



The Colours  
of Wellbeing



# Colours of Wellbeing

From the depths of the ocean to the top of a mountain, the natural world is awe-inspiring. It lifts our spirits when we witness a golden sunrise, it calms us as we stroll through a deep green forest.

At Rockfon, we draw on this inspiration to create acoustic ceilings in the colours of wellbeing. They don't just reduce noise, they also use colour theory to enhance wellbeing and awaken the same multisensory experience you get in nature.

Working with colour sensory experts, and complementing the latest design trends we curated nature-themed colours to enhance creativity, speed recovery and create calm, comfortable interiors.

It's where the wow factor meets the wellness factor.

Photo: Wairau River, Marlborough, South Island, New Zealand.



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# Karen Haller on Colour Psychology

Author and leading international authority in the field of Applied Colour & Design Psychology, Karen Haller consults, trains and heads colour campaigns for prestigious global brands such as Dove, Dulux, Samsung, Logitech, Fiat, BASF, Marks & Spencer, Nissan and Ascot Races.

## How does colour affect people?

Colour affects our every waking moment. Yet most of us are only around 20 per cent conscious of why we make certain colour choices or decisions. That's because they mostly occur at the subconscious level.

Seeing colour starts as a physical experience, but when the information we see travels to our brain's hypothalamus – which governs our metabolism, sleeping patterns, behaviours and appetite – it triggers an emotional response. It is these responses that inform the study of Applied Colour & Design Psychology, which examines how different colours and design styles influence our thoughts, feelings and behaviours.

## Are there universal reactions and responses to colour?

There is research to suggest there are common reactions and responses to colours and combinations of colours in nature. For example, black and yellow or black and red we instinctively know as a sign of danger or warning. Then there are the learnt associations, which are based on culture. Islamic countries revere green as the colour of Islam. In China, red is associated with prosperity and good fortune.

Fashion and design trends also influence our choices because we are constantly exposed to them through advertising, social media and the internet. Our colour choices are also influenced by our personal associations, such as a favourite holiday, sporting team or school uniform.

## Do certain colours cause us to respond in specific ways?

Every colour triggers emotional responses, which can have a positive or adverse effect.

Added to this we will find a colour is stimulating or soothing depending on its chromatic intensity. If it is a deeply saturated colour, it is likely to be stimulating, and if it has low saturation, it is likely to be soothing. For example, blue is the colour that relates to the mind. Darker, intensely saturated blues promote focus and concentration, while light blues are likely to soothe and calm the mind. Equally, soft greens are relaxing, while vibrant lime green is stimulating. Designers can use this knowledge to help create the desired feelings and behaviours in their interiors to create positive outcomes.

## How do you select colours for interior designs?

Colour is a powerful opportunity to design spaces that make a real difference – from helping people sleep or reducing stress to motivating productivity. Start by focusing on the positive behaviours your client is looking to achieve. For example, a hospital reception area needs to provide reassurance, where people feel safe and at ease. A colour to consider within the palette would be a soft green as it is the colour of balance and harmony between mind, body and emotional self. It reassures us on a very primitive level and is very restful for humans because it falls in the middle of the colour spectrum and requires little to no adjustment to see.

Yellow reminds us of sunshine and fills us with optimism, positivity and self-confidence. If bright yellows are too stimulating for the context, consider 'mustard', 'saffron' or softer yellow tones. Red stimulates us physically. It's the colour equivalent of a double shot of espresso. If you find strong reds too stimulating, try lighter tones like 'watermelon' and soft reds, which we know as pink. Blues are good for spaces where you want people to be able to reflect, focus and think.

Photographer: Kristina Gasperas  
Photo taken at Boxx Creative Studio.

"The more we love colour, the more that we can express who we truly are."

– Karen Haller, Author and Applied Colour & Design Psychology Expert







Photo: Rice plantation, Bali, Indonesia

Mint

Sage

Eucalyptus

Seaweed

## Inspiring Greens

Want a creative space? Just add green. People with plants and greenery in their workspace are 15% more creative, have a 15% higher level of wellbeing, and are 6% more productive.<sup>1</sup> Research has shown that certain colours actually alter work moods. Green, for example, can enhance creativity.<sup>2</sup> One reason for this is that it's easiest for humans to focus on green light. It's in the middle of the visible spectrum and has the strongest receptors in our eyes.<sup>3</sup>

1. Human Species report into to global impact of biophilic design.  
2. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0146167212436611>  
3. Basic Sciences for Ophthalmology (Bye, Modi, Stanford, 2013)



# Mood-lifting Yellows

Why does yellow make some people happy? Researchers found the first words that consistently come to mind when people see the colour yellow are sunshine, warmth, cheer and happiness. However, that response depends on where you live.<sup>1</sup> The farther people live from the equator, the more likely they are to appreciate bright hues. In Egypt, the likelihood of yellow being associated with joy was just 5.7%, whereas in chilly Finland it was 87.7%<sup>2</sup>.

