

World Ocean Council

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NEWS RELEASE

World Ocean Council Launches Global Industry Alliance On “Corporate Ocean Responsibility”

Industry leaders will meet in New York to collaborate on sustainability of the seas.

Honolulu, Hawaii, 16 June, 2008 - Ocean industry representatives from around the world will meet in New York in late June to work together on tackling shared marine environmental challenges. The inaugural meeting of the World Ocean Council will bring together business community members interested in developing an unprecedented collaborative approach toward improving the health of the marine environment. Representatives from the shipping, oil and gas, fisheries, cruise ship tourism, aquaculture, ports and other ocean industries are expected to attend. The workshop will be kicked off by Georg Kell, Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact and Vaclav Mikulka, Director of the United Nations Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea.

“The world’s oceans are at risk. The health of the seas depends on developing a more comprehensive approach to sustainability and stewardship by business. A growing number of companies are trying to be responsible, but collective efforts beyond those of a few companies or even a whole sector are needed to address the combined effects on the global ocean ecosystem,” said Paul Holthus, Executive Director of the World Ocean Council.

The phenomenal growth of shipping, oil and gas, fisheries, cruise tourism, aquaculture and other ocean uses is resulting in cumulative impacts to the marine environment, perhaps even affecting the ocean’s crucial role in regulating climate. “If we are thinking globally, oceanically and collectively, rather than considering our own narrow industry requirements, the World Ocean Council could be a very good idea,” noted Michael Grey from *Lloyd’s List*, an international maritime news report. “There is a tremendous opportunity for companies to distinguish themselves as sustainability leaders by joining with like-minded colleagues from other sectors in finding solutions to maintaining the health of the ocean,” Holthus noted.

To address this challenge, the World Ocean Council is creating a coalition of ocean industries to:

- Catalyze collaborative science to find solutions to shared marine environmental issues.
- Organize industry working groups to constructively engage with other ocean stakeholders.
- Develop sustainability standards, marine footprint reporting, and ocean stewardship strategies.
- Facilitate interaction among sectors to reduce ocean use conflicts.

“Managing the global ocean requires the involvement of all stakeholders, especially the private sector, and all ocean industries have a responsibility to help maintain the health and productivity of the marine environment,” Mikulka said. “The World Ocean Council efforts to bring together the global ‘ocean business community’ to develop leadership and collaboration for ocean sustainability and stewardship are critical to the future of the oceans.”

The World Ocean Council will convene ocean industry sustainability leaders on June 24 and June 25. Interested companies are invited to contact the Council. A special seminar outlining the growing collaboration on ocean sustainability issues will be held on the 25th as part of the annual UN consultations on oceans. At this event, leadership companies will have the opportunity to familiarize NGOs, governments and international agencies with their marine environmental programs.

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