



The Ocean Collective Summit 2023 : Inspiring Innovative Ocean Solutions

In a dynamic convergence of minds dedicated to marine conservation, The Ocean Collective Summit (TOCS) emerged as a beacon of inspiration during its two-day run in Singapore. Attended by influential figures and stewards in the marine conservation community, the event showcased a myriad of perspectives, solutions, and initiatives aimed at safeguarding the world's oceans.

The Ocean Collective Summit featured a combination of presentations, fireside chats, and panel discussions. To enhance participant engagement, an immersive virtual reality experience, highlighting key messages on plastic pollution by Fantassium Group, as well as a Kahoot quiz on Climate Change, were incorporated into the event.

Held as part of the Blue Water EduFest, TOCS brought together a diverse array of experts, including headline speakers like, Fabien Cousteau, Founder of the Fabien Cousteau Ocean Learning Centre and Proteus Ocean Group; Jeremy McKane, CEO of OCN.ai; Rena Lee, Ambassador for International Law; Zoe Ong, Senior Assistant Director, Coastal Protection Department, PUB, The National Water Agency Singapore and many more.

The event drew to a close with a reflection from Fabien Cousteau, who commended TOCS for bringing together a diverse global community committed to fostering a shift in mindset. His sentiment echoed the overarching theme of the summit — education and collaboration as powerful tools for meaningful change in our interaction with the oceans.

Julian Chang, President of The International SeaKeepers Society, Asia, highlighted the significance of education in creating awareness about the threats to our oceans. He emphasized TOCS as a pivotal player in this educational agenda, showcasing the power of collaboration and action irrespective of the scale of individual contributions.

Conclusion: A Wave of Change

The Ocean Collective Summit demonstrated that when passionate minds unite, solutions emerge. TOCS not only provided a platform for knowledge-sharing but also emphasized the critical role of education and collaboration in shaping a sustainable future for our oceans. As the summit concluded, it left a lasting impression on attendees, echoing the belief that, collectively, we can make a profound impact on the health and preservation of our oceans.

About The Ocean Collective Summit

The Ocean Collective Summit (TOCS) is a programme initiated by The International SeaKeepers Society in cooperation with Fabien Cousteau; the Founder of The Fabien Cousteau Ocean Learning Centre and Proteus Ocean Group; and famed for his work as an Aquanaut, Oceanographic Explorer and Environmental Advocate.

TOCS aims to bring a focus on the ocean and its intricate connections to life and all the inhabitants of our planet, Earth. Through its annual conference, TOCS will gather thought leaders to educate, raise awareness

and inspire action to be taken and work collectively towards a more sustainable future. For more information, please visit [Home - The Ocean Collective](#)

TOCS 2023 was held as part of The Blue Water EduFest <https://bluewateredufest.com/> and supported By Kin <https://www.kin.net/> and Inner Clique and Conference Airline Sponsor Singapore Airlines www.singaporeair.com.

Programme Highlights

November 2, 2023, Day 1: Charting the Course for Ocean Exploration and Conservation

In its 2nd year, The Ocean Collective Summit 2023 was inaugurated by The International SeaKeepers Society Chairman Jay Wade, who had just presided at The 25th anniversary celebrations of The International SeaKeepers Society.

Commencing with a captivating keynote address by Fabien Cousteau, the Founder of the Fabien Cousteau Ocean Learning Centre and Proteus Ocean Group, The Ocean Collective Summit 2023 was set in motion. Mr. Cousteau's focus on the crucial role of human engagement in ocean exploration established the overarching theme for the event.

The day unfolded with enlightening discussions covering a range of topics, including the pivotal role of key technological solutions and their potential to provide unprecedented opportunities for enhancing our comprehension of the ocean. These advancements also underscored their significance in driving impactful conservation efforts. Jaime McMichael Phillips, Director of The Nippon Foundation-GEBCO Seabed 2030 Project, further accentuated these points by highlighting the project's ambitious objective to map the world's seabeds as part of Seabed 2030 with the ultimate goal to produce the definitive GEBCO bathymetric map of the entire ocean by 2030.

During a fireside chat with Stephen Beng, Rena Lee, currently Singapore's Ambassador for International Law and Chief Executive of the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS), discussed The Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction Treaty Agreement (BBNJ), commonly known as The High Seas Treaty, a topic she was deeply involved in during her presidency of the BBNJ IGC from 2018 to 2023. Presently, 83 countries have signed the BBNJ Agreement, demonstrating a robust international commitment to the BBNJ process. This commitment holds particular significance for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) like Singapore, which rely on the oceans and their biodiversity for their livelihoods. Moreover, it signifies a substantial stride toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal 14, specifically in the conservation and sustainable utilization of oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

On Day 1, the spotlight extended to climate change adaptation in coastal regions, delving into innovative strategies for coastal protection. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has assessed that current climate impacts are likely to worsen across multiple human-natural systems. The escalating effects of climate change manifest in increasingly severe weather patterns, posing an existential threat to coastal cities, particularly vulnerable due to their low-lying nature.

