

Route du
Rhum 2026



Ocean ExplorERS



BREST
EN VUE



IDEC.SPORT

sopra & steria

the famous project



Route du RHUM 2026 Ocean Explorers

Table of contents

Introduction	p 2
1- All aboard	p 3
Welcome aboard!	p 4
A life offshore	p 4
From eight sailors... to just one	p 5
IDEC SPORT - CIC: a legendary boat	p 6
The Route du Rhum : heading for Guadeloupe	p 8
Alexia's dream team	p 10
2- Sailing a giant	p 12
How does a sailing boat move?	p 12
What to look for on the boat diagram	p 12
Flying... almost	p 13
Alone on board	p 15
Your turn to decide	p 17
What if something breaks?	p 18
3- Finding the route	p 19
The shortest route	p 20
is not always the fastest	p 21
Weather mission: read the map	p 22
The ocean's invisible highways	p 23
The major Atlantic currents	p 26
Become a weather router	p 27
The ocean and the atmosphere: one giant team	p 27
4- Two explorers, one ocean	p 28
Alexia meets another explorer	p 28
How does a float work?	p 29
What does the ocean tell us?	p 29
5- The ocean is alive	p 30
The invisible life that keeps the ocean alive	p 30
The journey of carbon	p 32
Destination Guadeloupe : corals	p 33
6- Your turn to take action	p 34
From the Mediterranean to the Caribbean	p 34
Waste travels too	p 34
7- Explorer	p 35
Certificate	p 36
8- Take note every week!	p 37
9- Your turn to take the helm!	p 38
Virtual Regatta	p 38
Become a meteorologist and navigator	p 38
What about Alexia?	p 39
10- Media and resources	p 40

JOIN THE 4MYPLANE EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS



Are you a teacher, a member of an educational team or responsible for a group of young people?

4myplanet offers educational resources, meetings, workshops and projects focusing on the ocean, science, the environment and great maritime adventures. This form helps us learn more about your school or organisation and the young people you work with, so that we can keep you informed about the 4myplanet projects you can take part in.

Just a few details are needed — the form takes about 2 minutes.

Google Form link : <https://forms.gle/Z66XJG56AUrVSa69A>



1 ALL ABOARD

With Alexia Barrier, 4myplanet and IDEC SPORT



Hi! I'm Captain Planet. I'm going to sail with Alexia throughout the Route du Rhum... And good news: you're coming with us too!
Keep your eyes and ears wide open — we've got lots of things to discover.

YOUR MISSION STARTS HERE

For the next few weeks, you are going to prepare for a real race across the Atlantic. Then you will follow Alexia during the few days of her crossing, observe the ocean with scientists and make decisions as if you were part of the team.

On 1 November 2026, a woman will cross the Atlantic alone on this boat.
And you're coming aboard with her!
Good news: you won't need your passport to follow this adventure!



WELCOME ABOARD!

In November 2026, **Alexia Barrier** will start the **Route du Rhum – Destination Guadeloupe**.

She will leave **Saint-Malo** and cross the Atlantic alone to **Pointe-à-Pitre**, aboard the maxi-trimaran IDEC SPORT - CIC.

But this adventure will be more than just a race. With 4myplanet, it will also become a journey to understand the ocean: weather, currents, climate, scientific floats, plankton, corals, and the women and men who study them.

ALEXIA BARRIER: A LIFE OFFSHORE



A professional sailor for more than twenty years, Alexia has competed in offshore races and developed projects combining sport, science, education and ocean protection.

2018

First Route du Rhum: a solo Atlantic crossing aboard an IMOCA.

2020/2021

Vendée Globe: 111 days around the world, alone, non-stop and without assistance.

2025/2026

The Famous Project CIC: an all-female crew sails around the world on the Jules Verne Trophy route.

2026

Back to the Route du Rhum, this time aboard IDEC SPORT - CIC in the ULTIM category.



FROM EIGHT SAILORS... TO JUST ONE



With eight sailors, you can take turns. Alone, Alexia will have to do everything!
Luckily, I'll be there to lend her a paw!
What? You've never seen a teddy bear hoist a mainsail?!

On 29 November 2025, eight female sailors left Brittany aboard IDEC SPORT - CIC to take on the **Jules Verne Trophy** challenge.

They rounded the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Leeuwin and Cape Horn, faced several technical problems and completed their round-the-world voyage on 26 January 2026 in 57 days, 21 hours and 20 minutes.

They Set the first reference time on this route for an all-female crew.

A few months later, Alexia is back aboard the same boat for a very different challenge: this time, she will be alone.

She will have to choose her route, trim the sails, sleep, eat, monitor traffic, manage the weather and deal with the unexpected.



KEY TAKEAWAY

The same boat can tell two completely different stories:
a round-the-world voyage with a crew, followed by a solo Atlantic crossing.



IDEC SPORT - CIC: A LEGENDARY BOAT



Wow... I've seen boats before, but this one is gigantic!
Do you really think you can cross the Atlantic on it — all by yourself?
Alexia... don't go too far, OK? I'm afraid I might get lost!
Three hulls and an enormous mast... No, it's not a spaceship!

IDEC SPORT - CIC is a maxi-trimaran: one central hull and two outer hulls connected by large crossbeams.

It is about **32 metres long and 22 metres wide**. Its mast is more than **34 metres high** and, in good conditions, the boat can exceed **40 knots**.

Length
≈ 32 m

Width
≈ 22 m

Mast
> 34m

Speed
> 40 knots

If IDEC SPORT were a building, its mast would reach approximately the 13th floor!



THREE ROUTE DU RHUM VICTORIES



Launched in 2006 under the name Groupama 3, the boat has changed names and skippers several times.

It won the Route du Rhum in 2010 with Franck Cammas, in 2014 with Loïck Peyron under the name Banque Populaire VII, and again in 2018 with Francis Joyon under the name IDEC SPORT.

In 2026, a new chapter in its story begins with Alexia.



IDEC SPORT - CIC: A LEGENDARY BOAT



A BOAT THAT KEEPS EVOLVING

A racing boat is never completely finished. Over the years, the sails change, navigation systems evolve, parts are reinforced and equipment is adapted to new projects.

For the 2026 Route du Rhum, the boat is being prepared for solo sailing. Some of the working areas are being adapted so that Alexia needs to go inside the boat as little as possible: the boat travels very fast, there are many dangers and Alexia is alone. The team is therefore organising things so that she can eat, navigate and have a resting area on deck, as close to the action as possible.

We also remember that during the **Jules Verne Trophy**, the mainsail was torn and the starboard foil was damaged. But don't worry — she'll be setting off with a boat as good as new!



https://4myplanet.fr/images/missions-educatives/kits-pedagogiques/pdf/jules_verne_trophy.pdf

A racing boat is a bit like a Formula 1 car: every single detail has to be prepared before the start.



MEET A PROFESSIONAL

Clément Surtel

Technical Director of IDEC SPORT - CIC
He coordinates the boat's technical preparation and the team responsible for making it as reliable as possible before the start.

MEET A PROFESSIONAL

Thierry Du Pre de Vorsen
Boat Captain of IDEC SPORT - CIC
He knows every detail of the boat and oversees its maintenance and day-to-day preparation.



THE ROUTE DU RHUM: HEADING FOR GUADELOUPE



More than 3,500 nautical miles (6,500 km!)...
Good thing we don't have to swim all the way!

The Route du Rhum is a solo transatlantic race held every four years since 1978. It runs from **Saint-Malo**, in Brittany, to **Pointe-à-Pitre**, in Guadeloupe. The start of the 2026 edition is scheduled for Sunday, 1 November.

