

## **Call to President Barack Obama & Governor Mitt Romney to Protect the Ocean!**

As citizens involved with our seas we call on and expect the next President of the United States to support our nation's ocean based economy and assure the sound stewardship of our coasts and ocean. Our nation's Exclusive Economic Zone, stretching 200 miles out from our shores, is the largest in the world, a blue frontier more extensive than our continental landmass. With increased scientific knowledge and understanding of this, our nation's second great frontier, comes both an opportunity and a responsibility to restore the blue in our red, white and blue.

Recognizing that the protection of coastal communities and ocean-dependent jobs, the marine environment and America's maritime heritage has long been a bipartisan goal, we ask that the two leading candidates for President of the United States in 2012 - President Barack Obama and former Governor Mitt Romney – and their parties and campaign organizations - commit to the following broad principles and actions:

### **I. In the International Arena**

- Support initiatives to protect our global commons on the high seas and the polar seas through agreements to restore fish and other marine wildlife, reduce marine pollution, encourage scientific collaboration and protect vital habitats including seamounts, coral reefs and coastal mangroves.
- Based on the work of Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush who established the highest level of protection for the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument of Hawaii, support similar global efforts now underway to create a network of large wilderness parks in the sea like the United States' unique system of National Parks and National Seashores that can act as a world repository of marine biodiversity for our and future generations.

### **II. In the United States**

- Implement a national ocean policy that will coordinate federal efforts to eliminate agency conflicts and redundancy while working with traditional and emerging users of our public seas. This policy should also embrace local, state and regional solutions to ensure healthy and productive seas while addressing emerging challenges including protecting coastal populations at risk, providing resources to our emerging blue water coastline in the Arctic and addressing the impacts of sea-level rise and ocean acidification.
- Recognizing that our EEZ frontier waters and our national economy depend on healthy seas, new discoveries and maritime enforcement, the next President should commit to fully fund the marine stewardship, exploration and law-enforcement missions carried out by the frontline agencies on America's blue frontier including the United States Coast Guard and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

We believe a commitment to these four action areas by the next President of the United States will help turn the tide in restoring a vital element of the American economy and our national and natural heritage from sea to shining sea.

We look forward to your response

With regards and respect,

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John C. Cruden President, Environmental Law Institute  
Bob Davidson President and CEO, Seattle Aquarium  
Alex Earl Executive Director, Project AWARE  
Sylvia Earle National Geographic Explorer in Residence  
Kristen Fletcher Executive Director, Coastal States Organization  
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Vicki Nichols Goldstein Executive Director, Colorado Ocean Coalition  
Randy Hayes Executive Director, Foundation Earth  
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Debbie Kinder CEO, Blue Ocean Film Festival  
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