

November 18, 2009

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Chairman
Committee on Environment
and Public Works
United States Senate

The Honorable James M. Inhofe
Ranking Member
Committee on Environment
and Public Works
United States Senate

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources
United States Senate

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member
Committee on Energy and Natural
Resources
United States Senate

Dear Chairpersons and Ranking Members,

We commend your action in focusing the attention of the Senate on the critical issue of climate change. Passage of strong climate change legislation will establish the United States of America as a global leader in addressing this great threat, and is the constructive and positive direction that is required to save our blue planet. Your leadership and commitment is precisely what is needed to improve the nation's and world's response to climate change.

As environmental stakeholders and scientists, we write to highlight an aspect of addressing climate change that has been overlooked in the current versions of climate change legislation, namely, the role that coastal and ocean ecosystems play as natural carbon sinks. We feel it is important to recognize their potential in mitigating the effects of climate change.

The Earth's oceans are critically important to the global carbon cycle. Our oceans, and the marine ecosystems they support, are natural carbon sinks. In fact, healthy ocean ecosystems represent the largest active carbon sink on Earth. Scientists recognize that some coastal and marine ecosystems, including tidal marshlands, mangrove ecosystems and seagrass meadows, play a natural role in absorbing carbon from the atmosphere. The continuing degradation of our oceans and loss of these ecosystems decreases the natural capacity of our oceans to perform these functions. Healthy natural ocean ecosystems are also critical to the livelihoods and food security of millions, and to the conservation of global biodiversity.

We ask Congress to consider following recommendations:

- Support the option for **natural** ocean carbon solutions in climate change legislation.
- Support marine science research that further explores **natural** ocean carbon solutions.

Thank you for considering our views, and for your continued commitment to addressing the threat of climate change.

Sincerely,

Signed by the following sixty-six conservation groups and stakeholders, and one hundred and fifty-eight marine scientists and professionals, together from twenty-eight states and territories and thirty-three countries (Blue Climate Coalition):

Conservation groups and stakeholders (sixty-six):