Ahead of the skippers lie more than 3,500 nautical miles of Atlantic Ocean. But no sailing boat simply follows a straight line: the route depends on the wind, waves, currents and weather systems.



DID YOU KNOW?

The shortest route is not always the fastest.
A skipper may choose to sail extra miles to find an area with more favourable winds.



THE ROUTE DU RHUM: HEADING FOR GUADELOUPE



MISSION 1 PLOT YOUR ROUTE



On a map of the Atlantic, find Saint-Malo and Pointe-à-Pitre.

Then imagine three routes:

1. the shortest route;
2. a route going farther west;
3. a route going farther south.

Which one would you choose? Explain why.

MISSION 2 MEET YOUR TEAM



In this booklet, you will meet a sailor, a technical team, scientists, ocean specialists, educators, and professionals working in imaging and technology.

They all have one thing in common: each of them observes or tells the story of the ocean in their own way.



ALEXIA'S DREAM TEAM

Alone on board, yes — but never without the Shore team!



Anne
Communications
The Famous Project



Annemieke
«Bessy»
One of the eight sailors from
the Jules Verne Trophy



Dee
Alexia's co-skipper during
the Jules Verne Trophy



Gwen
Technical crew

Top!



Hélène/Elen
A supporter from the very beginning,
working behind the scenes.
Alexia can always count on her —
ready for any mission!



Julot
Technical crew



Laurence
Accountant
Without her,
nothing would run!



ALEXIA'S DREAM TEAM



Stéphanie
community manager
4myplanet



Thierry
aka «Titi»
IDEC boat captain



Titou
Technical crew



Xavier
aka «P'tit Xav»
Technical crew

The artists



Mopi
Illustrator
4myplanet



Robin
Tall photographer
(and not just because
he's tall!)

The fan club

My mum is
the best!

When do
we eat??



Nikka



2

SAILING A GIANT

HOW DOES A SAILING BOAT MOVE?



The wind is invisible... but look at everything it can do!

IDEC SPORT - CIC has no engine to propel it during the race:
its energy comes from the wind.

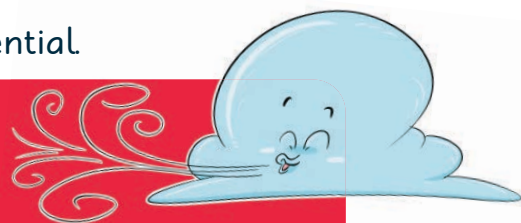
But the wind does not simply push the boat from behind. Depending on the point of sail, air flows around the sails and creates a force that allows the boat to move forwards. Underwater, the hulls and appendages* resist sideways movement and help turn this force into forward motion.

Sail trim and the balance of the boat are therefore essential.

DID YOU KNOW?

A sail works partly like a wing: its shape and the airflow around it create forces.

Underwater, the appendages also interact with the flow of a fluid.



WHAT TO LOOK FOR ON THE BOAT DIAGRAM



Find the **mainsail**, **headsails**, **mast**, **boom**, **central hull**, two **outer hulls**, **rudders**, **centreboard** and **foils**.

Instead of trying to memorise everything, ask yourself:

What works in the air?

What works in the water?

Answers on the next page...

KEY TAKEAWAY

The boat moves thanks to the combined action of the air on the sails and the water on the hulls and appendages.

*Appendages = rudders, centreboard and foils — the parts that extend below the hulls into the water.



FLYING... ALMOST



Answers:
1-mast, 2-headsail, 3-mainsail, 4-rudder, 5-boom, 6-centreboard, 7-foil, 8-outer hull, 9-central hull

It almost looks as if IDEC SPORT is about to take off!
Scientists prefer to say that its foils help lift the boat. Not quite as exciting as flying!

When a boat moves forwards, its hulls displace water.

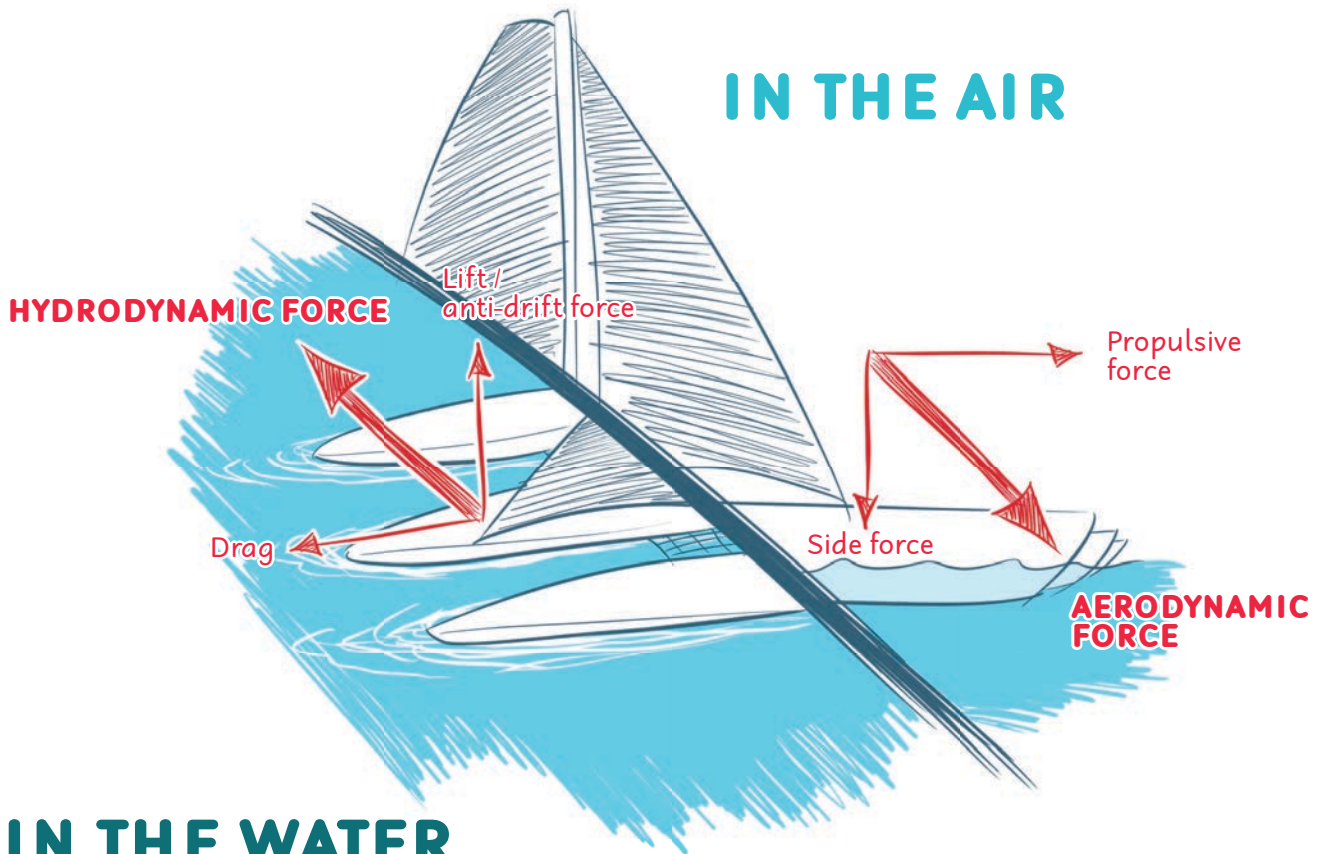
This creates resistance called **hydrodynamic drag**.

To go faster, boat designers try, among other things, to reduce this resistance.

