Dear Mr. President,

As you work to stabilize and strengthen the economy, please consider that a healthy environment can play a central role in job creation and a strong economic future, as well as addressing greenhouse gas pollution and global climate change.

As coastal and marine stakeholders, representing a wide range of interests, we write to provide our support and recommendations for economic recovery and the mitigation of greenhouse gas pollution, through job creation projects related to the conservation and restoration of coastal and marine ecosystems, illustrated as follows:

**Blue Works** – Healthy coasts and oceans are vital to the economy of the United States. The majority of the nation’s population lives in coastal states (70%) and the majority of the gross domestic product comes from coastal states (82% in 2008).1

Healthy coastal and marine ecosystems represent critical economic infrastructure – they are vital to coastal economies through lucrative tourism and commercial and recreational fisheries. For example, Florida’s recreational saltwater fishery, dependent on healthy seagrass meadows and mangrove forests, has an economic impact of $5.4 billion and supports over 54,000 jobs.2

Coastal and marine conservation and restoration projects can create new jobs, provide economic stimulus and increase revenues to states and local communities. Many “shovel ready” projects are awaiting implementation. For example, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) received $167 million through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 for coastal restoration projects around the country from a pool of proposals totaling more than $3 billion in requests.

**Blue Carbon** – Healthy coasts and oceans are also critically important to climate change and the global carbon cycle. When healthy, certain coastal and marine ecosystems such as seagrass meadows, mangrove forests, and saltwater marshlands absorb atmospheric carbon dioxide and thereby naturally help mitigate the threat of climate change.3,4 These “blue carbon” ecosystems are extremely effective at storing carbon – mangroves and coastal wetlands store 50 times more carbon than tropical forests by area.
Sadly, the loss of coastal ecosystems is occurring at an alarming rate – 59,000 acres of coastal wetlands are lost each year in the Eastern United States\textsuperscript{5}. The continued degradation of these ecosystems decreases the ocean’s existing carbon stock and its capacity to mitigate climate change. It also threatens essential fish habitat, marine biodiversity, and related sectors of the economy.

**Recommendations** – We respectfully ask you to consider the following actions:

1) Include the conservation and restoration of coastal and marine ecosystems in your plan for economic recovery, and a central strategy in policy for climate change mitigation. Options include:
   a. Increase support for the conservation and restoration of coastal and marine ecosystems that help store atmospheric carbon. Suitable projects will create good jobs and support and stimulate local economies while also mitigating climate change. They will also encourage community-based volunteerism and represent a significant investment in our future;
   b. Support the research and development of natural marine ecosystem solutions to climate change, and related technologies, through priority setting at appropriate science funding bodies;
   c. Incorporate coastal and marine carbon management into your National Ocean Policy and marine spatial planning policy. Please consider issuing a directive that facilitates cross-cutting interagency cooperation and the creation of guidelines for managing and accounting for these blue carbon sinks;
   d. Include coastal and marine carbon sinks in national greenhouse gas accounting;
   e. Incorporate blue carbon solutions into U.S. international development assistance; and
2) Support the United States in advancing the inclusion of coastal and marine ecosystem carbon in international climate change negotiation texts.

Please note that eleven U.S. Senators have recently endorsed the blue carbon concept by including appropriate language under allowable climate mitigation (or offset) projects in the Clean Energy Partnerships Act of 2009 and American Power Act (discussion draft)\textsuperscript{6}.

We offer you our support in advancing these policy options. Thank you for considering our views and for your continued commitment to productive and healthy oceans.

Sincerely,

Signed by the following seventy-four marine stakeholders and conservation groups, together from twenty-one U.S. states and territories and seventeen countries (Blue Climate Coalition):
**Domestic** - Fifty-four signatories from twenty-one states and territories:

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**Blue Climate Solutions**  
Steven J. Lutz, Executive Director, Founder, Blue Climate Coalition, Miami, FL

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**The Ocean Foundation**  
Mark J. Spalding, Ph.D., President, Washington, DC

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**Mangrove Action Project**  
Alfredo Quarto, Executive Director, Port Angeles, WA

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**Pew Environment Group - Campaign for Healthy Oceans**  
Chris Mann, Director, Washington, DC

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**Sierra Club**  
Bruce Hamilton, Deputy Executive Director, San Francisco, CA

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**Seagrass Recovery**  
Jeff Beggins, President & CEO, Indian Rocks Beach, FL

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**Restore America’s Estuaries**  
Jeff Benoit, President, Arlington, VA