1. <https://edition.cnn.com/2017/06/30/health/cnn-colorscope-yellow/index.html>
2. <https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2019/10/what-makes-people-happy-when-skies-are-gray-color-yellow>



Photo:  
Wheat field,  
Baden-Württemberg,  
Southern Germany



Photo:  
The Wave,  
North Coyote Buttes,  
Vermillion Cliffs, Arizona.



Petal

Seashell

Coral

Scarlet

## Positive Pinks

The colour pink represents softness and compassion. It takes all the passion and energy of red and tempers it with the purity of white, leaving us with the colour of tenderness and affection. According to colour psychology, pink inspires hope and positivity. It encourages a sense of comfort and relaxation, soothing the senses. Pink makes you feel like everything is going to be alright.



# Calming Blues

Blue calls to mind feelings of calmness or serenity. It is often described as peaceful, tranquil, secure, and orderly. Shoppers spend longer in stores with a blue interior. Blue also helps to steady breathing, lower blood pressure and clear the mind.<sup>1</sup>

1. [psychologytoday.com/us/blog/your-personal-renaissance/201810/surprising-research-the-color-blue](http://psychologytoday.com/us/blog/your-personal-renaissance/201810/surprising-research-the-color-blue)

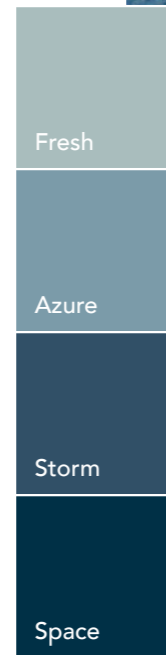


Photo:  
Island in El Nido,  
Palawan, Philippines



Photo:  
Sand dunes,  
deserts of Africa



Chalk

Linen

Hemp

Cork

Earth

Ebony

## Relaxing Browns

Natural earthy tones ground us. Brown is a relaxing colour. It's coffee, cinnamon and cane sugar. It's been linked to an increase in tryptophan (related to sleep and our immune systems) and serotonin (linked to mood.) Brown typically gives us warm, settled feelings, reminding us of connections to earth, home and family.



## Soft Greys

Neither black nor white, soft greys represent neutrality and balance. It's a cool palette that is often used as a foundation for invoking a safe and natural atmosphere.



Photo:  
Snow on a black  
sand beach, Iceland





Photo: Tangalooma shipwrecks, Moreton Island, Australia

## Colour Selection

We're innately and evolutionarily hardwired to respond to nature. We just need a reminder sometimes.

We worked with interior designer and colour expert Sara Garanty to develop our Colours of Wellbeing range. Our goal was to bring wellbeing as well as acoustic harmony to modern interiors. We also carefully aligned our colour selection with the key trends that are influencing the world of interior design and architecture today.



# Sara Garanty on the Colours of Wellbeing

Sara was on the global consultancy team that selected the Colours of Wellbeing for Rockfon. She has a BA in interior design from IED in Barcelona and is a self-described 'colour addict' who specialises in colour theory and psychology to create positive change and wellbeing.

## You had to choose 34 colours; where did you start?

It's been a one-and-a-half-year process, starting with some intense work alongside three forecasters to predict future design trends. Following that process we painted 400 potential colours onto A3 sheets and started the challenging process of selecting just 34 colours that would both match emerging trends and create a sense of wellbeing. We're extremely proud to present the final trend collections, which we named **Uncluttered Wabi-Sabi**, **Calm Enclosure**, **Biophilic Awareness** and **Technology**.

## What is the thinking behind the four trends you identified?

**Uncluttered Wabi-Sabi** is a prominent trend from Japan. It's all about taking a step back into simplicity and celebrating imperfection. The colours that encapsulate the beauty of uncertainty are browns, beiges and light greys.

**Calm Enclosure** reflects a retreat into reassuring and enveloping interiors in the face of global uncertainty.

It's one of my favourite trends because it has the most vibrant colours, like warm yellows and rich reds. When you want to emphasise or show something off, you can use **Calm Enclosure** colours in a way that is not overstated. They empower, uplift and energise you without being loud or forceful.

**Biophilic Awareness** is all about reconnecting to nature. It expresses itself by 'bringing the outside in' – incorporating stone, timber, plants, natural light, sometimes even water, into interior design. It uses the colours of nature, including blues and greens.

**Technology** is a trend that's inspired by the merger of human and artificial intelligence. It's reflected in subtle futuristic designs, juxtaposing regular and irregular forms, hard and soft materials, glossy and matte surfaces. It's portrayed through our palette of clean, chromatic blues, darks and silver.