A foil is an appendage placed in the water. As water flows around its shape, it can create an upward force: **lift**.

This force can lift part of the boat. Less hull in the water can mean less drag and therefore greater speed.

IN THE AIR



IN THE WATER

WARNING

Not all ULTIM trimarans "fly" in the same way.

IDEC SPORT belongs to an older generation than more recent trimarans designed to fly more completely.

Its curved foils help lift the boat and improve its performance, but it would be incorrect to describe it as constantly flying above the water.



FLYING... ALMOST



MINI-CHALLENGE

IDEC SPORT is designed to exceed 30 to 40 knots,
with a top speed of 42 knots!
One knot is equal to one nautical mile per hour,
and one nautical mile is 1,852 metres.

To give you an idea:
IDEC SPORT could cross a football pitch in less than two seconds.
It can travel almost as fast as a car on a main road.



At 40 knots, how far does it travel in one hour?

Answer: $40 \times 1,852 = 74,080$ m, or approximately 74 km.



ALONE ON BOARD



For us bears, naps can last several months...
For skippers, sometimes ten minutes is enough!
With eight sailors, you can take turns.
Alone... even the alarm clock never gets a break!

During The Famous Project CIC round-the-world voyage, eight sailors shared the manoeuvres, watchkeeping, weather analysis, boat maintenance and rest periods.

On the Route du Rhum, Alexia will have to organise **everything by herself.**



ON BOARD, ALEXIA HAS TO...

Why ?

Trim and manoeuvre the sails	Constantly adapt the boat's power to the wind and sea conditions.
Observe the weather and choose her route	Find favourable conditions while protecting the boat.
Monitor traffic and her surroundings	Anticipate risks even when she needs to rest.
Eat and drink	Keep enough energy to think clearly and manoeuvre the boat.
Sleep for short periods	Recover without leaving the boat unsupervised for too long.
Maintain and repair the boat	In the middle of the Atlantic, no technical team can come aboard.



ALONE ON BOARD

Even when Alexia is asleep, the boat keeps moving!
And I promise, it has nothing to do with me...



NAPS OF 8 TO 20 MINUTES

When sailing solo, sleeping for several hours at a time is impossible. Alexia sleeps for short periods of **8 to 20 minutes**, during both the day and the night. Before closing her eyes, she checks the **weather, route, traffic and boat settings**, then sets her alarms.



Sleeping for ten minutes and calling it a good night's sleep?
Skippers know how!



WHEN THE BRAIN GETS TIRED

Lack of sleep can cause:
reduced alertness • slower reactions • difficulty concentrating • poor decisions

When fatigue becomes extreme, the brain can even **confuse dreams with reality**. Some sailors have reported **hallucinations**, seeing or hearing things that were not really there.

At sea, sleep is therefore part of staying safe.

A FEW DAYS... BUT VERY INTENSE!

During the round-the-world voyage, Alexia spent more than a month at sea, but there were **eight sailors** who could take turns.

On the Route du Rhum, the crossing should last only a few days...
but Alexia will be alone **24 hours a day**.

Her challenge: go fast without forgetting to sleep!

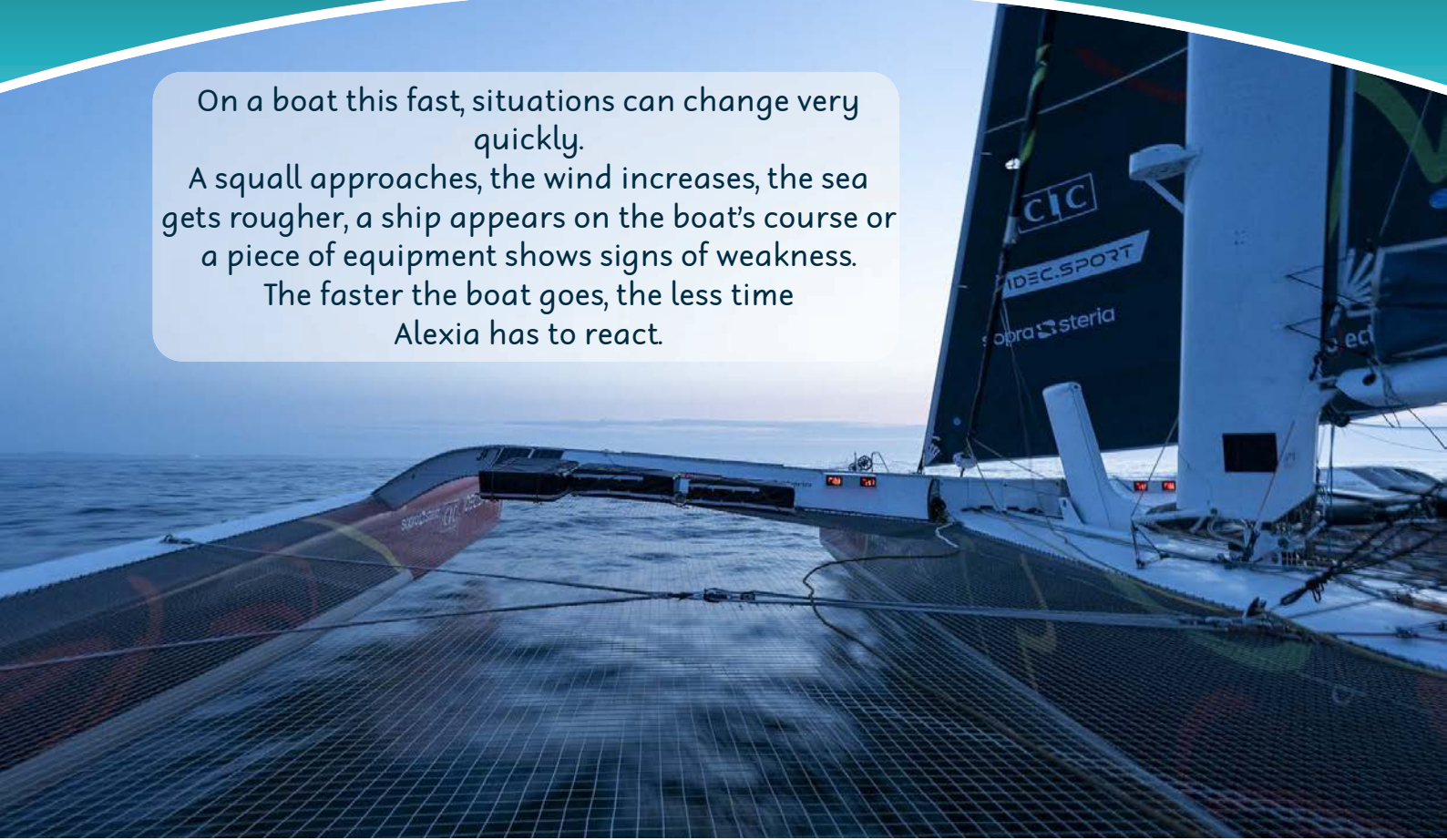


YOUR TURN TO DECIDE

On a boat this fast, situations can change very quickly.

A squall approaches, the wind increases, the sea gets rougher, a ship appears on the boat's course or a piece of equipment shows signs of weakness.

The faster the boat goes, the less time Alexia has to react.



MISSION – THE WIND IS GOING TO INCREASE

You are sailing towards Guadeloupe. The boat is moving very fast. The forecast predicts a major increase in wind speed in three hours.

Option A : You continue at full power to cover as much distance as possible.

Option B : You reduce sail now to prepare the boat.

Option C : You wait for the wind to increase before deciding.

What would you choose? What are the advantages and risks of your decision?

