

The Ocean Call

TO the peoples of the world, we ask for recognition that the oceans and their resources are a necessary element of life on the planet. We also ask that you respect the ocean and understand that actions and activities even deep within continents can impact the marine environment. Governmental responses can be ponderous but ultimately they must reflect the will and priorities of their constituencies. The ocean deserves your support.

TO those who finance and undertake capacity building programs, we ask that increased priority be given to programs in coastal and ocean management, ocean sciences and ocean technologies in order to provide safe, healthy and sustainable environments and reduce poverty through the promotion of effective and efficient marine stewardship.

TO the scientists in all ocean disciplines, we ask that you continue your dedication to gather and interpret marine data, to inform the public and decision-makers of the results of your studies and to maintain a collegiate and multidisciplinary community.

TO the extensive framework of learned professionals and environmental lobbyists in academia, industry, politics and law and to all those who have achieved leading positions and authoritative voices in our society, we ask that you will use your position and influence to further the support and attention needed to sustain and preserve our ocean environment.

TO the media, whose role it is to inform our largely terrestrial society of the news and events of interest and importance, we ask that you recognise the ocean as an integral part of our environment and of our society. From tourism to trade, from energy to food, from high finance to indigenous fisheries and from megacities to mangrove habitats, there is a story with an ocean connection that needs telling.

TO governments, we ask that you address the present deficiencies in the support of the marine environment. Nationally, to ensure that ocean research is adequately funded, that the infrastructure to distribute ocean information is in place, that sustainable marine management practices are fostered and that terrestrial and atmospheric policies take account of potential impacts on the ocean. Internationally, we ask you to adopt as a premise that sustaining the global environment remains the ultimate priority and that national differences must be overcome in working collectively for the future.

TO the youth, we make the final and perhaps the most important request. We ask that you listen and learn, that you profit from the advances that we have achieved and avoid the mistakes that we have committed. You are the future. The ocean needs your enthusiasm, creativity and ability as scientists, managers, lawyers and politicians to champion its cause and to sustain its splendour and resources for generations to come.