## The ceiling is the 'fifth' wall

I recommend that when you're deciding on ceiling colours you hold them above you to envisage how they will look in place. I also believe that the ceiling should be considered as a 'fifth wall' that's as significant as the walls and flooring – not just a feature that we put colour on at the end of the process.

As a rule, colour needs to be factored into the design process much earlier and considered to be just as important as the floor or section plan. The mood or feeling you want to create can often be achieved with colours, even at a subconscious level. Good architecture combined with good colour can immediately convey the intention and feel of a room – relaxing, inspiring, comforting and so on.

"Colour is a dance between your brain and the world. Every colour is a universe of its own, it unfolds differently and it evokes different feelings and emotions within us."

– Sara Garanty, Colour Expert and Interior Designer







Eucalyptus
Sage
Sand
Fresh
Azure
Storm

# Biophilic Awareness

The Earth from which all living beings are created is perfect as it is. How can we make use of nature to improve our lives and this planet while at the same time deepening our understanding?

In our quest for solutions for a better future, designers have turned to the bio-world, exploring the use of organic materials to improve sustainability and infuse our buildings with a sense of wellbeing.

Biophilic awareness is all about this deepening awareness of our connection with nature. This trend expresses itself by 'bringing the outside in' – incorporating elements of nature into interior design including organic materials like stone, timber, plants, natural light, sometimes even water. It also emphasises views – such as framing a glimpse of the sky or landscape – to bring us back to nature.

Colours: daylight yellows, natural greens and blues that mimic plant and ocean life  
 Materials: natural, organic, raw, for example stone wool & wood  
 Shapes: curved, organic

Photo: Beach in Corralejo Park, Fuerteventura, Canary Islands



# Uncluttered Wabi-Sabi

In an increasingly slick, digitised, superficial world where video conferencing, texts and social media are replacing real contact, our desire for connection and positivity is more evident than ever before.

It makes us re-examine our values and helps us find a state of wellbeing by finding meaning in everyday existence, by taking a step back into simplicity and celebrating imperfection.

We want to take care of ourselves, of each other and the natural world, go back to basics and learn from our elders, rediscover lost skills, reclaim natural resources. We are looking for a place where we can contemplate our future and consider our purpose in this new world.

Light colours, unfinished interiors and materials are linked to our desire to disconnect and search for “nothing”.

Uncluttered Wabi-Sabi mixes light and transparent materials such as silk, smoky glass and linen, creating a tranquil layered colour palette ranging from soft greys to warm beige.

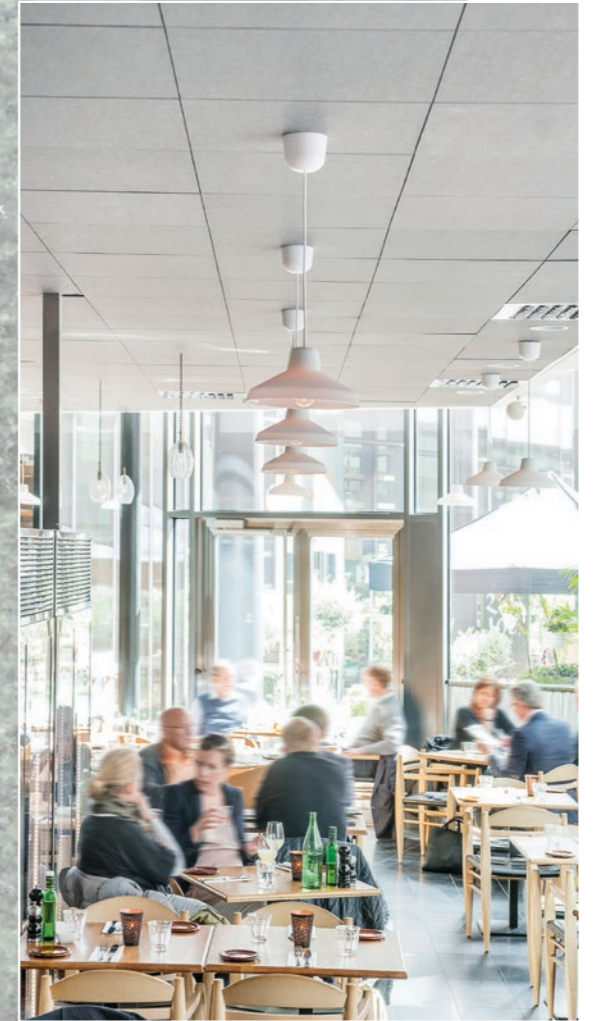
Colours: very light, beige, grey and natural tinted whites and browns

Materials: imperfect, not smooth nor flat

Shapes: organic, curves

Photo: Calm beach, Sardinia, Italy

Plaster
Moon
Mint
Stucco
Petal







Sand
Chalk
Stucco
Seashell
Coral
Scarlet

## Calm Enclosure

Climate change, coupled with economic and political uncertainty, have led to a retreat into relaxed atmospheres and softness to reduce stress and anxiety.

