

### **A ‘Call to Action’ statement by the World Ocean Day –Kenya Organizing Committee**

The Ocean covers nearly 71% of the earth’s surface and is often referred to as the world’s life source. However, due to the finite amount of resources dedicated to protecting the environment, the ocean has received far less attention than it so richly deserves. However, the World Ocean Day- Kenya Organizing community, coordinated by Eco-Ethics - Kenya has recognized World Ocean Day, celebrating it every June 8<sup>th</sup> since 2006. The efforts of many have begun to pay off, after tireless lobbying efforts spread across many years, the United Nations General Assembly has recently declared June 8<sup>th</sup> as World Ocean Day. However, our work has just begun.

The ocean is the focal point of the global eco-system and responsible for many integral parts of our lives and the lives of creatures around us. Roughly one-third of the world’s population lives next to the ocean, it provides a home to millions of species, food to countless humans, and work for millions of people across industries including fishing, tourism, biotechnology, hydrocarbon exploration, and transportation to name a just small sample. The ocean also plays many environmental roles including the slowing of global warming by absorbing excess nitrogen in the atmosphere. In addition, the ocean holds the key to numerous potential alternative energy sources, for example hydropower or offshore wind energy.

The stability of the ocean is facing many threats today. Sadly, nearly all are caused by human actions. Discharge of hazardous wastes is increasing steadily each year, despite environmental audits and impact assessment reports. Destructive fishing such as trawling and beach seining are practiced haphazardly, oil spills continue to go unreported and the reported cases are treated with little concern, sunken ships perpetually seep toxic elements into the ocean as they disintegrate, and coral bleaching is on the rise due to climate change and heavy sedimentation caused by massive waves of deforestation. Inaction is no longer an option and we have a simple request – help us tackle these problems.

The organizers of World Ocean Day – Kenya, call upon all factories overloading the ocean with waste to reduce the toxicity of their outputs and to reduce their carbon-emissions that contribute to climate change. We invite participants in the fishing industry to embrace sustainable fishing methods and to forego the destructive practices that have few economic advantages. We further call upon the beach hotels to develop sound environmental behavior that poses less harm to their main source of income, the ocean. We challenge the shipping lines to be sensitive to the waters that function as the highways for their cargo.

We strongly challenge lead government agencies to implement the laws set to protect the ocean without prejudice. Finally, we invite all beneficiaries of the ocean to recognize World Ocean Day. A day centered on the goal of advocating for protection of the ocean from further destruction by human beings. At World Ocean Day we aim to mobilize all citizens to learn not just what the problems facing the ocean are; but what they can do as an individual or as a corporation to ensure the ocean’s cries for better care and more human responsibility are answered.

Pledge your support by signing below and we hope to see you on June 8<sup>th</sup> where we celebrate World Ocean Days 2009 theme, “One Ocean, One World, One Future”

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