



IUCN Congress Bulletin

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A Daily Report of the 2016 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress

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**IUCN
World
Conservation
Congress
Hawai'i 2016**

THE IUCN WORLD CONSERVATION CONGRESS: THURSDAY, 1 SEPTEMBER 2016

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress started on Thursday with almost 10,000 participants joining the opening ceremony, the Pacific Ocean Summit and a welcome reception in the evening.

OPENING CEREMONY

Master of Ceremonies Kamana'opono Crabbe, CEO, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, welcomed participants to the IUCN World Conservation Congress (WCC) in Hawaiian and English. He emphasized the importance of forging relationships to address climate change, and invited everyone to share "aloha" with each other.

Hawai'i Governor David Ige said an island is a "microcosm of Planet Earth," and that island communities see the impacts of invasive species, wildfire and unsustainable fishing practices close to home. He announced the Hawai'i Sustainable Initiative, including the following goals: protecting 30 % of the State's highest-producing watersheds; effectively managing 30 % of nearshore waters; doubling local food production by 2030; developing a biosecurity plan focused on partnerships to prevent, detect, and control invasive species; and moving to 100 % use of renewable energy sources in the electricity sector by 2045. He also announced that Hawai'i is joining the Global Island Partnership with a view to developing models for sustainability at the local level. He urged participants to work together to make a difference for "Island Earth."



Traditional Hawaiian dancers performing at the opening ceremony

Sally Jewell, US Secretary of the Interior, noted that "humans' identity and culture is shaped largely by the waters and lands that they inhabit." She saluted US President Barack Obama's expansion of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in western Hawai'i by more than 442,778 square miles, creating the largest marine reserve on earth. She observed that: islands are especially vulnerable to biodiversity loss; endangered species can be successfully conserved and restored; and successful conservation means "moving from random acts of kindness to strategic planning," including the use of latest scientific tools. Jewell further noted the need to: protect wildlife corridors "as species know no boundaries"; address the scourge of illegal wildlife trafficking; respect and utilize the traditional



Master of Ceremonies Kamana'opono Crabbe, CEO, Office of Hawaiian Affairs



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Sally Jewell,
US Secretary of the Interior

knowledge of Indigenous people; and push for the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change by sending clear signals to all stakeholders.

Hawaiian Senator Brian Schatz noted growing reasons for optimism despite the ongoing struggle with impacts of climate change, drought and loss of biodiversity in forests and oceans. He observed increasing global political will among

leaders and practitioners from the infrastructure, farming, insurance and disaster management sectors. Senator Schatz noted that it has become mainstreamed that taking action on climate change mitigation and adaptation is cheaper and smarter than to merely respond retroactively to storms. He highlighted the expansion of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, and praised US President Obama's focus on ensuring that new US electricity generation comes from clean energy sources. Senator Schatz applauded commitment and cooperative efforts to fight 'Ōhi'a tree mortality in the Hawaiian rainforest.



Hawaiian Senator Brian Schatz

President Tommy Remengesau, Palau, said President Obama's designation of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National



Tommy Remengesau,
President of Palau

Monument "cements his legacy as an ocean leader." As a good-natured challenge, he called it a "good start," saying when the US matches Palau's accomplishment of protecting 80 % of its Exclusive Economic Zone, it will "finally be ready to join the big league." He cited Palau's efforts to protect marine resources, including the world's first shark sanctuary. Noting that the establishment of new marine

protected areas in many different areas over the past two years shows the "wind is rising at our back," he emphasized the need for speed and determination to meet the urgent challenges. He called on participants to support a motion to the IUCN to protect at least 30% of oceans. Remengesau said the "enormous" support and commitment already visible at the Congress shows that "we are paddling in the same direction."

Erik Solheim, Executive Director, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), presented examples of innovation in conservation from all over the world and stressed the need to bring the initiatives of all stakeholders together in one coherent flow.

Noting the necessity for humans to take care of Mother Earth, he saluted the G20 efforts in rapidly transitioning to green finance. Presenting the UN Secretary-General's warmest congratulations and strong support, Solheim reminded participants that "no task is too big if we act together."



