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Earth gets a fifth ocean – 13th June, 2021

Level 0

At school, we learn that there are four oceans - the Atlantic, Indian, Pacific and Arctic Oceans. The National Geographic Society now says there are five. The fifth one is the "Southern Ocean". This is around Antarctica. National Geographic said it is important for children to learn that the Southern Ocean is "a fifth ocean".

Children will learn about climate change when they study the Southern Ocean. National Geographic said students should know how important it is. It said the Southern Ocean has "unique and fragile marine ecosystems" full of wonderful ocean life like whales, penguins and seals.

Level 1

We learn at school that there are four oceans - the Atlantic, Indian, Pacific and Arctic Oceans. However, the National Geographic Society now accepts there is a "Southern Ocean". This is around the South Pole and Antarctica. Geography teachers will now teach students that the world has five oceans. National Geographic said: "We think it's really important from an educational [viewpoint]...to bring attention to the Southern Ocean as a fifth ocean."

Learning about the Southern Ocean will change how children see the world and climate change. National Geographic said students must learn about how important oceans are to the world. It said: "Antarctica forms a distinct ecological region defined by ocean currents and temperatures." It added that the Southern Ocean has "unique and fragile marine ecosystems" full of wonderful ocean life like whales, penguins and seals.

Level 2

Many of us were taught in school that there are four oceans - the Atlantic, Indian, Pacific and Arctic Oceans. However, an Internet search shows there is also a "Southern Ocean". This is around the South Pole and Antarctica. The National Geographic Society now officially accepts this is a real ocean. Geography teachers will now have to teach students that the world has five oceans. A National Geographic geographer said: "We think it's really important from an educational [viewpoint], as well as from a map-labelling standpoint, to bring attention to the Southern Ocean as a fifth ocean."

National Geographic said studying about the Southern Ocean would change how children see the world and climate change. It said: "Students learn information about the...world through what oceans they're studying. If you don't include the Southern Ocean, then they don't learn...how important it is." It added: "Antarctica forms a distinct ecological region defined by ocean currents and temperatures." National Geographic said the Southern Ocean has "unique and fragile marine ecosystems" full of wonderful marine life like whales, penguins and seals.

Level 3

Many of us thought the world had four oceans - the Atlantic, Indian, Pacific and Arctic Oceans. That's what we were taught in school. However, a search on the Internet will show that there is also a "Southern Ocean" around the South Pole and Antarctica. The National Geographic Society has now officially accepted that this body of water around Antarctica is a real ocean. Geography teachers will now have to teach their students that the world has five oceans. Alex Tait, a geographer and cartographer at National Geographic, said: "We think it's really important from an educational [viewpoint], as well as from a map-labelling standpoint, to bring attention to the Southern Ocean as a fifth ocean."

National Geographic said its recognition of the world having a fifth ocean would have an impact on how children see the world. Mr Tait said: "Students learn information about the...world through what oceans they're studying. If you don't include the Southern Ocean, then they don't learn...how important it is." He said that recognising the Southern Ocean would help students understand more about climate change. He wrote: "Antarctica forms a distinct ecological region defined by ocean currents and temperatures." National Geographic said: "The Southern Ocean [has] unique and fragile marine ecosystems that are home to wonderful marine life such as whales, penguins and seals."