

World Leaders Take Action Towards 30% Ocean Protection at Our Ocean Conference Panama

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PANAMA CITY, PANAMA, March 2, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- World leaders gathered at the [Our Ocean Conference](#) in Panama City, Panama to celebrate bold leadership and shared action toward the collective goal of protecting at least 30% of the world's oceans by 2030.

High level representatives from the United States, Fiji, Panama, Tonga, and

Vanuatu spoke at a Blue Prosperity Coalition event about actions each of their nations are taking to safeguard their oceans and marine resources to benefit communities, economies and environments.

“

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*Fiji's Prime Minister Hon.
Sitiveni Rabuka*

Organized by the [Waitt Institute](#), [Oceano Azul Foundation](#), Oceans 5, and Islas Secas Foundation, the event featured remarks from the following leaders:

- United States Presidential Special Envoy for Climate Change Secretary John Kerry
- Fiji Prime Minister Honorable Sitiveni Rabuka
- Panama Minister of Tourism Honorable Iván Eskildsen

- Kingdom of Tonga Acting Minister for Fisheries and Minister for Agriculture, Food and Forestry Honorable Lord Fohe

- Vanuatu Special Envoy on Climate Change, His Excellency Bakoa Kaltongga

Secretary John Kerry, Presidential Special Envoy for Climate Change, congratulated the nations of



US Secretary John Kerry congratulates leaders from Fiji, Panama, Tonga, and Vanuatu on ocean action

Fiji, Panama, Tonga, and Vanuatu for their leadership on ocean protection and called on other nations to act on ocean protection to combat climate change. “You can’t separate the ocean from climate and climate from the ocean. We know we are on the right side of history. But that is not enough. We need to win the battle, and this battle is winnable. We know what we need to do.”

During his first address to an international audience, the new Prime Minister of Fiji Hon. Sitiveni Rabuka delivered a keynote speech establishing his administration’s dedication to ocean protection for the wellbeing of the people of Fiji. “We talk about economy, we talk about the environment, but for us it is survival. Fiji is committed to leading efforts towards sustainable ocean management and 30% protection to ensure that Fiji is prosperous for generations to come. ” The Fiji Government recently reaffirmed their commitment to sustainable ocean management through Blue Prosperity Fiji.

Panama, the host of this year’s conference, has long been a leader in ocean protection. Minister of Tourism Hon. Iván Eskildsen welcomed guests to Panama and expressed excitement for ocean action, “Panama is a crossroads of biological and cultural diversity. Panama has been working towards becoming one of the ocean leaders of the world. We have accomplished not only 30% protection of the ocean, but 30% of the land.”

Tonga’s Acting Minister for Fisheries and Minister for Agriculture, Food and Forestry Hon. Lord Fohe encouraged fellow leaders to work closely with communities on ocean management. “While much has been done, there is still much to do, and the Government of Tonga looks forward to continuing to partner and cooperate towards achieving the global goals – across the UN Decade of the Oceans, and the UN Decade for Ecosystem Restoration, and beyond.”



World Leaders from US, Fiji, Panama, Tonga, and Vanuatu



Fiji's recently elected Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka gives his first address on an international stage, focusing on his ocean commitments.

Vanuatu's Ministerial Special Envoy on Climate Change, His Excellency Bakoa Kaltongga announced his government's new partnership and commitment to marine protection. "We are living in a new reality of climate change, and our oceans are on the front lines. That is why I am especially proud to announce that we have launched the Blue Prosperity Vanuatu, a partnership between the Government of Vanuatu and the Waitt Institute to find new and innovative solutions to addressing ocean governance in the context of the climate emergency." The Republic of Vanuatu recently partnered with the Waitt Institute to launch Blue Prosperity Vanuatu, a new initiative to protect the nation's ocean health and build economic resilience.

In line with the Our Ocean Conference theme, "Our Ocean, Our Connection", the Governments of Fiji, Tonga, and Vanuatu have recently signed individual Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) with the Waitt Institute to advance ocean sustainable ocean management and implement their commitments and targets for ocean protection. "Ocean management requires true collaboration, knowledge sharing, and political action. We are proud to work with leaders who are taking the action needed to protect and enhance our ocean." Said Dr. Kathryn Mengerink, Executive Director of the Waitt Institute and MC for the event.

ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS

Waitt Institute

The Waitt Institute is a non-profit that partners with committed governments and local communities to create and implement sustainable ocean plans to benefit people, the economy, and the environment. The Waitt Institute brings technical expertise, funding, and tools to support each country's vision for marine spatial planning, blue economy, and sustainable fisheries. The Waitt Institute is the founding member and organizing body of the Blue Prosperity Coalition, which currently has Blue Prosperity partnerships with the Azores, Barbuda, Bermuda, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, the Maldives, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

Oceano Azul Foundation

Founded in 2017 with the motivation to promote healthier, more productive oceans through literacy, conservation and capacity building, the Oceano Azul Foundation serves as a voice for the sustainable use of the ocean.

Based in Portugal, the Oceano Azul Foundation works to position the country as an international leader in ocean-related issues by developing a blue generation and blue economy, while supporting innovation in scientific research. The Foundation has an international reach, strategically partnering on a global scale with other countries, foundations, academic institutions and civil society organizations, as well as with intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union. The Oceano Azul Foundation works toward a sustainable future for both humans and the ocean, under its motto, "From the ocean's point of view."

Oceans 5 is an international funders' collaborative dedicated to stopping overfishing, establishing marine protected areas, and constraining offshore oil and gas development - three of the highest priorities identified by marine scientists around the world.

Islas Secas Foundation

Islas Secas Foundation (ISF), an affiliate of The Moore Charitable Foundation, founded by Louis Bacon, supports marine and avian conservation and research, habitat protection and local community programs in the region.

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