At the same time, the search for equality has created important new movements throughout the world. One of these has been the softening of distinct boundaries between masculinity and femininity. We've seen this reflected in design, with the introduction of a gender-free style introducing colours that were not traditionally masculine. Interiors are becoming more enveloping and reassuring with soft textures like Alcantara® and suedine. Shapes are organic, rounded, wavy and protective, creating a cocoon. Acoustics are high on the agenda for creating a comfortable, cosy ambience.

Colours: sandy yellows, warm beiges, soft reds and pinks

Materials: soft, suedine, slightly velvety textures

Shapes: rounded, curved

Photo: Field patterns, Teruel, Spain



# Technology

The evolution of human identity connected to artificial and human intelligence has created a new kind of merged, emotional intelligence.

Virtual reality that blends earth-like and human attributes plays on our emotional triggers, allowing us to escape into worlds that are similar to our own, but where life is safer, and everything is fiction.

This trend is a statement for a unified intelligent tomorrow, inspired by the merger of human and artificial intelligence to create futuristic yet subtle designs. It expresses itself by juxtaposing regular and irregular forms, hard and soft materials, (such as stone with smooth suede), and mixing glossy and matte surfaces.

The colours are pure and clean, chromatic blue, dark blue, silver. Inspired by the future, and confident of a better tomorrow.

Colours: pure and clean, chromatic blue, dark grey, silver

Materials: metallic, hard, leather, vinyl, suede

Shapes: curved and angular

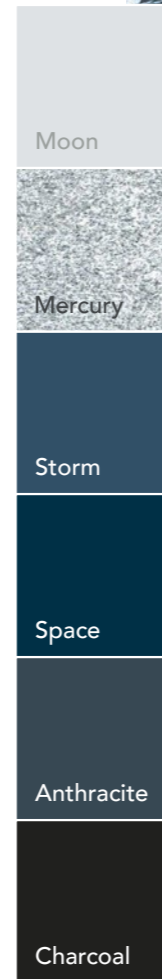


Photo: Black sand beach, Vik, Iceland



# The Colours of Wellbeing Collection

Carefully curated in partnership with colour sensory expert Sara Garanty, our Rockfon Color-all® range comes in 34 nature-themed colours, chosen to create a sense of wellbeing and complement today's interior design trends. From leafy biophilic designs to uncluttered wabi-sabi, technology and calm enclosures, we hope they inspire you to add a new dimension to your interiors.

Enjoy.







Photo: Salt lake, Queensland, Australia

## Natural Inspiration

Take a moment to consider your next design in the context of what inspired our collection: the breathtaking palette and patterns of nature and how they infuse us with a sense of joy and wellbeing. It's the perfect starting point for a breakthrough interior design that reflects beauty and purpose.