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**350.org**  
Bill McKibben, Co-founder & Global Organizer, Ripton, VT

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**Greenpeace USA**  
Phil Kline, Senior Oceans Campaigner, Washington, DC
The Blue Carbon Project
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John Bruno

Surfrider Foundation
Chad Nelsen, Environmental Director, San Clemente, CA

American Littoral Society
Tim Dillingham, Executive Director, Highlands, NJ

American Fisheries Society (AFS)
Gus Rassam, Ph.D., Executive Director, Bethesda, MD

Gus Rassam

Alliance for Earth Observations
Nancy S.A. Colleton, Executive Director & Co-Founder, Arlington, VA

Nancy Colleton

EarthEcho International
Philippe Cousteau, Jr., Co-founder & CEO, Washington, DC

NAUI Worldwide
Jed Livingstone, Vice President, Tampa, FL

Forest Trends
Mr. Michael Jenkins, President & CEO, Washington, DC

Michael Jenkins

Blue Ocean Institute
Carl Safina, Ph.D., President, East Norwich, NY
Oceanic Defense - Florida
Samantha Whitcraft, Director, Conservation Biology & Research, Miami, FL  Activation Through Education

Samantha Whitcraft

Fauna & Flora International
Katie Frohardt, Executive Director, Washington, DC

Trees, Water & People
Stuart Conway, International Director, Fort Collins, CO

Stuart Conway

Center for Rural Empowerment and the Environment
Mike Skuja, Executive Director & Founder, Washington, DC

Mike Skuja

Urban Paradise Guild
Sam Van Leer, Executive Director, Miami, FL

Sam Van Leer

CORALations
Mary Ann Lucking, Director, Culebra, PR

Mary Ann Lucking

Environment Florida
Sarah Bucci, Federal Field Associate, Miami Beach, FL

Sarah Bucci

Repower America - Florida
Lance Orchid, Florida State Director, St Petersburg, FL

Lance Orchid

The Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)
Rick MacPherson, Interim Executive Director and Conservation Programs Director, San Francisco, CA

Rick MacPherson

Earth2Ocean Inc.
Ellen Prager, Ph.D., President, Miami, FL

Ellen Prager

Endangered Habitats League
Dan Silver, Executive Director, Los Angeles, CA

Dan Silver

ECOMB: Environmental Coalition of Miami & the Beaches
Luiz Rodrigues, Executive Director, Miami Beach, FL

Luiz Rodrigues
Florida Conservation Alliance
Ilysia Shattuck, Director, Fort Lauderdale, FL

_Ilysia Shattuck_

Friends of the Marianas Trench Marine National Monument
Mr. Ignacio V. Cabrera, Chairman, Saipan, CNMI

_Ignacio V. Cabrera_

Global Coral Reef Alliance (GCRA)
Thomas J. Goreau, Ph.D., President, Cambridge, MA

_Thomas J. Goreau_

Guanaja Mangrove Restoration
Scott Duncan, Director, South Portland, ME

_Scott Duncan_

Island Resources Foundation
Bruce G. Potter, President, Washington, DC

_Bruce G. Potter_

KAHEA: The Hawaiian-Environmental Alliance
Miwa Tamanaha, Executive Director, Honolulu, HI

_The Ocean Project_

Bill Mott, Director, Providence, RI

_Bill Mott_

Malama Kai Foundation
Terry O’Halloran, Executive Director, Kamuela, HI

_Terry O’Halloran_

Ocean Defenders Alliance
Scott Scheckman, Executive Director, Huntington Beach, CA

_Scott Scheckman_

Ocean Revolution
Wallace J. Nichols, Ph.D., Founder & Co-Director, Davenport, CA

_Wallace J. Nichols_

Pro Peninsula - Ocean Connectors Program
Frances Kinney, Director, San Diego, CA

_Frances Kinney_

SandyHook SeaLife Foundation
Mary M. Hamilton, Executive Director, Highlands, NJ

_Mary M. Hamilton_
Save Our Seas
Capt. Paul Clark, President, Hanalei, HI

ScienceFish.com
Refik Orhun, Ph.D., Founder, Miami, FL

Sea Turtle Conservancy
David Godfrey, Executive Director, Gainesville, FL

South Carolina Coastal Conservation League
Dana Beach, Executive Director, Charleston, SC

Coastal Research and Education Society of Long Island
Arthur H. Kopelman, Ph. D., President, Long Island, NY

