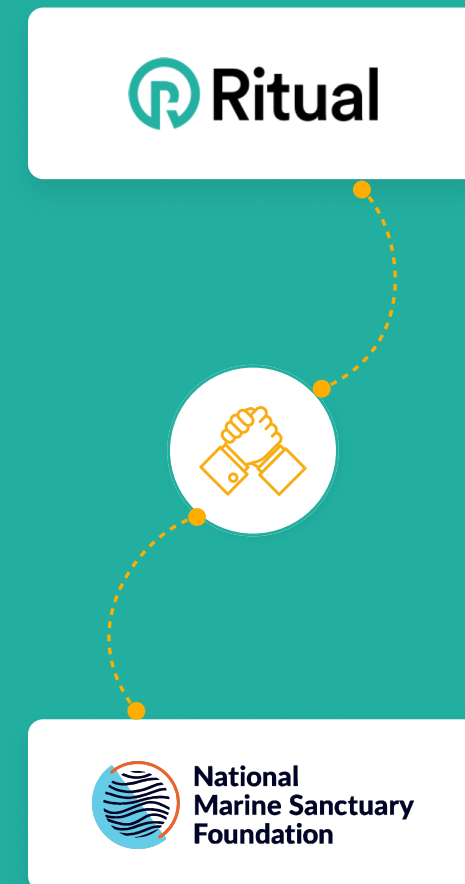
Marine Sanctuary were in a state of evolution in 2023. They had a new CEO, who brought in the practice of OKRs. They were also seeking increased engagement with their local partners, while ensuring expert voices of scientists and policy makers were elevating their approach to projects. The team was hungry for new ways to collaborate at this pivotal moment of organizational change.

Marine Sanctuary experiences pain points:



It was at this time that Blue Economy Manager, Megan Fraser, came across the WSJ bestselling book Decision Sprint in an airport bookstore. Inspired by what she read about the significance of upstream, she contacted author and Ritual co-founder Atif Rafiq directly. She was just in time to join Ritual's beta pilot program. Ritual conducted team workshops on the power and methodology of upstream thinking and how to apply it to key initiatives within Marine Sanctuary. Ritual was in (2) strategic initiatives on the heels of the workshop. More project teams began to adopt Ritual after witnessing the benefits of using software to handle critical upstream work and address pain points.

“We need new ways of working to move strategy to action. I was instantly drawn to the WSJ bestseller, Decision Sprint, and very excited that Ritual exists to put concepts into practice.”
Megan Fraser, Innovation Manager



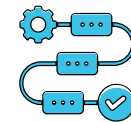
GETTING THE KICK-OFF RIGHT

Marine Sanctuary struggled with collaboration starting with the kick-off. The old way of working did not enable a project to kick-off with a common understanding of the problem space. This had many downstream implications like sudden changes in direction, rework, or going back to the drawing board. A common understanding of the problem solving effort is an important way to focus the team and align efforts.

Ritual provided a structured approach to initiating a project with a clear problem, understanding of objectives and the key issues to solve.



Clearly articulate and define the core problems for each initiative.



Streamline team focus, ensuring that everyone was working towards the same goals.

