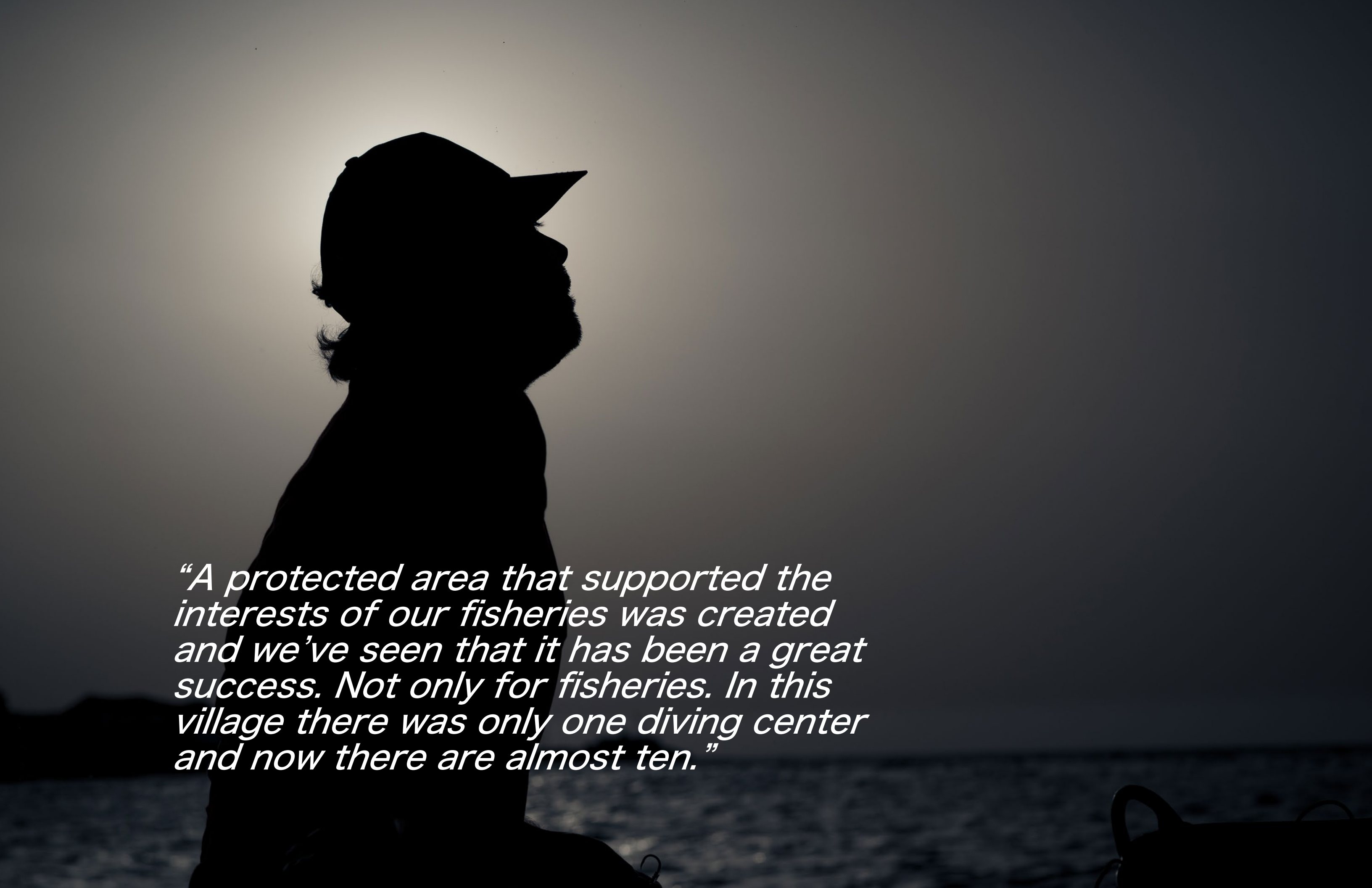




THE CANARY
ISLANDS
INCUBATION.

FISHING A
STEP AHEAD.

EL HIERRO, CANARY ISLANDS

A silhouette of a man wearing a baseball cap, looking out over a body of water towards a bright sunset. The sun is a large, glowing orb on the horizon, creating a strong backlight effect. The water is dark with some ripples, and the sky is a gradient of dark to light grey. The man's silhouette is sharp against the bright light of the sun.

“A protected area that supported the interests of our fisheries was created and we’ve seen that it has been a great success. Not only for fisheries. In this village there was only one diving center and now there are almost ten.”







Surrounded by beautiful lunar landscapes, La restinga is a small village on the south coast of El Hierro island. For the last decades, Jesus Machín, a 42 year old fisherman, and the rest of the people on this small fishing community, witnessed a revolution on a fast growing fishing fleet. A higher fishing pressure was brought into the shallow waters around the island. As he knows he's highly depending on it, he contemplates the ocean with his feet grounded on the island. The ocean surface seems to be endless, and the

longevity of its species perennial. But in fact, he knows small continental shelves around islands make their marine ecosystems even more vulnerable, limiting the available fish grounds. Catching tuna on the most sustainable way, one-by-one, he's aware their success, fishing this migratory species, is highly depending on the good shape of prey stocks around the island. Overfishing it could drive them into a disaster. Although the concept of marine protected areas is something we instinctively deliver on politicians hands, 26 years ago, a group of fishers from this

village decided not to wait for the good will of those in command. They decided to create their own marine protected area to assure the good health of the fish stocks they rely on to survive.

The "Mar de las calmas" marine protected area was born and is until these days the most important oxygen bubble that assures a better future to the island fisheries, and has become an example for the Canary Islands archipelago, for Macaronesia and for all Europe.





*“An artisanal boat
that fishes one-by-one
would never put the
resource at risk.
On the other hand,
a boat with a purse
seine net that is two
kilometers long
and hundreds of
meters deep, will
definitely cause
damage.”*