Beautify CNMI!
Cinta M. Kaipat, Founder, Saipan, CNMI

The Interfaith Council for the Protection of Animals and Nature (ICPAN)
Lewis Regenstein, President, Atlanta, GA

Khaled bin Sultan Living Oceans Foundation
CAPT Philip G. Renaud, USN (ret), Executive Director, Landover, MD

The Snorkel Bob Foundation
Robert Wintner, Executive Director, Kihei, HI

WIDECAST: Wider Caribbean Sea Turtle Conservation Network
Karen Eckert, Ph.D., Executive Director, Beaufort, NC
International - Twenty signatories from sixteen countries:

**Andros Conservancy and Trust (ANCAT)**
Peter Douglas, Executive Director, Fresh Creek, Andros, Bahamas

*Peter Douglas*

**Blue Ventures Conservation**
Alasdair Harris, Ph.D., Research Director, London, United Kingdom

*Alasdair Harris*

**Cartagena’s Youth Declaration on Climate Change Group**
Viviana Mourra, Representative, Cartagena, Republic of Colombia

*Viviana Mourra*

**Centro Ecologico Akumal**
Paul Sanchez-Navarro, Director, Quintana Roo, México

*Paul Sanchez-Navarro*

**CIANGO: Cook Islands Association of Non-Government Organizations**
Mrs. Tuaine Marsters, President, Rarotonga, Cook Islands

*Cinta M. Kaipat*

**Friends of the Environment**
Kristin Williams, Executive Director, Marsh Harbour, Abaco, Bahamas

*Kristin Williams*

**Global Islands Network**
Graeme Robertson, Executive Director, Inverness, Scotland, United Kingdom

*Graeme Robertson*

**Marine Conservation Society**
Mrs. Sam Fanshawe, Director, Herefordshire, United Kingdom

*Sam Fanshawe*

**MAUDESCO: Mauritius Council for Development Environmental Studies and Conservation**
Rajen Awotar, Executive Director, Port Louis, Republic of Mauritius

*Rajen Awotar*

**Melanesian NGO Centre for Leadership (MNCL)**
Ms. Margaret Sete, Port Moreby, Papua New Guinea

*Ms. Margaret Sete*
NIUANGO: Niue Island Association of NGOs
Mr. Hiva Levi, Niue Island

Mr. Hiva Levi

Palau Conservation Society
Mr. Elbuchel Sadang, Executive Director, Koror, Palau

Peninsula Citizens for Sustainable Development
Mary Toy, Co-Chair, Placencia, Belize

Mary Toy

Rainbow Warriors Core Foundation (Rainbow Warriors International)
Milton Ponson, President, Oranjestad, Aruba, Dutch Caribbean

Milton Ponson

Saint Lucia National Trust
Bishnu Tulsie, Director, Castries, Saint Lucia

Bishnu Tulsie

Sierra Club British Colombia
George Heyman, Executive Director, Victoria, BC, Canada

Sierra Club

SUNGO: Samoa Umbrella for Non Governmental Organisations
High Chief Vaasiliifili Moelagi Jackson, SUNGO National President, Apia, Independent State of Samoa

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TNYC: Tonga National Youth Congress
Miss Siaila Jagroop, Nuku’alofa, Kingdom of Tonga

Miss Siaila Jagroop

WetlandCare Australia Ltd
Anissa Lawrence, Director, Ballina, NSW, Australia

Anissa Lawrence
Copied to: Carol Browner, Director, White House Office of Energy and Climate Change Policy
Dr. John Holdren, Director, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy
Nancy Sutley, Chair, White House Council on Environmental Quality
Hillary R. Clinton, Secretary, U.S. Department of State, Chair of the Board of
Directors, Millennium Challenge Corporation
Rajiv Shah, Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development
Dr. Steven Chu, Secretary, U.S. Department of Energy
Lisa P. Jackson, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Gary Locke, Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce
Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and
NOAA Administrator
Ken Salazar, Secretary, Department of the Interior
Rowan W. Gould, Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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References:

6 Wording includes “wetlands” and “vegetated marine coastal habitats” under eligible offset projects. Endorsed by John Kerry (MA), Joseph Lieberman (CT), Debbie Ann Stabenow (MI), Max Baucus (MT), Mark Begich (AK), Sherrod Brown (OH), Robert Casey (PA), Thomas Harkin (IA), Amy Klobuchar (MN), Bill Nelson (FL), and Jeanne Shaheen (NH) (111th Congress).