

Global Leaders Advance 30% Ocean Protection at Our Ocean Conference Greece

World leaders convened at the Our Ocean Conference in Athens, Greece to share progress toward the goal of 30% full protection of the world's ocean before 2030.

ATHENS, GREECE, April 16, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- World leaders convened at the [Our Ocean Conference](#) in Athens, Greece to commemorate shared achievements toward the collective goal of implementing 30% full protection of the world's ocean before 2030.



Blue Prosperity Coalition Reception

High level representatives from Bermuda, Federated States of Micronesia, Greece, Palau, Kingdom of Tonga, and Vanuatu spoke at the [Blue Prosperity Coalition](#) reception, highlighting actions they are taking to safeguard their oceans and marine resources to benefit local communities, economies and environments.

Organized by the [Waitt Institute](#) and the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, the event featured remarks from the following leaders:

Hon. Secretary John Kerry

President of the Federated States of Micronesia, H.E. Wesley Simina

President of the Republic of Palau, H.E. Surangel Whipps Jr.

Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga, Hon. Hu'akavameiliku Siaso Sovaleni

Deputy Premier of Bermuda and Minister of Home Affairs, the Hon. Walter Roban, JP, MP

Minister of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology and Geo-Hazards, Energy, Environment and Disaster Risk Management of Vanuatu, Hon. Ralph Regenvanu

Dr. Dionysia-Theodora Avgerinopoulou, Greece Prime Minister's Special Envoy for the Ocean and Member of the Hellenic Parliament

Ted Waitt, Waitt Foundation and Institute Founder & Chairman

Dr. Kathryn Mengerink, Waitt Institute Executive Director

Aligned with the 10-year anniversary of the Our Ocean Conference, Hon. Secretary John Kerry delivered the keynote address reflecting on a decade of progress, "Ten years ago, we believed the world desperately needed a single annual event that focused on tangible and concrete ways to elevate the oceans crisis and galvanize new tangible commitments to address it. That's become even more urgent as new science emphasizes that we cannot win the climate battle without recognizing the ocean's potential to mitigate the climate crisis, and we cannot protect the ocean without urgent action on the source of the climate crisis itself. Our Ocean has become that rallying cry to unite world leaders in the face of the ocean and climate crisis. It is an essential convening, producing concrete results, and I know that the speakers joining me today will keep leading the way for the rest of the world in the years ahead."

H.E. President Wesley Simina underscored the Federated States of Micronesia's commitment to marine protection. He stated, "Our nation's connection to our environment is so strong that the people of Micronesia endorsed a constitutional amendment protecting every citizen's right to a healthy environment. I am proud to lead a nation that recognizes the right of the people to a healthy environment and is taking steps necessary to respect, protect and promote this right."

H.E. President Surangel Whipps Jr. echoed sentiments about marine protection: "Our actions, informed by traditional knowledge and values, are driven by an urgent need for solutions. As custodians of our ocean, we recognize the interconnectedness of our actions with global outcomes. "

The Kingdom of Tonga's Prime Minister Hon. Hu'akavameiliku stated: "99% of Tonga is ocean, which is why it is critical to see the connection between people, planet and profit systems that underpin our security and livelihood, and also to govern and manage effectively for a sustainable future for the Blue Pacific."

Greece, the host of the Our Ocean Conference relies heavily on the ocean to support its economy. Dr. Dionysia-Theodora Avgerinopoulou, Greece Prime Minister's Special Envoy for the Ocean, praised the work of the Waitt Institute and Blue Prosperity Coalition, "Their collaborative approach partnering with governments, research institutions and NGOs underscores their belief in the power of cooperation and solidarity. They have managed to both sustain communities and economies, but also to safeguard the environment for the generations to come."

In line with the Our Ocean Conference's theme "An Ocean of Potential," these governments are working to advance and implement their marine protection commitments.

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 a founding member and the organizing body of the Blue Prosperity Coalition, which currently has Blue Prosperity partnerships with the Azores, Bermuda, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, the Maldives, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner

The Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner (OPOC) was established within the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to provide dedicated professional support to the Commissioner. Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum appointed The Pacific Ocean Commissioner to ensure the Pacific region had a champion to provide the necessary high level representation and commitment urgently required for dedicated advocacy and attention to Pacific Ocean priorities, decisions and processes at national, regional and international levels.

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