Dr. Winston Chow, elected as Co-Chair of the IPCC's Working Group 11, underscored the vital role of enhancing climate resilience in these communities. This involves implementing planned adaptation strategies

that integrate technology with nature-based and social policies, ensuring the inclusivity of stakeholders, with a special focus on local communities.

Additionally, Zoe Ong, Senior Assistant Director of the Coastal Protection Department at PUB, The National Water Agency Singapore, addressed the development of innovative, flexible, and multi-functional solutions for coastal protection and flood management in Singapore which faces other challenges including limited land, high urbanization, and a dense population.

A notable highlight at the conclusion of Day 1 was the focus on inspiring young changemakers, including Melati Riyanto Wijzen, the Founder of Bye Bye Plastic Bags and YOUTHTOPIA; Dr. Louisa Ponnampalam, Co-Founder of MareCet Research Organization; and Thanda Ko Gyi, Founder of the Myanmar Ocean Project. Their narratives illuminated both personal and organizational journeys, underscoring the profound impact of individual and community-driven initiatives on marine conservation challenges, irrespective of scale.

Day 2: Riding the Waves of Innovation and Finance

Building on the momentum of the first day, TOCS's second day delved into presentations on ocean innovation and finance.

The first speaker of the Day Ying Qin, Global Thematic Analyst from Citi Global Insights spoke about Unlocking a sustainable future with ocean innovation and finance. The imperative to restore ocean health and transition away from unsustainable practices is fostering innovation across various sectors. This spans ocean-based climate solutions, sustainable seafood initiatives, advancements in ocean intelligence, and the development of innovative financial tools. Establishing a compelling business and investment case for ocean action, with a particular emphasis on pioneering ocean solutions, is pivotal in unlocking a sustainable future.

Furthermore, a panel consisting of George Foulsham, Director at DHI; Dr. Jani Tanzil, Facility Director at St. John's Island National Marine Laboratory; and Dr. Siti Maryam Yaakub, Senior Director at the International Blue Carbon Institute, was moderated by Ms. Kong Man Jing (MJ), Co-Founder of Just Keep Thinking. The panel deliberated on "Blue Carbon: Challenges and Opportunities," emphasizing the growing significance of Blue Carbon in carbon credit development. This discussion marked a departure from the conventional emphasis on generating "green" credits from land-based ecosystems like forests.

Continuing the discourse on "Tackling Plastic Pollution," Wendy WONG, Senior Lecturer at the School of Applied Science, Republic Polytechnic, took centre stage to provide insightful discussions on the Implications Of The Plastic Treaty. Throughout the day, a recurring theme underscored the significance of sustainable practices, emphasizing the circular economy's role in recycling, as advocated by Benjamin Chay, Founder of Green Earth Sustainability Bridge (GESB).

The discussion also shed light on the emergence of a new wave of CleanTech companies that are pioneering innovative and eco-friendly solutions to combat the plastic menace. Presented by Antoine Repiton-Preneuf, Business Development Manager - Asia Pacific, The Serial Cleaners specifically targets the insidious problem of small and micro debris littering beaches and shorelines, offering a promising avenue in the ongoing battle against plastic pollution.

Shifting the focus to the human-interest aspect of conservation, in the "Harmonizing Nature and Purpose" sessions, speakers shared their efforts in recognizing nature's intrinsic value, considering long-term impacts on ecosystems, and pursuing goals while minimizing environmental harm.

Micca Ferraro, Owner of Icon Yachts, discussed 'Responsible Yachting' and the increasing significance of experiential yachting and its role in ocean conservation, highlighting the shift to explorer yachts and their contributions to scientific research.

Enayatullah Khan, Founder of Cosmos Foundation and WildTeam, outlined his organization's commitment to fostering pro-environmental attitudes regarding the Sundarbans.

Cesar Jung Harada, a designer and environmentalist, emphasized the importance of envisioning a better world and advocated for collaboration with the younger generation and indigenous populations to build a sustainable relationship with the ocean.

Concluding the two-day summit with a poignant reminder to catalyze tangible impact for sustainability initiatives, participants were urged to form groups and participate in brainstorming sessions. The emphasis was on devising solutions corresponding to each Brainstorm Question, aimed at directly or indirectly contributing to the advancement of ocean sustainability.

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About Blue Water EduFest:

Blue Water EduFest, a non-profit marine and coastal conservation event, is at the forefront of ocean advocacy. It is a prestigious event that brings together experts, thought leaders, policymakers, and passionate advocates from around the world to engage in meaningful discussions, share innovative solutions, and inspire action towards the sustainable preservation of our oceans. Through a dynamic programme comprising an educational conference, prestigious Blue Water Heroes Awards and a meaningful beach clean-up, Blue Water EduFest seeks to foster collaboration, raise awareness, and drive positive change in the realm of marine conservation. For more information, please visit: <https://bluewateredufest.com/>