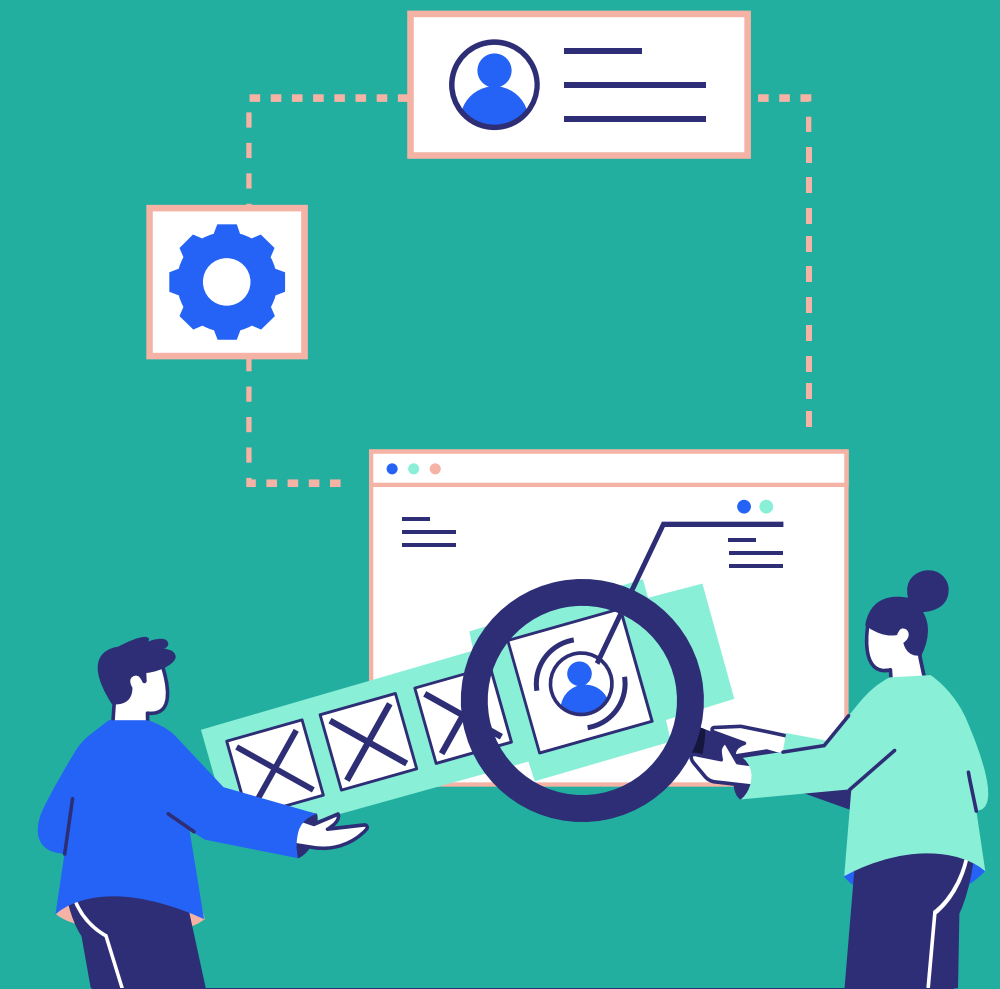
+60%

Confidence in defining clear problems for initiatives

+125%

Confidence in getting the team focused around the problem

“Ritual helps us frame the problem, which is crucial to align from the start. It makes all the work that follows much smoother.”



BUILDING PROJECT MOMENTUM THROUGH EXPLORATION


Projects frequently lacked essential input, causing significant delays in moving to execution. Teams were learning lessons too late, leading to setbacks. The challenge of securing the right input made it hard to move forward with confidence.

In one case, a team lost eight months of productivity because they hadn't gathered a critical issue at the outset. Something had to change. How could the team proactively address these issues to stay ahead?


Ritual streamlined the process of conducting exploration and discovery, providing benefits:



Ensuring that blindspots are minimized.



Guiding a team to explore before drawing conclusions

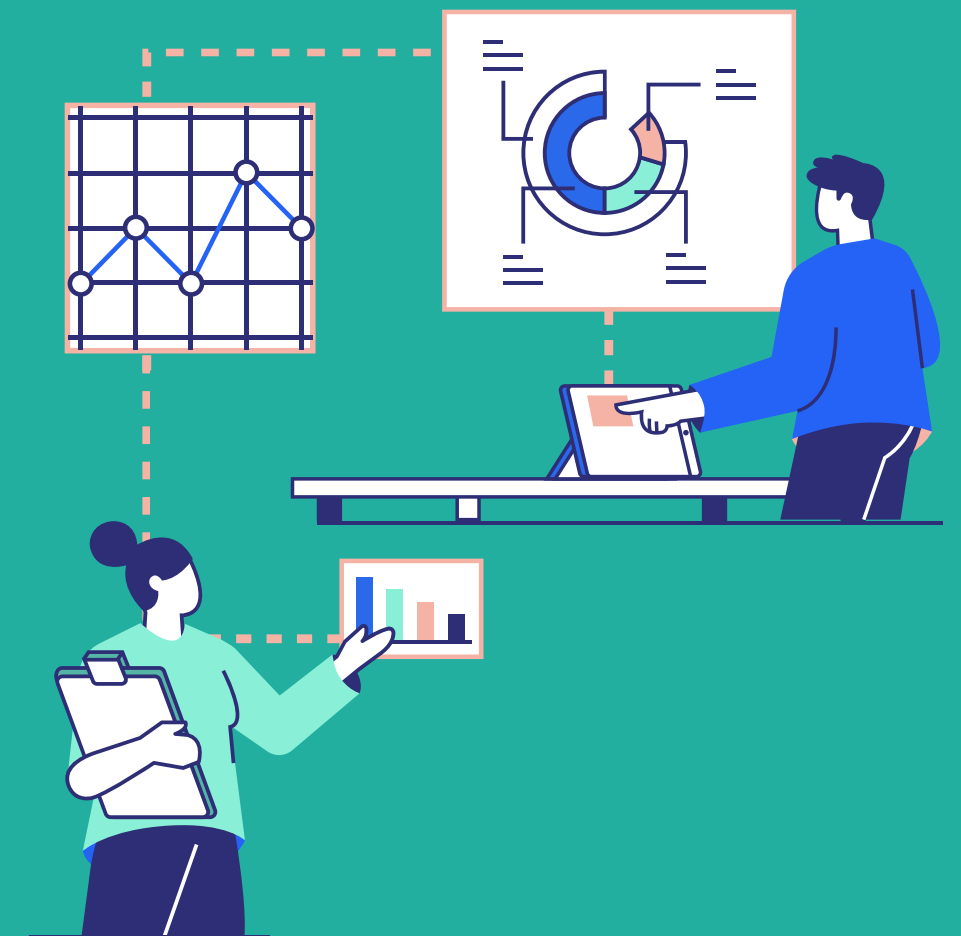


Building habit for continuous exploration to tackle the next fork in the road

+75% Confidence in obtaining necessary input from critical people

Marine Sanctuary now has a way to go about the exploration stage of projects effectively. And it's unlocked a huge capability: getting high quality input at the right stage so that when it comes time to make recommendations, they stand on strong ground.


"Exploration help us uncover critical questions and collect the right input efficiently. We get to the bottom of the right questions and build sound recommendations."




BUILDING CONFIDENCE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Marine Sanctuary has faced challenges in engaging senior leadership effectively, making it difficult to extract meaningful contributions and ensure that leadership was aware of the depth of work involved in strategic explorations. The organization also works with a huge range of stakeholders across sectors, time zones, and seniority levels which often made collaboration laborious. Ritual enhanced the organization's ability to engage with stakeholders by:

 Expanding the circle of input"

 Providing a way for leaders to engage with meaningful input at key stages."

 Illuminating the efforts of the team, making the depth of work visible to senior stakeholders.

+133%

Confidence in extracting meaningful contributions and feedback from senior leadership

+80%

Awareness among senior stakeholders about the depth of work involved in explorations

“Ritual helps us illuminate the work being done, which is often invisible to senior staff.

It shows the rigor behind how we plan to get from kick-off to decision-making.”