Photo: Island at sea, Hong Kong



Photo: Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, USA





Photo: Evaporation ponds, outback Australia

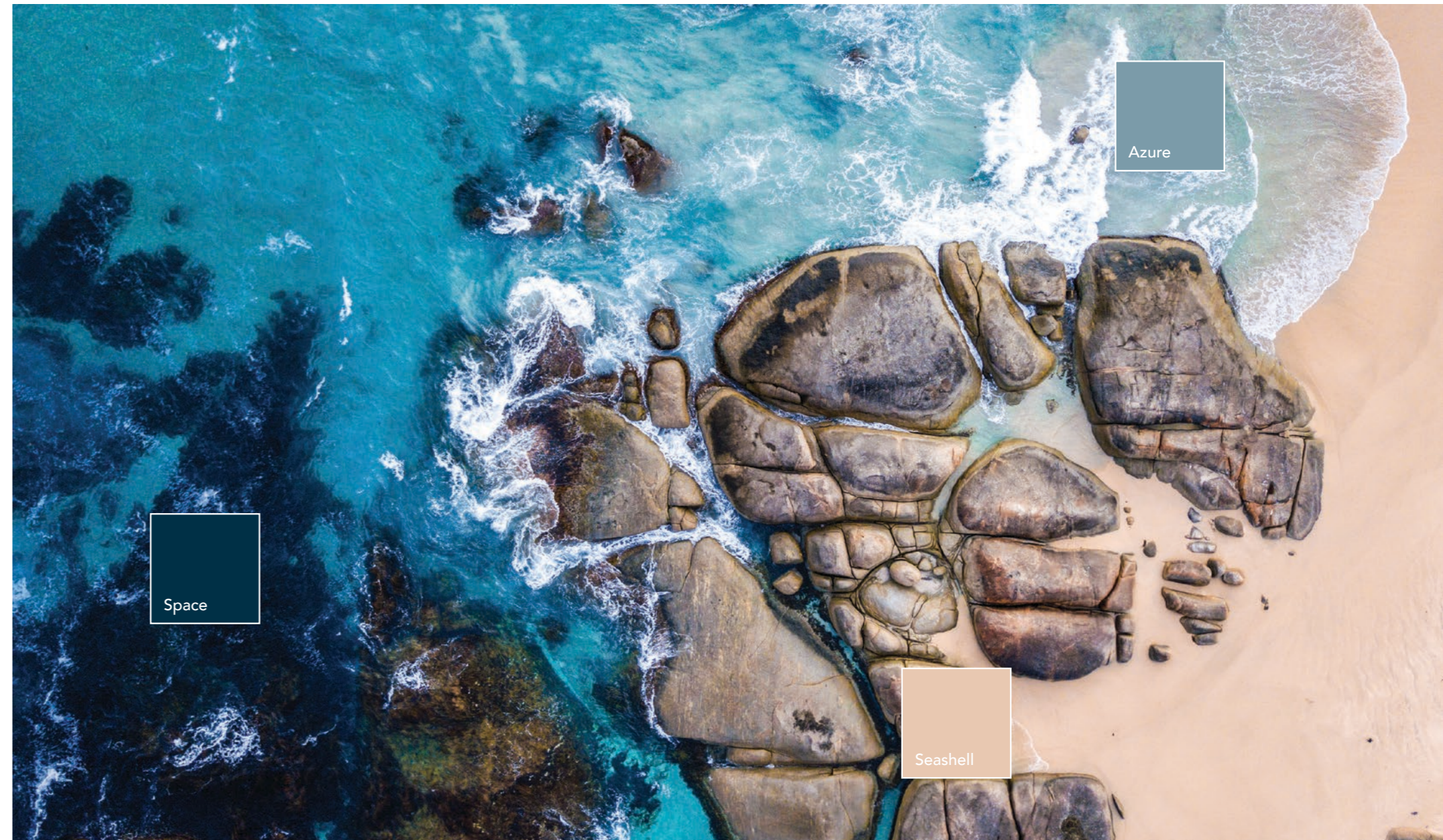


Photo: Little Beach Nature Reserve, Albany, Western Australia



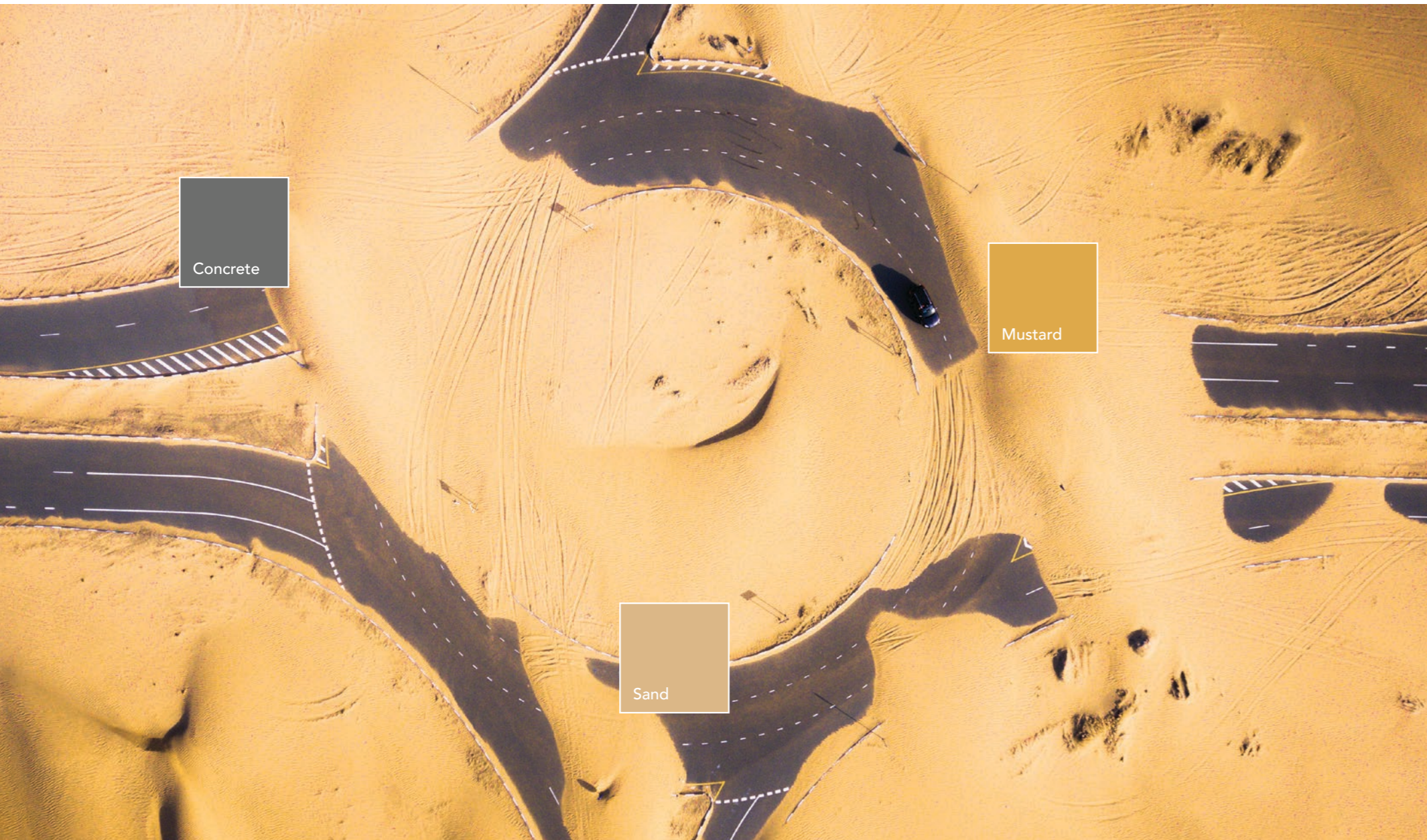