KEY TAKEAWAY

In offshore racing, going fast is not enough. You also have to protect the boat and the sailor. The fastest boat on paper cannot win if it does not finish the race.



WHAT IF SOMETHING BREAKS?



Alexia can't call a breakdown service in the middle of the Atlantic...! She will have to rely on herself... and on her team's preparation.

Alexia carries **tools, spare parts and repair equipment**.

Before the start, the technical team tries to anticipate possible problems and prepare solutions.

At sea, Alexia will first have to understand the problem and then decide whether she can repair it immediately or whether she should wait for better conditions.

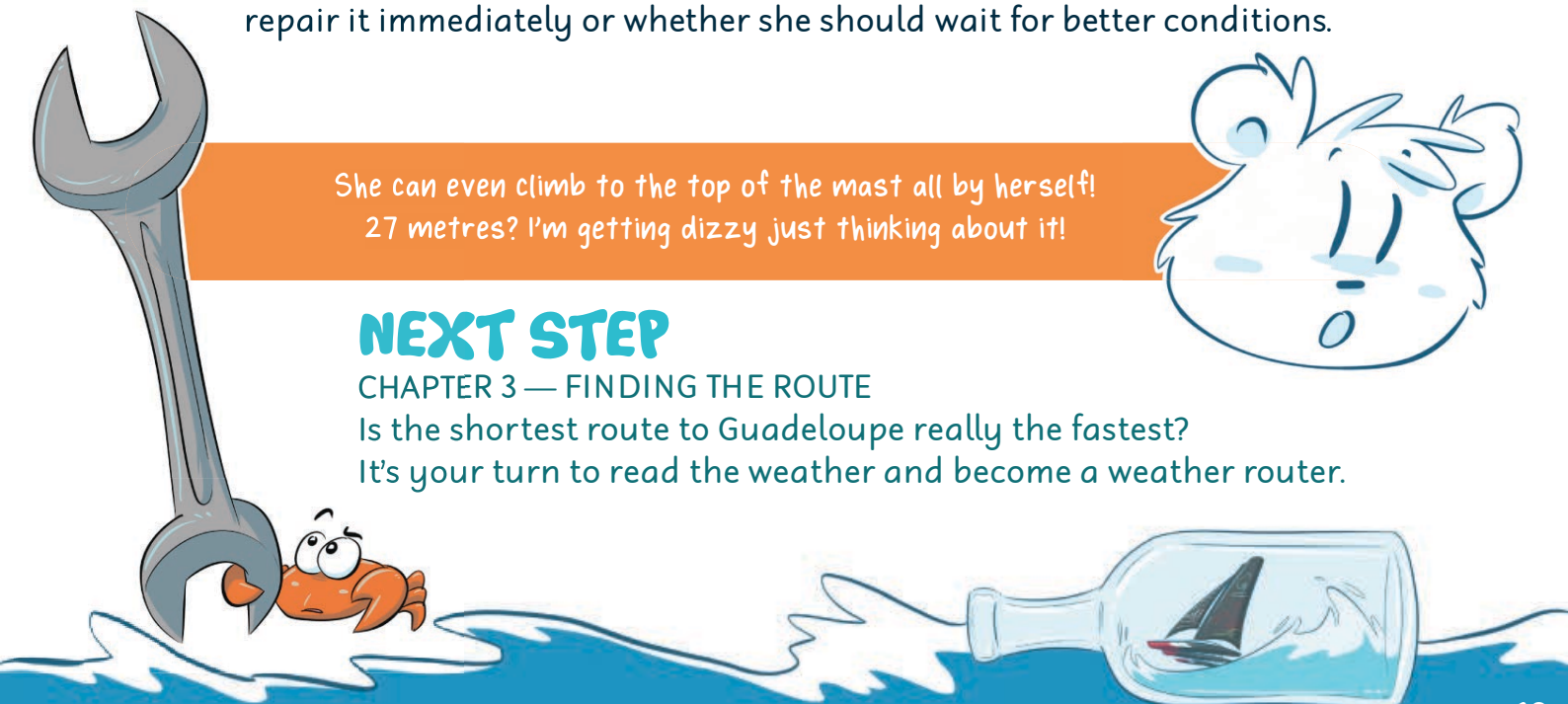
She can even climb to the top of the mast all by herself! 27 metres? I'm getting dizzy just thinking about it!

NEXT STEP

CHAPTER 3 — FINDING THE ROUTE

Is the shortest route to Guadeloupe really the fastest?

It's your turn to read the weather and become a weather router.



3

FINDING THE ROUTE



If you think the shortest route is always the best one...
You should ask the wind what it thinks!

YOUR MISSION

Understand why Alexia will not sail in a straight line towards Guadeloupe, learn how to read some of the information on a weather map and make your first routing decision.



ATLANTIC



3 Finding the route

THE SHORTEST ROUTE IS NOT ALWAYS THE FASTEST

Between Saint-Malo and Pointe-à-Pitre, the direct route crosses more than 3,500 nautical miles of Atlantic Ocean.

On a map, you might be tempted to draw a straight line between the start and the finish. At sea, that would rarely be the best strategy.

A sailing boat depends on the wind. Alexia therefore looks for a route where the wind is blowing in a direction and at a strength that suit **IDEC SPORT - CIC**.

DID YOU KNOW?

A detour can save time.

Sailing a longer distance in favourable winds can be much faster than taking a shorter route through an area with almost no wind.

THE MAJOR WEATHER SYSTEMS



Meteorologists love forecasting the weather...
but the clouds don't always read their forecasts!

A low-pressure system is an area of low atmospheric pressure, often associated with wind and unsettled weather.

A high-pressure system is an area of high atmospheric pressure where winds may be lighter.

Farther south, the trade winds can provide steady winds towards the Caribbean.

But these systems move and change. The map Alexia looks at today will not be exactly the same tomorrow.



WEATHER MISSION: READ THE MAP

YOUR TURN TO INVESTIGATE

1. Find Alexia's position.
2. In which direction is the wind blowing around the boat?
3. Where are the strongest winds?
4. Find an area of light wind.
5. If Alexia keeps the same course, what conditions might she encounter next?

KEY TAKEAWAY

A skipper does not look for the shortest route.
A skipper looks for the wind.

A weather map does not tell the skipper what to do. It provides information.

The skipper must then interpret the forecast and choose a strategy.

MEET A PROFESSIONAL

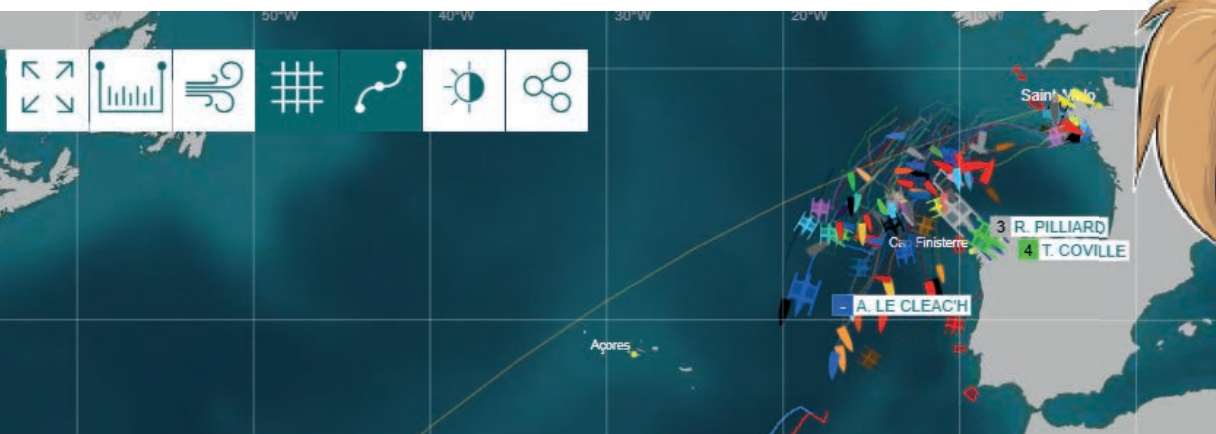
Meteorologist / Weather Router

They analyse weather models, wind, waves and how they are expected to change.

