

# Planet Hero!

## Dr. Sylvia Earle



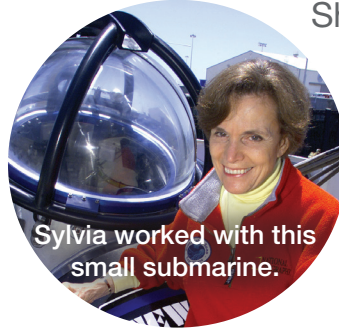
People and Planet

### Marine biology expert!

Dr Sylvia Earle was born on **August 30, 1935**, in a time when very few women studied the ocean. But when her family moved to the coast of **Dunedin, Florida**, in 1948, Sylvia became fascinated by it. Aged 16, she won a scholarship to **Florida State University**, and by the time she was 20, had earned a Masters degree in botany from **Duke University**.

After getting married and starting a family in **1957**, Sylvia began her **PhD** in **1966**, using her training in **SCUBA** diving to research **marine plants**. Soon, she began taking part in **ground-breaking exploration** missions deep in the ocean, testing new **submersible equipment** capable of reaching depths humans can't!

In the **1970s**, Sylvia began working with **National Geographic** to tell people around the world about her ocean adventures.



She led ocean expeditions and became the **first-ever female Chief Scientist** at **NOAA** (the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration) in **1990**.

After more than 40 years in research, in **2009** Sylvia founded the **Sylvia Earle Alliance/Mission Blue**, an ocean advocacy group dedicated to protecting **marine biodiversity**! She is now its **President and Chairman**.

#### Did you know?

- On **September 19, 1979**, Sylvia set a **world record** for the deepest walk on the ocean floor! She spent two hours exploring the seabed at **1,250ft**, using weights to keep her submerged.
- She collected over **20,000 samples** of algae (seaweed) for her PhD project!
- As of 2020, about **10% of the ocean** is under some form of protection, thanks to the **worldwide efforts** of people like Sylvia.

#### FUN FACT!

In **1970**, Sylvia led the **first ever all-female team of aquanauts** to live and work in a habitat **50 feet underwater**. They stayed there for **two weeks**, exploring deep-water habitats!

Preparing for her aquanaut expedition in 1970!

#### FUN FACT!

Sylvia has spent more than **7,000 hours underwater**, led over **100 expeditions**, and authored almost **200 articles**!