Erik Solheim, UNEP Executive Director

Speaking on behalf of the EU, State Secretary Norbert Kurilla, Ministry of Environment, Slovakia, called on the



State Secretary Norbert Kurilla,
Ministry of Environment, Slovakia

WCC to produce pragmatic solutions for nature that can be implemented on the ground. Reporting from the EU, he noted "Natura 2000" as the largest coordinated network of protected areas in the world. He explained this network would not work without the cooperation of communities, countries, and regions. He referred to upcoming multilateral meetings, including: the Convention on International Trade of Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora (CITES) to work on effective trade-related measures and how to address illegal trade of endangered species; the Montreal Protocol, to work on an agreement for early, clear and ambitious phase-out of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs); the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to build on the Paris Agreement in order to promote concrete action; and the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to highlight the interlinkages of the work to reduce biodiversity loss with the work of other multilateral environmental agreements.

Corbett Kalama, Kamehameha Schools Trustee, called his school the largest indigenous land trust in the world, with an



Corbett Kalama,
Kamehameha Schools Trustee

emphasis on perpetuating Hawaiian culture and good stewardship of natural resources. Observing that "we look to the past for the answers," he noted that Indigenous peoples have always had the answers. He offered a blessing of gratitude for IUCN's work of preserving the world for future generations and "taking action now."



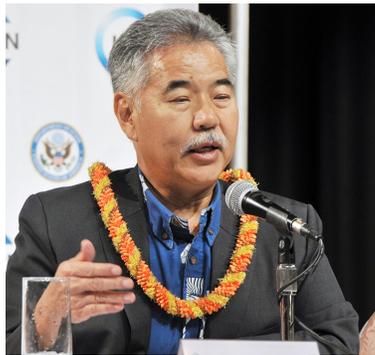
IUCN President Zhang Xinsheng

IUCN President Zhang Xinsheng said the IUCN WCC is about moving the 2015 historical agreements to action. Inviting participants to show how they plan to contribute to implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement, he reminded them that their decisions “will define the opportunities and limitations of future generations.” Stressing the need for joint global efforts to “move the world from a tipping point to a turning point,” he declared the 2016 IUCN World Conservation Congress open.

During the final performance of the Opening Ceremonies, the sounds of earth-pounding drums, chants and song filled the arena as hula dancers, young and old, offered a visual feast of graceful, powerful and compelling movement. Master of Ceremonies Crabbe told participants, “We are all on watch.”

PRESS CONFERENCE

Following the opening ceremony, a press conference was

Sally Jewell,
US Secretary of the Interior

held where Governor Ige highlighted that the WCC is the largest and most diverse environmental meeting ever held in the US.

Secretary Jewell, noted the importance of: recognizing the culture and traditional knowledge of native people in environmental management; taking a landscape perspective as individual parcels of protected land

are not enough; and involving youth in nature conservation.

She highlighted that the Trans Pacific Partnership Agreement is an important tool for combating the illegal trafficking of wildlife.

Inger Andersen, IUCN Director General, emphasized that people have the power to invest back in nature so it can recover from the impacts humans have inflicted

Inger Andersen,
IUCN Director General

upon it. She noted that “behind” the over 9000 participants at the WCC, there are millions of people working on the ground to make progress towards a better world.

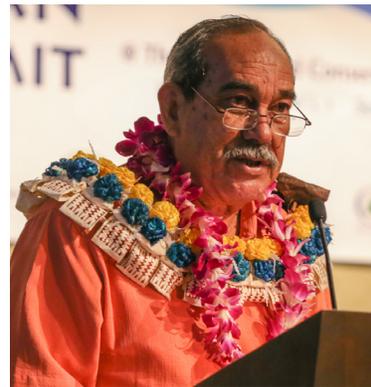
Senator Schatz noted that the power in the opening ceremony did not come from elected officials but from those that work every day on conservation, adding that the WCC is in a position to help realize the Paris Agreement and the SDGs.

In response to a question regarding shark extinction, Andersen emphasized work of the IUCN scientific commissions, and Schatz recalled a bipartisan Senate Oceans Caucus. On a question regarding actions to preserve 30% of the watersheds and oceans of Hawai‘i, Ige said a community-based resource management approach had been initiated. On action on climate change in the Philippines, Schatz emphasized that he believes it is possible to find a path towards ratification of the Paris Agreement for the Philippines, and address moral questions regarding climate justice. In response to a question on how Hawai‘i will achieve its commitment to double food production, Ige said it will increase land availability and diversify agriculture in each county.