Their work helps us understand the conditions the boat may encounter.

FOLLOW ALEXIA!

<https://tracking-rhum.georacing.com/>



THE OCEAN'S INVISIBLE HIGHWAYS

The ocean is never still.

Huge masses of water are constantly moving: these are **ocean currents**.

Some are driven mainly by winds.

Others are linked to differences in water temperature and salinity.

Like the wind, a current can help a boat... or slow it down.

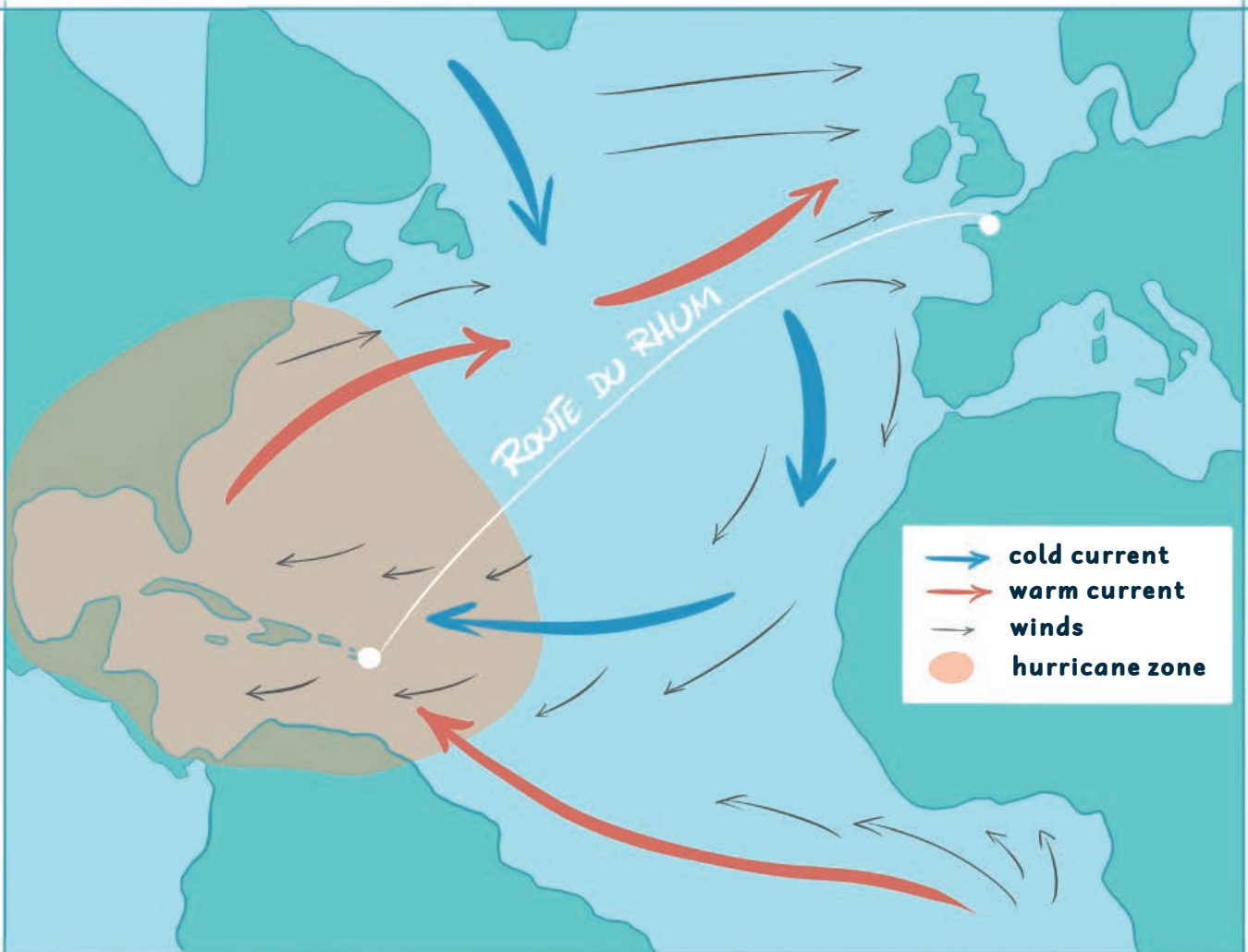
To choose her route, Alexia therefore needs to look at what is happening in the sky, but also in the water.

KEY TAKEAWAY

An ocean current is the regular movement of a large mass of water.



Even when the sea looks still... it is travelling!



based on lelivrescolaire.fr



THE MAJOR ATLANTIC CURRENTS

The Atlantic Ocean is crossed by huge currents that transport water over thousands of kilometres.

In the North Atlantic, winds move surface waters and create a large loop. The Gulf Stream carries warm water from tropical regions towards the North Atlantic. Farther east, the Canary Current flows southwards, while the North Equatorial Current flows towards the Caribbean.

But there is also a much deeper circulation: the **AMOC — Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation**.

It carries warm water northwards and brings cold water back southwards at depth. Water temperature and salinity play an important role in how it works.

KEY TAKEAWAY

Ocean currents redistribute an enormous amount of heat around the planet. They therefore play an essential role in our climate.



The ocean doesn't just carry boats...
it carries heat too!

EXPERIMENT 1 — CREATE AN OCEAN CURRENT

Question : What happens when warm water and cold water meet?

MATERIALS

- one large transparent container
- 2 small containers
- warm water
- cold water
- 2 different food colourings

WHAT I DO

- .1. Add a few drops of one food colouring to the warm water and a different colour to the cold water.
- .2. Gently pour both into the large container, one on each side.
- .3. Do not mix them.
- .4. Observe for a few minutes.

WHAT I OBSERVE

Where does the warm water go?

Where does the cold water go?

MY CONCLUSION

Warm water and cold water do not have the same
They can create movements of water.



THE MAJOR ATLANTIC CURRENTS



The ocean moves even when nobody is making waves!

EXPERIMENT 2 — FRESH WATER OR SALT WATER: WHICH IS DENSER?

Question : Does salt change the way an object floats?

MATERIALS

- o 2 transparent glasses
- o water
- o salt
- o 2 fresh eggs
(or two exactly identical floating objects:
2 ping-pong balls, etc.)

WHAT I DO

- .1. Fill both glasses with the same amount of water.
- .2. Keep fresh water in the first glass.
- .3. Add several spoonfuls of salt to the second glass and mix well.
- .4. Gently place an egg (or another object) in each glass.
- .5. Compare

WHAT I OBSERVE

In fresh water, the egg.....

In salt water, the egg.....

WHY?

Salt water is denser than fresh water, so the egg floats more easily.