Blue Climate Solutions, Steven J. Lutz, Miami, FL, **The Ocean Foundation**, Mark J. Spalding, Washington, DC, **Fauna & Flora International**, Katie Frohardt, Washington, DC, **Wildlife Conservation Society**, John Calvelli, Washington, DC, **EarthEcho International**, Philippe Cousteau, Jr., Washington, DC, **Blue Legacy International**, Alexandra Cousteau, Washington, DC, **Clean Air - Cool Planet**, Adam Markham, Portsmouth, NH, **Gilles Marini**, Actor and supporter of healthy oceans, Studio City, CA, **Ocean Conservation Research**, Michael Stocker, Forest Knolls, CA, **Blue Ocean Institute**, Carl Safina, East Norwich, NY, **NAUI Worldwide**, Jed Livingstone, Tampa, FL, **International Society for Reef Studies**, Richard B. Aronson, Montgomery Village, MD, **Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine (FoProBiM)**, Jean W. Wiener, Haiti, **Campaign to Safeguard America's Waters - Earth Island Institute**, Gershon Cohen, Haines, AK, **Seagrass Recovery**, Jeff Beggins, Indian Rocks Beach, FL, **Mangrove Action Project**, Alfredo Quarto, Port Angeles, WA, **Friends of the Everglades**, Connie Washburn, Miami, FL, **Sailors for the Sea**, Dan Pingaro, Newport, RI, **The Alliance for Tompotika Conservation/Aliansi Konservasi Tompotika**, Marcy Summers, Vashon, WA & Luwuk-Banggai, Indonesia, **SEE Turtles**, Brad Nahill, Beaverton, OR, **Beautify CNMI**, Angelo Villagomez, U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, NMI, **Caribbean Conservation Corporation**, David Godfrey, Gainesville, FL, **Coastal Conservation League**, Dana Beach, Charleston, SC, **Save Our Seas**, Paul Clark, Hanalei, HI, **Project S.E.A.-Link**, Liz Foote, Wailuku, HI, **Around the Americas/Ocean Watch**, Herb McCormick, Seattle, WA, **Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network (WIDECAST)**, Karen Eckert Beaufort, NC, **Aquatic Research & Communication**, William F. Loftus, Homestead, FL, **Urban Environment League**, Fran Bohnsack, Miami, FL, **Save the Manatee Club**, Patrick M. Rose, Maitland, FL, **Sustainable Travel International**, Peter Davis Krahenbuhl, White Salmon, WA, **Turtle Island Restoration Network**, Todd Steiner, Forest Knolls, CA, **WILDCOAST/COSTASALVAJE**, Serge Dedina, Imperial Beach, CA & Ensenada, México, **Tethys Research Institute**, Giovanni Bearzi, Milano, Italy, **REEF RELIEF**, Paul G. Johnson, Crawfordville, FL, **The Interfaith Council for the Protection of Animals and Nature**, Lewis Regenstien, Atlanta, GA, **Andros Conservancy and Trust (ANCAT)**, Peter Douglas, Fresh Creek, Andros, Bahamas, **Peninsula Citizens for Sustainable Development**, Mary Toy, Placencia, Belize, **Marine Conservation Society**, Mrs Sam Fanshawe, Herefordshire, United Kingdom, **Corals for Conservation**, Austin Bowden-Kerby, Sigatoka, Fiji Islands, **Oceanic Preservation Society**, Louie Psihoyos, Boulder, CO, **Urban Paradise Guild**, Sam Van Leer, Miami, FL, **Roffer's Ocean Fishing Forecasting Service Inc.**, Mitchell Roffer, Melbourne, FL, **MEDASSET-Mediterranean Association to Save the Sea Turtles**, Lily Venizelos, Athens, Greece, **The Snorkel Bob Foundation**, Robert Winter, Kihei, HI, **Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation**, Philip Renaud, Landover, MD, **Oceanic Defense**, Samantha Whitcraft, Orange County, CA, **Pro Peninsula**, Kama Dean, San Diego, CA, **Save Our Shores**, Laura Kasa, Santa Cruz, CA, **The Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)**, Brian Huse, San Francisco, CA, **Australian Marine Conservation Society**, Darren Kindleysides, Brisbane, Australia, **Fundação Pró-TAMAR**, Neca Marcovaldi, Rio Vermelho, Brazil, **Protective Turtle Ecology Center for Training, Outreach, and Research (ProTECTOR)**, Stephen Dunbar, Colton, CA, **NAUCRATES**, Monica Aureggi, Giulianello di Cori, Italy, **OceanRevolution.org**, Wallace J. Nichols, Davenport, CA, **Coastal Research and Education Society of Long Island**, Arthur H. Kopelman, Long Island, NY, **Global Coral Reef Alliance**, Thomas J. Goreau, Cambridge, MA, **The Ocean Project**, Bill Mott, Providence, RI, **Vaughani Shores Vanuatu**, Karl Fellenius, Port Vila, Vanuatu, **Cry of the Water**, Dan Clark, Coral Springs, FL, **St Kitts Foundation**, Mark J. Spalding, Washington, DC, **Palm Beach County Reef Rescue**, Ed Tichenor, Boynton Beach, FL, **Center for Rural Empowerment and the Environment (CREE)**, Mike Skuja, Chicago, IL, **Cartagena's Youth Declaration on Climate Change Group**, Viviana Mourra, Cartagena, Colombia, **Anguilla National Trust**, Farah Mukhida Anguilla, British West Indies, **South Coast Citizens for Sustainable Development**, Sue Harris, Belize

Marine scientists and professionals (one hundred and fifty-eight):

United States of America (Ninety-six signatories from twenty-eight states and territories):