PACIFIC OCEANS SUMMIT

Overview, context and importance of the Oceans, the Pacific Ocean Summit and the 2030 Pacific Ocean Partnership:

John De Fries, Department of Research and Development, County of Maui, Hawai‘i, opened the session. President Peter Christian, the Federated States of Micronesia, emphasized partnerships for action. Alan Arakawa, Mayor,

Peter Christian,
President, Micronesia

County of Maui, Hawai‘i, said solutions are available but require political will for implementation. UNEP Executive Director Erik Solheim called to stop illegal extraction of resources from the poorest nations. President of the Marshall Islands Hilda Heine emphasized the connection between oceans, wellbeing and prosperity, and outlined threats such as climate change, deep sea

mining and illegal fishing.

Pacific Ocean Partnership Session; Actions and Commitments for Oceans: Taholo Kami, Regional Director, IUCN Oceania, framed the session.

On reducing threats, moderator Kosi Latu, Director General, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, urged delegates to bring clear actions to the 2017 UN Ocean Summit. Arakawa underscored the value of creating regulations and baselines to implement and measure progress, noting actions taken in Maui such as a ban on plastic bags and partnerships such as the East Maui Watershed Partnership. Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare, Solomon Islands, called for harmonization of legal frameworks and addressing the cause and origin of challenges, saying “we cannot manage the oceans but we can manage the behavior of people using the oceans.”

On increasing ocean resilience, Aliko Faipule Afega Gualofa, President of Tokelau, said “the Pacific Ocean is our teacher, our elder and our home”, further highlighting that ocean health is

interdependent with quality of life and climate change. Prime Minister Henry Puna, Cook Islands, emphasized that traditional approaches must be nurtured and integrated into ocean resilience efforts. Eduoard Fritch, President, French Polynesia, highlighted experience in sustainable marine resource management to ensure marine resources benefit communities. Moderator James Movick, Director General, Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, said that to be effective, marine protected areas must be one of many activities.



Prime Minister
Henry Puna, Cook Islands

On action on climate change, moderator Colin Tukitonga, Director General, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, noted the US\$1 billion spent on importing fossil fuels throughout the Pacific could be used on renewable energy instead. President Hilda Heine, the Marshall Islands, said that Small Island Developing States (SIDs) could be the world's "powerhouses" for renewable energy, highlighting efforts such as solar energy and sustainable shipping. Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga, Tuvalu, highlighted the importance of good governance; capacity building and education; and technology development and transfer to improve climate change action in the Pacific. Siaso Sovaleni, Deputy Prime Minister, Tonga,



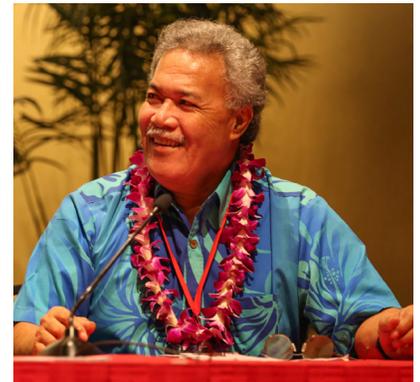
Hilda Heine,
President, the Marshall Islands

underlined that renewable energy is not only about reducing greenhouse gas emissions, but also about improving energy access for all.

On connecting Pacific peoples, Kamana'opono Crabbe, CEO, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, applauded leaders in the Pacific region and invited further dialogue.

On financing mechanisms, Moderator Dame Meg Taylor, Pacific Ocean Commissioner and Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, underscored the potential for joint proposals and called for development finance to include regions vulnerable to climate change. President Tommy Remengesau, Palau, introduced his vision for a multi-country proposal to support the Coalition of Atoll Nations on Climate Change and a national climate change survival trust fund. Ensuing discussions covered, *inter alia*, the need to improve direct access to the UNFCCC adaptation fund.

Closing Session: Where to from here? A 2030 Pacific Ocean Pathway & UN Ocean Summit 2017: Moderator Senator Kalani English, State of Hawaii, opened the session. Zhang Xinsheng, President, IUCN, shared admiration for the determination in the Pacific region and pledged solidarity and support for continued actions on behalf of IUCN. Nainoa Thompson, Master Navigator, Polynesian Voyaging Society, talked about the courage of the traditional cultural practitioners and scarcity of master navigators and their role in preserving ocean culture. Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, Foreign Minister, Fiji, highlighted the importance of SDG 14 and the UN Ocean Summit. David Ige, Governor, State of Hawai'i, recognized the commitments made in Paris that "have changed the trajectory of the planet."



Prime Minister
Enele Sopoaga, Tuvalu



Delegates during the evening reception