THE LINK WITH OUR FLOAT

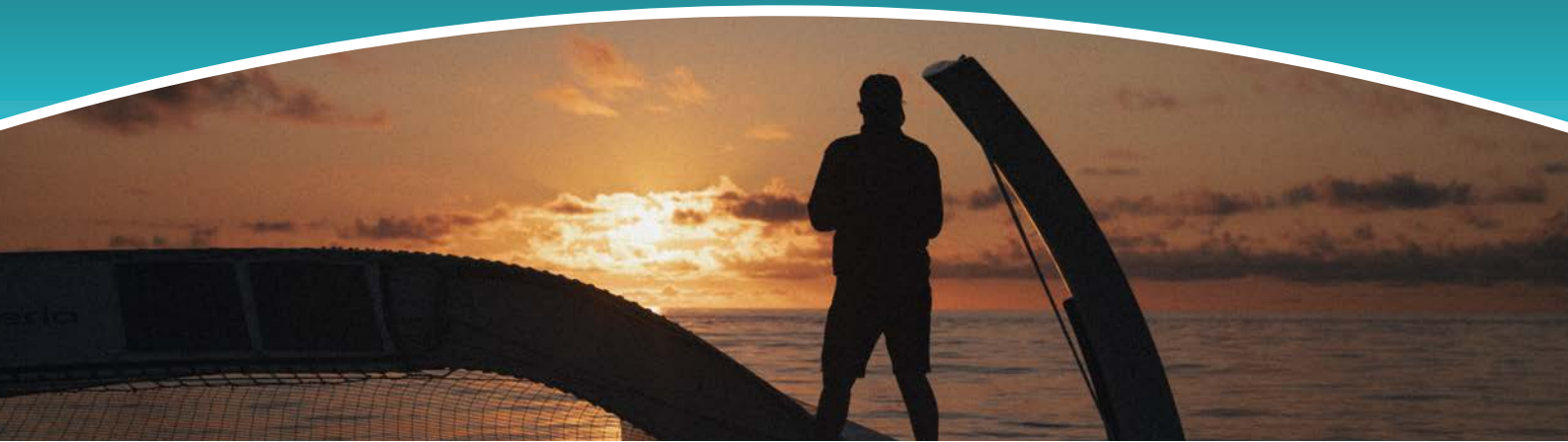
In the ocean, differences in salinity and temperature change the density of the water and contribute to the movement of water masses.



So salt isn't just for chips... It can also help us understand the ocean!



THE MAJOR ATLANTIC CURRENTS



WHAT ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE?

You may have felt it this summer: 2026 was marked by periods of intense heat — including heatwaves, when temperatures do not fall very much at night — and exceptional drought in Western Europe.

In June, Western Europe experienced its **hottest June ever** recorded. In July, the heat and lack of rain made the drought even worse in several regions, particularly in France. The Atlantic Ocean also reached exceptionally high temperatures near the European coast.

Scientists are therefore closely monitoring the ocean and its currents.

As the climate warms, the Atlantic is getting warmer and melting ice is adding more fresh water to the North Atlantic.

This could gradually affect the major ocean circulation system known as the AMOC. Climate models indicate that it is expected to weaken during the 21st century.



Understanding ocean currents also means better understanding the climate of tomorrow.



The ocean and the atmosphere work as a team: when one changes, the other reacts!



BECOME A WEATHER ROUTER



If you were Alexia, which route would you choose?



A weather router: a job where you spend a lot of time... looking at maps!

Alexia is offshore. Three routes are possible. None is perfect: you have to compare distance, wind, sea conditions and risk.

route	advantage	risk
A direct	The distance is shorter	There is an area of light wind ahead of the boat
B Farther north	The wind is stronger	The detour increases the distance and the sea is rougher
C Farther south	It may provide steadier winds	You may never find the winds you were looking for

WHAT WOULD YOU DO IN HER PLACE?

Choose a route and explain your decision.

There is not necessarily only one correct answer: a racing decision depends on the information available at that moment.

Now imagine that the new forecast changes six hours later. The wind expected along your route becomes much lighter.

Do you stick with your choice or change your strategy?



3 FINDING THE ROUTE

THE OCEAN AND THE ATMOSPHERE: ONE GIANT TEAM



The ocean works quietly... yet it influences weather across the whole planet. Impressive, isn't it?

To understand Alexia's weather, we need to look at both the sky and the ocean.

The atmosphere and the ocean constantly exchange heat, water and energy.

The ocean covers about 71% of the Earth's surface. It can store enormous amounts of heat and then transport it through currents.

These exchanges influence the planet's climate and the conditions sailors encounter.

TODAY'S FIGURES

- o 71% of the Earth's surface is covered by water.
- o 96.5% of all the water on Earth is found in the oceans and is therefore salt water.
- o Only about 2.5% is fresh water.
- o Only 0.5% of all the water on the planet is considered available, drinkable fresh water.

WEATHER OR CLIMATE?

Weather describes the state of the atmosphere over a short period: today, tomorrow or the next few days.

Climate describes average conditions and their variability over long periods.

WHY DO SCIENTISTS OBSERVE THE OCEAN?

To predict and understand changes in the climate system, scientists need measurements: temperature, salinity, currents, sea level and many other types of data.

Satellites, ships, buoys and autonomous floats allow scientists to observe an enormous ocean that could never be measured from the coast alone.

QUICK CHALLENGE

Today, observe the weather where you are: temperature, wind, clouds and possible rainfall. Write down your observations. Repeat this for one week.

Does the weather stay the same every day?



4

TWO EXPLORERS, ONE OCEAN

ALEXIA MEETS ANOTHER EXPLORER



While Alexia explores the surface, another explorer sets off to discover the depths. I love it when adventures cross paths!

Our second explorer doesn't eat, doesn't sleep... and never complains! Alexia observes the ocean from the surface. Below the surface, Argo profiling floats explore the depths. They dive down to 2,000 metres, regularly return to the surface and transmit their measurements to scientists.

2,000 metres underwater... We're definitely better off staying nice and dry on the boat, don't you think?

Discover how your class can follow a real float through the Adopt a Float programme. While Alexia is crossing the Atlantic, the float will continue its journey too.



www.adoptafloat.com



CultureOcéan/Sea Institute of Villefranche (IMEV)