Photo: Dubai, United Arab Emirates



Photo: Anjihai Grand Canyon, Tianshan Mountains, China





Photo: Ore mine, Pennsylvania, USA



Photo: Whitehaven Beach, Whitsundays, Queensland Australia



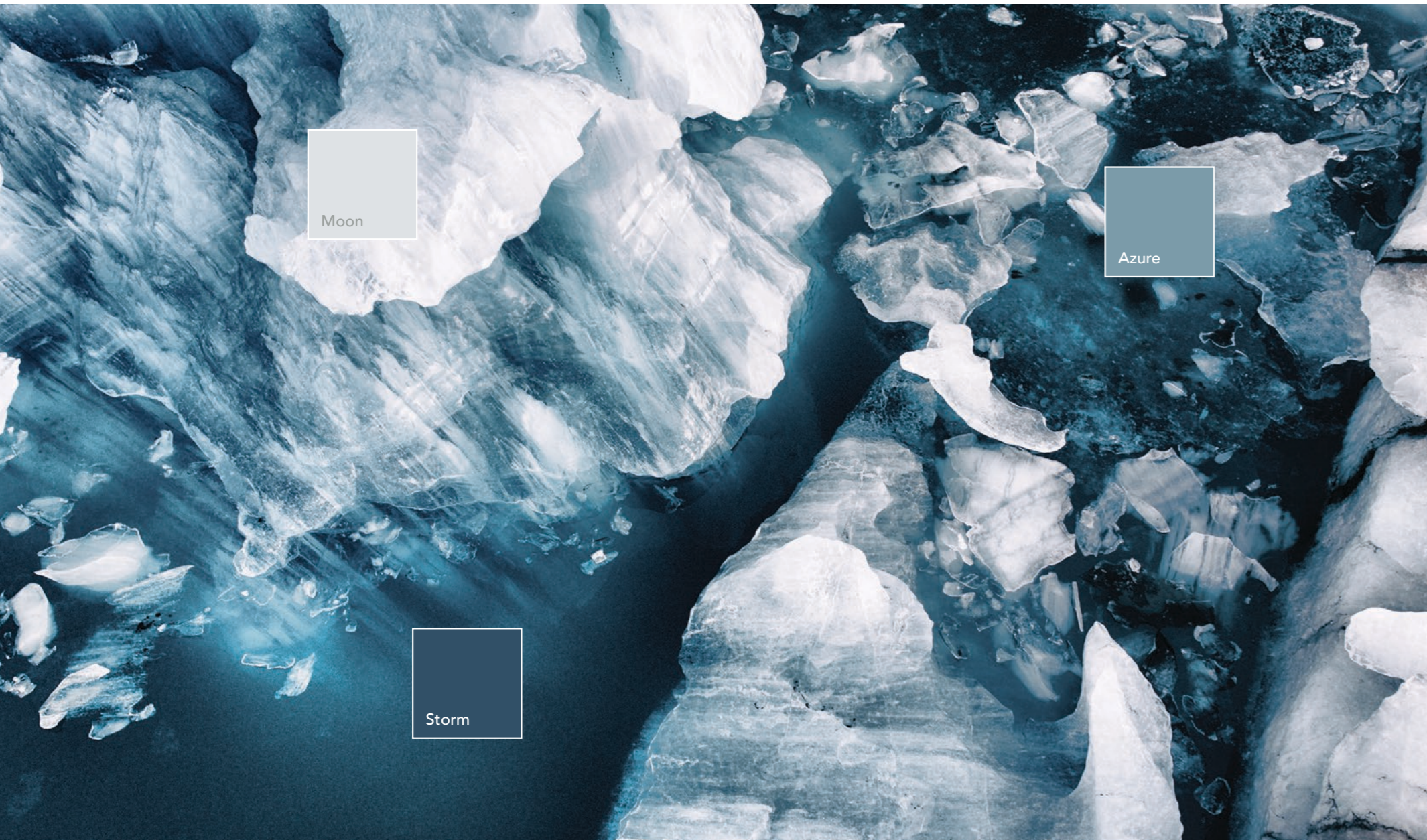


Photo: Large glacier, Vatnajökull, Iceland



Photo: Sand piles, South Australia, Australia