Alaska - Vera Alexander, Gershon Cohen, Jon Warrenchuk, **California** - Murat Aydin, Vicki Buchsbaum Pearse, Paul Detwiler, Stephen Dunbar, Sylvia Earle, Jeffrey Firestone, Healy Hamilton, Wallace J. Nichols, Christopher Papouchis, Benjamin Pister, Kevin Raskoff, Theresa Sinicrope Talley, Todd Steiner, Bradley Zlotnick, **District of Columbia** - Raymond L. Hayes, Mark J. Spalding, **Florida** - Richard B. Aronson, Andrew C. Baker, Daniel D. Benetti, Laurent Cherubin, Dorothy Dick, Neil Hammerschlag, Paul Jones, Lisa Konczal, David Letson, William F. Loftus, Steven J. Lutz, Laura Macesic, Gary K. Meffe, Jon A. Moore, Mark Mueller, John C. Ogden, Howard Prentice, Mitchell Roffer, Patrick M. Rose, Andy Sherrill, Rachel Silverstein, Adrienne Simoes Correa, Shawna Simpson, Angie Stiles, Katie Lee Toth, Nancy Voss, Samantha Whitcraft, **Georgia** - Dorinda g. Dallmeyer, Christine Laporte, **Hawai'i** - Elisha M. Wood-Charlson, **Illinois** - John Cheeseman, Michelle M. Croissier, **Indiana** - Reuben Goforth, **Iowa** - Ehsan Kayal, Dennis V. Lavrov, **Maryland** - John R. Cannon, Ruth Kelty, **Massachusetts** - Thomas J. Goreau, Les Kaufman, Eric John Olson, Daniel Sher, Robert D Stevenson, David W. Tapley, **Michigan** - Aviva Glaser, **Minnesota** - Anne Wakeford Berry, **Mississippi** - Chet F. Rakocinski, **New Jersey** - Marian Glenn, Michael F. Gross, Judith S. Weis, **New York** - Nancy Jacobson, Brian Keel, Arthur H. Kopelman, Gerald P. Rasmussen, Carl Safina, **North Carolina** - Karen Eckert, Sheril Kirshenbaum, TyAnn Lee, Alina M. Szmant, Carmen Yeung, **Oregon** - Dr. Mark Hixon, **Pennsylvania** - Stanley Shostak, **Puerto Rico** - María Vega-Rodríguez, **Rhode Island** - Kara Johnson, **Texas** - Eric Madrid, Kimberly Reich, **United States Virgin Islands** - Nasseer Idrisi, Christine Settar, **Virginia** - Russell P. Burke, Meredith Ferdie Muth, **Washington** - Meggen Chadsey, Marcy Summers, **Wisconsin** - Jonathan L. Temte

International (Sixty-two signatories from thirty-two countries):

Australia - Maria Fernanda Adame, Hans Hoegh-Guldberg, Lucy Hurrey, Matt Lybolt, Justin Marshall, Jillian Ooi, Paola Rachello-Dolmen, **Bangladesh** - Md. Sherazul Islam, **Belize** - Julianne Stockbridge, **Brazil** - Daphne Wrobel Goldberg, **Cameroon** - Moudingo Jean-Hude, **Canada** - William Allison, Ambrose, John, Julie L. Nielsen, Colette Wabnitz, Elizabeth M. De Santo, **Colombia** - Viviana Mourra, **Denmark** - Erik Kristensen, Katrina Povidisa, Matthieu Delefosse, **Fiji Islands** - Austin Bowden-Kerby, **Finland** - Camilla Gustafsson, Eriika Melkas, **Germany** - Jessica Gross, Steffen Hengherr, Sybill Jaschinski, Frank Veit, Manfred Verhaagh, **Greece** - Eugenia Apostolaki, **India** - Eganathan Palanisami, Dhiren M. Pania, Patel Rohitkumar Mangalbhay, **Italy** - Monica Aureggi, Giovanni Bearzi, Carlo Cerrano, Paolo Guidetti, Francesca Zardin, **Japan** - Soha Shabaka, **Malaysia** - Harinder Rai Singh, Allison Perry, **Mexico** - Joaquin Rodrigo Garza-Pérez, Steven L. Swartz, Brigitta I. van Tussenbroek, **Namibia** - Anja van der Plas, **New Zealand** - Lorna Deppe, Roger Grace, Martin C. Hingston, **Norway** - Franz Uiblein, Helene Amundsen, **Portugal** - Marta Nogueira, **South Africa** - Anusha Rajkaran, **Spain** - Carmen Amaro, Rafael Coma, Marcel Clusa Ferrand, **Sweden** - Maricela de la Torre-Castro, **The Netherlands** - Tim Wijgerde, **United Kingdom** - Stacey DeAmicis, Mark Huxham, David Moss, **Vanuatu** - Karl Fellenius, **Venezuela** - Joaquin Buitrago, Alicia Villamizar

CC: Members of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee
Members of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee

Contact: Steven Lutz, Blue Climate Solutions, steven.lutz@blueclimatesolutions.org