4 TWO EXPLORERS. ONE OCEAN

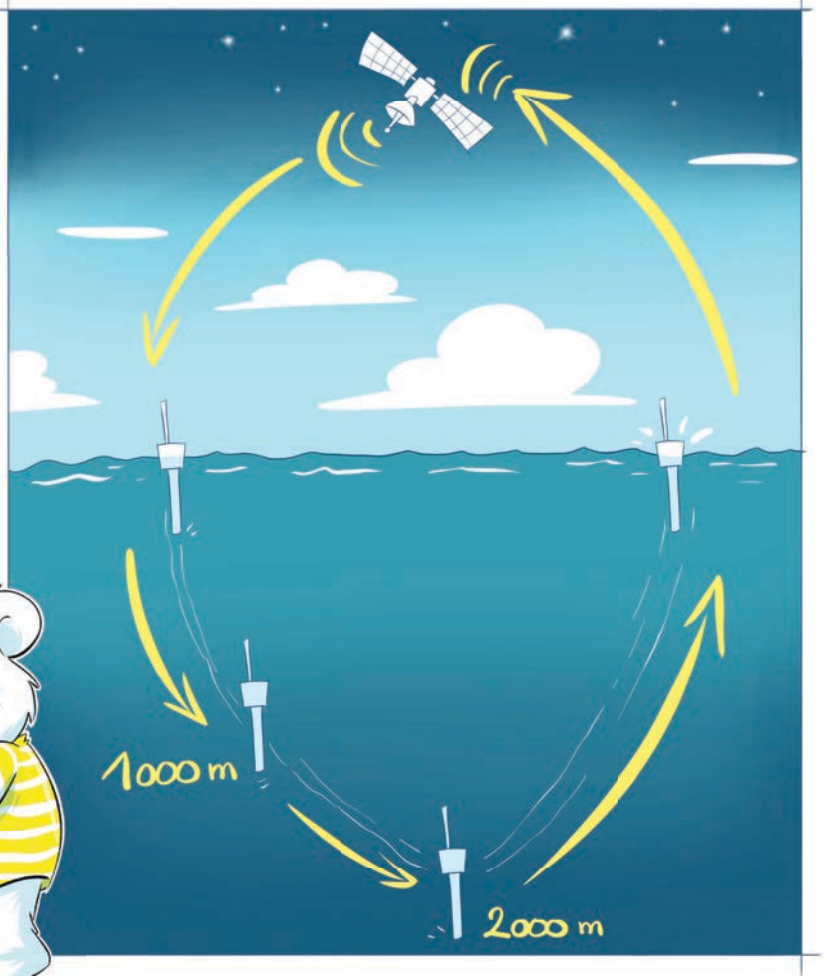
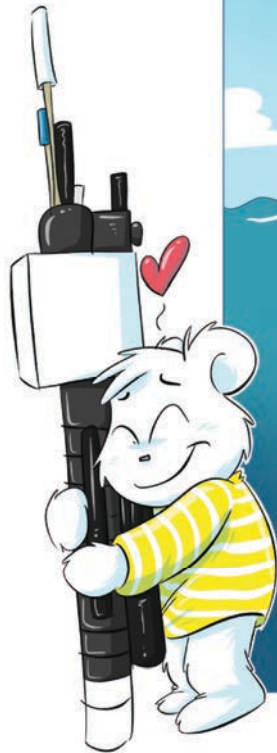
HOW DOES A FLOAT WORK?

A profiling float alternates between phases of descent, drifting, ascent and satellite data transmission.

It automatically repeats this cycle for several years.

KEY TAKEAWAY

The float drifts with the currents.
Its role is to observe the ocean.
Scientists sometimes call Argo floats diving robots.



The float never takes notes... it sends its measurements directly to Scientists!

WHAT DOES THE OCEAN TELL US?

The float measures temperature and salinity, among other things.
This information helps scientists better understand water masses and ocean currents.



Every measure is like a piece of a huge puzzle!



5

THE OCEAN IS ALIVE

THE INVISIBLE LIFE THAT KEEPS THE OCEAN ALIVE



The smallest inhabitants of the ocean feed the largest ones!
Never judge by size! Plankton is a true ocean hero.

Even when it looks empty, the ocean is full of life.
Plankton includes thousands of microscopic organisms that drift with the currents. Some produce organic matter using sunlight, while others feed on them.

Without plankton, marine food chains would no longer function.

Many animals, from tiny larvae to the largest whales, depend on plankton directly or indirectly.

ACTIVITY

Look at a photograph of plankton under a microscope.
How many different shapes can you recognise?

DID YOU KNOW?

A large part of the photosynthesis that takes place on Earth occurs in the ocean thanks to phytoplankton.



Even things we cannot see can change the balance of our planet.

WOW!

Yeah, mate — microscopic but mighty!



THE INVISIBLE LIFE THAT KEEPS THE OCEAN ALIVE

EXPERIMENT 3 — SEARCHING FOR PLANKTON

Question : What happens when warm water and cold water meet?

MATERIALS

- o a water sample containing plankton
- o a pipette
- o a microscope slide
- o a microscope

WHAT I DO

- .1. Take a drop of water using the pipette.
- .2. Place it on the slide.
- .3. Put the slide under the microscope.
- .4. Start with the lowest magnification.
- .5. Observe carefully.

WHAT I OBSERVE

How many different shapes can you see?

Draw the organism that surprises you the most.

MY CONCLUSION

A single drop of water can contain an incredible diversity of organisms that are invisible to the naked eye.



The smallest inhabitants of the ocean are the foundation of some of its biggest wonders!

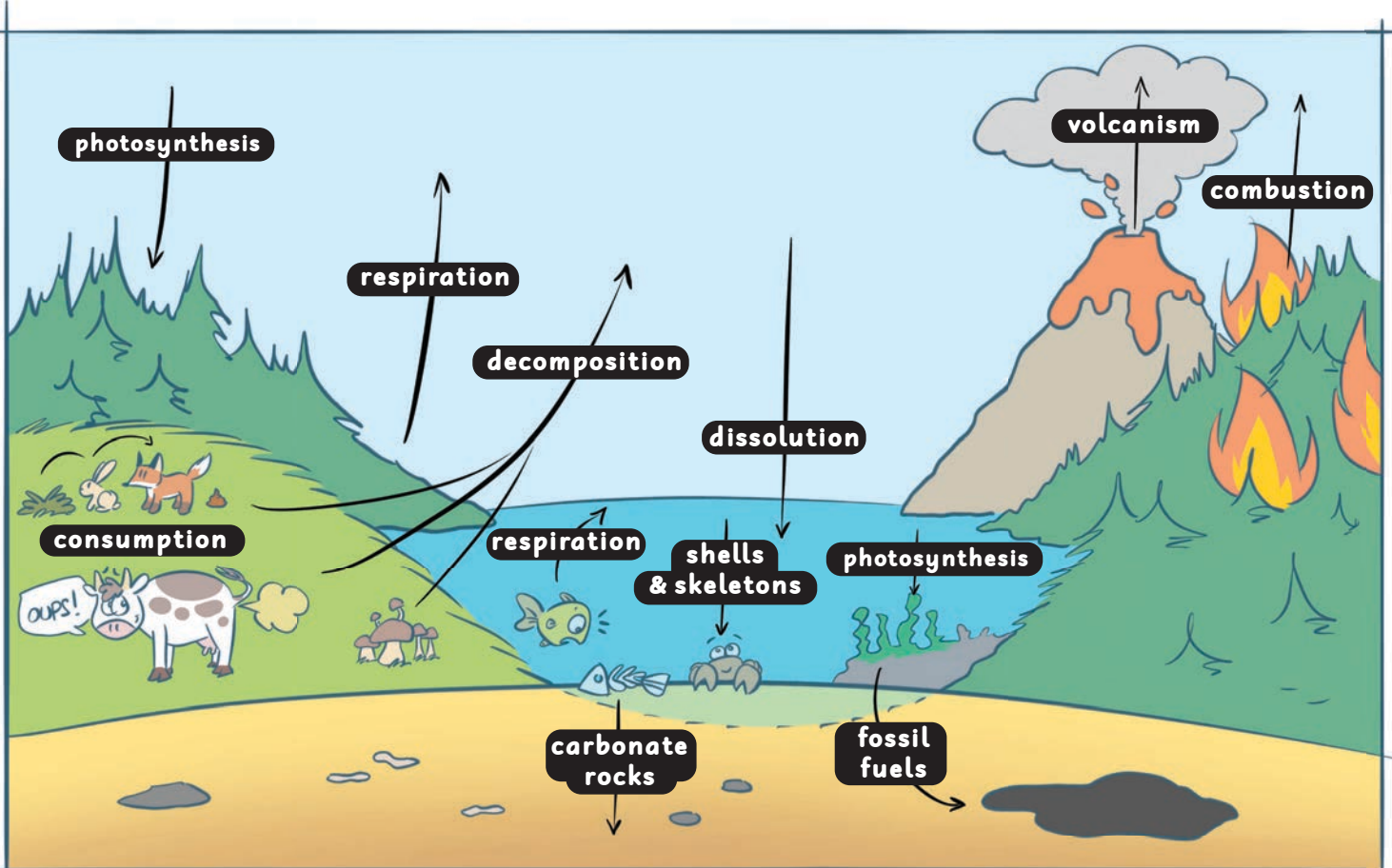


THE JOURNEY OF CARBON

Carbon dioxide (CO_2) moves between the atmosphere, living organisms and the ocean. Some of it is absorbed by the ocean and then used by phytoplankton. Some can also be transported into the deep ocean.