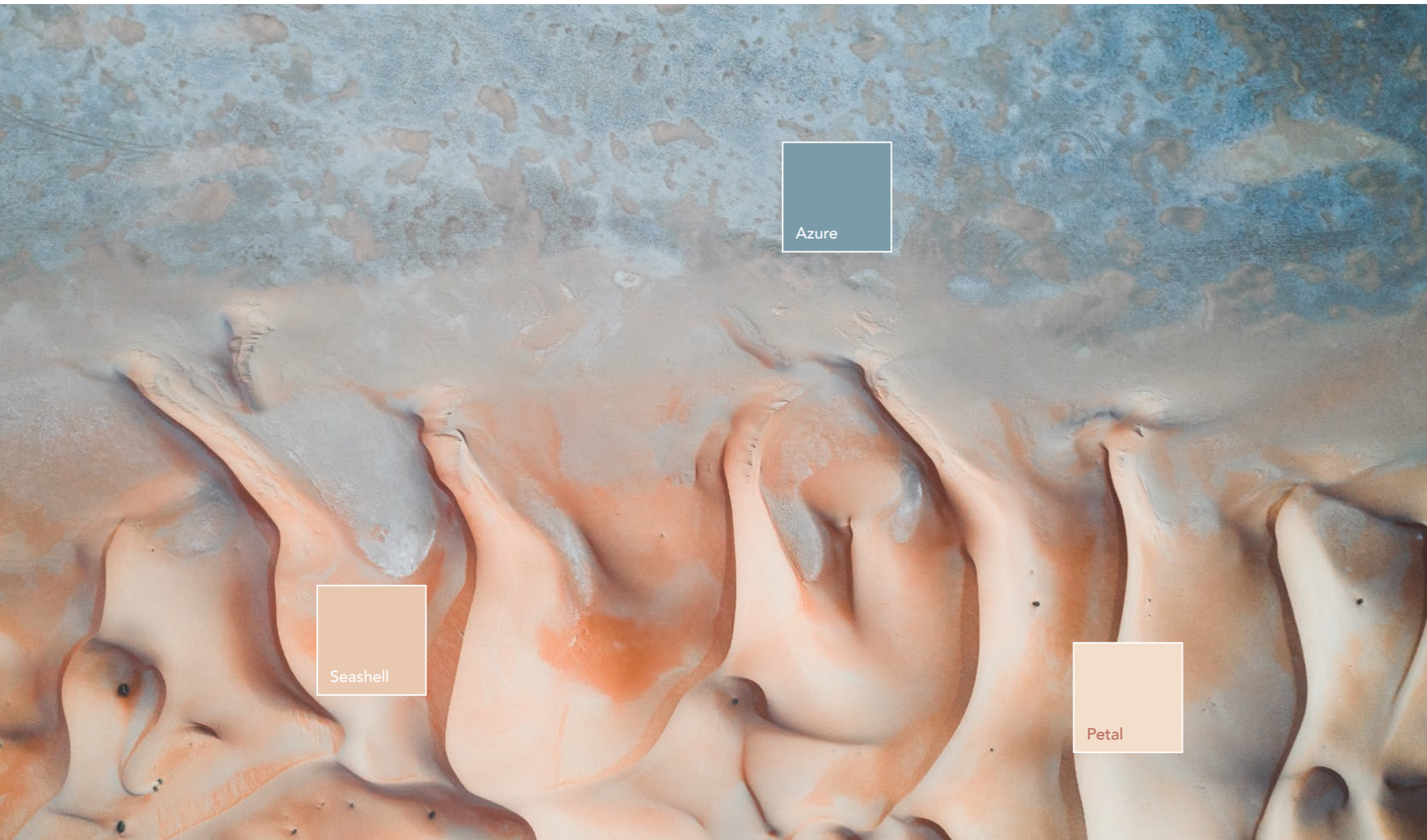


Photo: Desert landscape, United Arab Emirates



Photo: Black sand beach, Lanzarote, Canary Islands, Spain



## Naturally quieter

Rockfon Color-all acoustic ceilings don't just look great, they reduce background noise, creating pleasant spaces that promote wellbeing.

Stone wool, the core material in our acoustic tiles, isn't just brilliant at absorbing sound. Made from natural volcanic stone, it's resistant to mould and bacteria, fire-proof and easy to clean. Above all, it lasts. So your interior will continue to look, feel and function exactly the way you designed it long after the occupants have moved in.

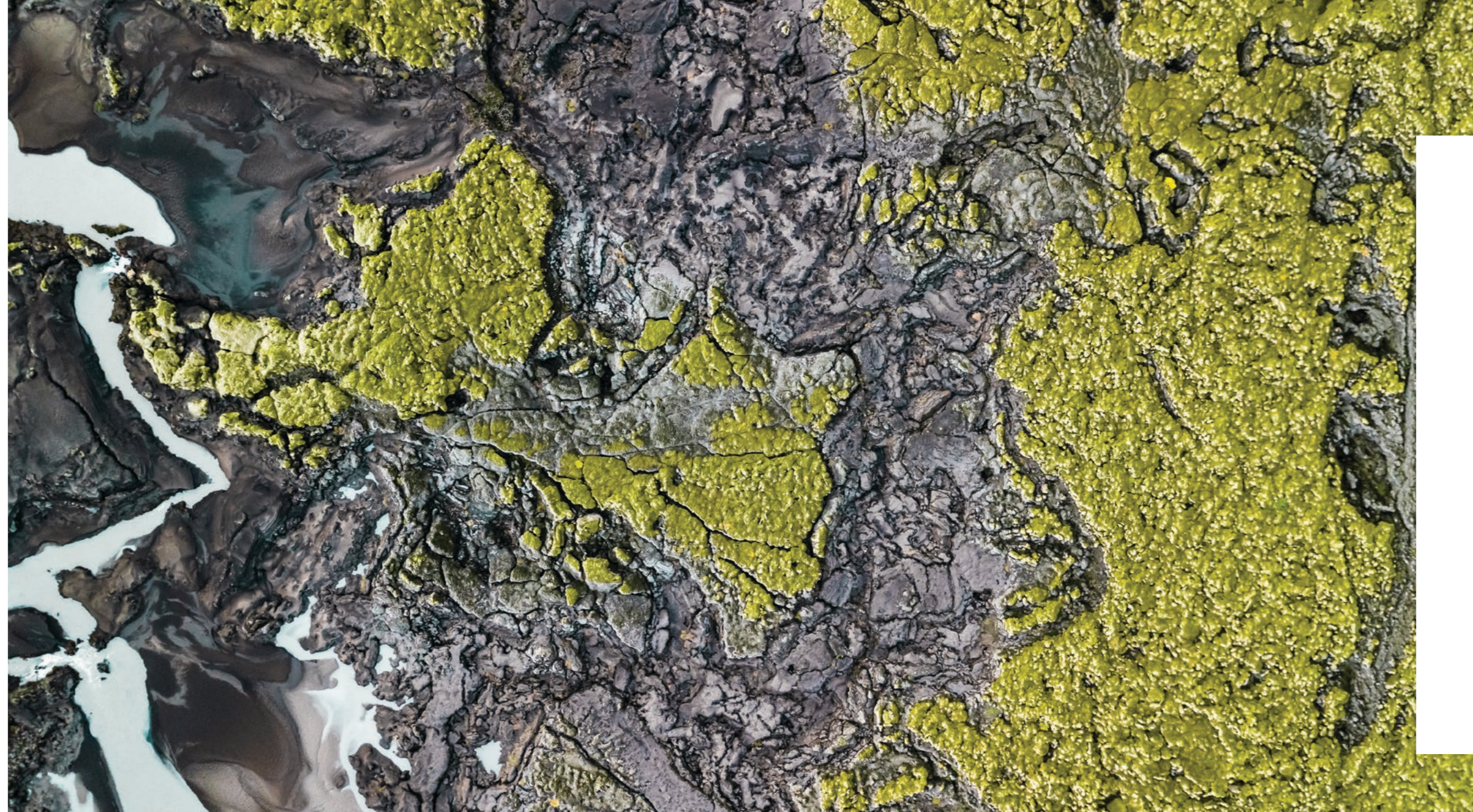


Photo: Lava field covered by green moss, Iceland

## Naturally beautiful

Carefully curated to complement modern building materials like stone, cement, wood and metals, the Colours of Wellbeing harmonise with today's textures and colours, helping to create aesthetically pleasing, contemporary interiors.

Our acoustic solutions are also sustainably sourced, so you can be confident you're supporting nature across the entire cycle – from improving human wellbeing to helping the planet. Rockfon uses natural stone, we recycle as part of the circular economy and commit to reducing our carbon footprint every year.

Because we don't think the next generation of acoustic solutions should be at the expense of the next generation of people.



Rockfon® is a registered trademark  
of the ROCKWOOL Group.

# Sounds Beautiful



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