Scientists are trying to understand these exchanges so that they can better predict how the climate will change.

THE CARBON CYCLE



DESTINATION GUADELOUPE: CORALS

At the finish of the Route du Rhum,
Alexia reaches tropical waters where coral reefs are found.

A coral is neither a plant nor a rock: it is an animal that lives in a colony with microalgae. These reefs are home to exceptional biodiversity and also protect coastlines from the force of the waves.



They look like colourful rocks...
but they really are animals!
Nature loves to surprise us.



Mission : Look at a photograph of a coral reef.
How many different species can you identify?



Why do corals bleach?

When the water becomes too warm or the coral experiences **significant stress**, it can lose the microalgae it lives with.

It then turns white: this is called **coral bleaching**.
A bleached coral is not necessarily dead. If conditions become favourable again quickly enough, it can sometimes recover its microalgae and survive.

Scientists are also developing coral nurseries to help some reefs regenerate.

KEY TAKEAWAY : Understanding how coral reefs work is essential if we want to protect them more effectively.



6

YOUR TURN TO TAKE ACTION FROM THE MEDITERRANEAN TO THE CARIBBEAN

Alexia leaves Saint-Malo,
crosses the Atlantic and finishes her race in Guadeloupe.

During this crossing, she travels from a temperate ocean environment to a tropical one.

The underwater landscapes change too.

In the Mediterranean, we find Posidonia seagrass meadows and coralligenous habitats,
among others.

In Guadeloupe, mangroves, seagrass meadows and coral reefs play an essential role in supporting biodiversity.

Mission : Research the Mediterranean and Guadeloupean seabeds.
Compare the two environments. Find three differences and three similarities.

WASTE TRAVELS TOO

Wind, rivers and currents can carry waste left on land all the way to the sea.

Over time, some plastics break down into smaller and smaller pieces called **microplastics**.

Reducing this pollution requires action at several levels: producing less waste, collecting it more effectively, recycling it more effectively and preventing it from reaching the ocean.

Mission 1 : You have just finished your snack. Imagine where the packaging goes.
Now imagine that you had dropped it on the ground. What journey might it take?

Mission 2 : Go to a beach or the bank of a river or stream and find a piece of litter.
Identify it and imagine how it might have ended up there.



Every action counts when it comes to protecting the ocean.
And the good news is that we can all start today.

Debate : A WORLD WITHOUT WASTE

- Where does waste come from?
- Where should we start?
- What can we do?
- Who should act first?
- How can we combine our skills, resources, needs and solutions?



7 EXPLORER



WELL DONE!

You have just crossed the Atlantic with Alexia.

You have learned how to read the weather, understand the boat, discover the work of scientists and explore the oceans.

But the mission is not over. Every time you observe nature, ask a question or help protect the ocean, you become part of the 4myplanet team.

I hope we'll meet again soon for another adventure!

See you soon,

Captain Planet

You are now an Ocean Explorer!

During this adventure, you followed Alexia, discovered how a giant racing yacht works, met scientists, observed an Argo float, explored plankton and corals, and learned why the ocean plays such an essential role for our planet.

The adventure does not end at the finish line.

The scientific questions continue — and so do the observations.





CERTIFICATE

I, the undersigned,

have taken part in the Route du Rhum 2026 Mission with 4myplanet
and I promise to continue to observe, understand and protect the ocean.

Date:

Signature: *Alexia Barrier*.....



MY ROUTE DU RHUM LOGBOOK



Date :

Where is Alexia?

What weather conditions is she experiencing?

(Wind — waves — weather)

What decision did she make?

ALEXIA'S MINUTE

What I remember:

A WORD FROM CAPTAIN PLANET

I learned that...

I still have a question about...

THIS WEEK'S CHALLENGE

☐ completed!

MY LEVEL OF UNDERSTANDING



I understood everything. ☐



I still have a few questions. ☐



It was difficult! ☐



9

YOUR TURN TO TAKE THE HELM!

SAIL YOUR OWN ROUTE DU RHUM ON VIRTUAL REGATTA



What if you crossed the Atlantic too?

With Virtual Regatta Offshore, you can take part virtually in the Route du Rhum and take control of your own boat.

Start : Saint-Malo

Finish : Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe

Race start : 1 November 2026

You will sail on the same ocean as the real skippers and make your own decisions to reach Guadeloupe as quickly as possible.

YOUR MISSION :

- 1 Log in to **Virtual Regatta Offshore**.
- 2 Enter the **Route du Rhum 2026**.
- 3 Choose your boat and give it a name.
- 4 Look at the weather map before choosing your route.
- 5 Set your course and choose the right sail for the conditions.
- 6 Check your boat regularly: the wind changes...
and your strategy may need to change too!

<https://www.virtualregatta.com/>

BECOME A METEOROLOGIST AND NAVIGATOR

On Virtual Regatta, the shortest route is not always the fastest.
Before changing your route, ask yourself three questions:

Where is the wind coming from?

How strong is it?

Which route will allow my boat to sail fastest?

Sometimes you will have to sail extra miles to find more favourable winds.



9 TOUR TURN TO TAKE THE HELM!

BECOME A METEOROLOGIST AND NAVIGATOR

YOUR LOGBOOK

Every day, record:

My position:

My ranking:

Wind strength:

Wind direction:

My course:

My speed:

My strategic decision today:

.....



WHAT ABOUT ALEXIA?

During your virtual race, regularly compare your route with
Alexia Barrier's route in the real Route du Rhum.

Is she farther north or farther south than you?

Has she chosen the same weather system?

Why isn't her route necessarily the shortest one?

At the end of the race, compare your two routes and explain which decision seemed the most important to you.

THE CLASS CHALLENGE

Who will reach Guadeloupe first?

But remember: the ranking is not just a matter of luck.

To improve, you will need to observe, anticipate, understand the weather and make decisions.



Your turn, skipper!



Have fun!



VIDEOS

4myplanet  YouTube

https://youtube.com/@4myplanet_asso?feature=shared

Follow the educational adventure, discover the ocean, meet scientists and explore the projects led by 4myplanet.

The Famous Project  YouTube

<https://youtube.com/@thefamousproject?si=eNay3JES-E3ZXh5T>

Follow Alexia Barrier and The Famous Project: from the preparation for the Route du Rhum to the race itself, with videos from the boat and behind the scenes.

FOLLOW ALEXIA AND THE ROUTE DU RHUM

IDEC SPORT – Sailing <https://www.idecsport.com/le-maxi-trimaran/>

Discover IDEC SPORT - CIC, the maxi-trimaran Alexia will sail in the Route du Rhum, and follow the team's latest news.

Route du Rhum – Destination Guadeloupe <https://www.routedurhum.com/>

Visit the official race website to follow the skippers, the route, the rankings and all the latest race news.

OCEANS EXPLORERS

Wild Immersion <https://wildimmersion.io/fr/>

Discover wildlife and ecosystems from around the world through immersive educational experiences.

adopt a float <https://adoptafloat.com/accueil/>

Follow a real scientific float, explore its journey through the ocean and discover the data collected by scientists.

YOUR TURN TO TAKE THE HELM!

Virtual Regatta Offshore <https://www.virtualregatta.com/>

Take the helm! Sail your own Route du Rhum, study the weather and make your own routing decisions.

