

Strictly Embargoed until 0001hrs Monday June 8th 2015



The Prince of Wales launches 'Out of the Blue' – a new photography competition to celebrate the astonishing beauty and importance of our oceans and seas

The Prince of Wales will mark World Oceans Day (8th June) by launching a new photography competition for Commonwealth citizens to celebrate the beauty and importance of our oceans and seas. ***Out of the Blue: The Prince of Wales's Commonwealth Environmental Photography Awards*** will be unveiled at a public meeting on the future of the ocean, being held this evening at the Royal Geographical Society in London. The competition is a collaboration between The Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit (ISU), The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) and National Geographic, and aims to highlight the value and importance of the marine environment to Commonwealth countries.

In a video message played to participants of the meeting, entitled ***World Oceans Day – Realising the Potential of our Oceans and Coasts,***

The Prince will encourage Commonwealth citizens to explore their relationship with the marine environment through photography and submit images that remind people of the beauty of the oceans and seas, as well as our dependency as human beings on them. The Prince of Wales has, for many years, been interested in the conservation of the marine environment and has supported numerous initiatives in pursuit of that cause. In the video message, The Prince of Wales will say: “Good pictures can tell stories in ways that words sometimes cannot and it is my sincere hope that by inviting people to submit their finest photographs, depicting not only the astonishing beauty of the ocean, but also the nature of our relationship with it, that we might deepen efforts to ensure a more secure and sustainable future than might otherwise be the case.”

The competition has been organised by The Prince of Wales’s International Sustainability Unit, which seeks to build consensus around solutions to pressing environmental and developmental challenges. As such, the ISU works to highlight the benefits of the transition to a more sustainable use of the natural capital of our seas and oceans.

The Prince will highlight the fact that half of Commonwealth countries are island states whose future prosperity is inextricably linked to the future of the ocean. He will urge young people in particular to enter the competition with a hope that it will help deepen their passion for safeguarding the future of our 'blue world', as well as help get key messages across to global leaders.

Michael Lake CBE, Director of the Royal Commonwealth Society, a co-organizer, says: "The Commonwealth is comprised of a global girdle of countries and islands with both maritime ecology and commercial interests. The Royal Commonwealth Society aspires to encourage them to pursue imaginative, energetic and co-ordinated initiatives that will draw public and community attention to the need for sensible management of seas and oceans, for the well-being of future generations. This competition, with which the Royal Commonwealth Society is pleased to be involved, is a timely initiative."

Entries can be submitted from today through the competition website (www.outofthebluecompetition.com). The closing date for images will be 6th September. A panel of judges¹ will select winners and finalists in three categories, all of which will be included in an exhibition to be shown at this year's Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Malta in November, where among other things, the critical importance of the continued viability of economic activity dependent on oceans, seas, rivers and coasts will be discussed.

Note to Editors

About the competition partners:

The Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit

The Prince of Wales's ISU evolved from The Prince's Rainforest Project in 2010. It seeks to build consensus around solutions to some of the key environmental challenges facing the world, namely tropical deforestation, how best to achieve food, energy and water security and ensure healthy marine fish stocks. The ISU works with public, private and non-

¹ Terence Dormer, Enric Sala, Kevin Casha and Daniel Beltra with a fifth judge to be confirmed.

governmental organizations, helping to strengthen partnerships between them.

The aim of the ISU's Marine Programme is to build consensus on how the world's fish stocks can be managed in a more sustainable way, and on the need to manage them in the context of other marine life and the broader ocean ecosystem.

Reports written by the ISU can be found here:

<http://www.pcfisu.org/resources/>.

National Geographic Pristine Seas

Through its Pristine Seas project led by Explorer-in-Residence Dr. Eric Sala, National Geographic seeks to protect the last wild places in the ocean. Pristine Seas has conducted 13 expeditions and has helped to preserve over 2.2 million square kilometers of ocean territory. The project continues to support the United Nations' global goal of fully protecting 10% of the ocean by 2020.

<http://ocean.nationalgeographic.com/ocean/explore/pristine-seas/>

The Royal Commonwealth Society

The Royal Commonwealth Society (RCS) advocates positive social change through its programmes, competitions and publications. Developing dialogue by convening individuals and organisations across its vast pan-Commonwealth networks, it promotes the value and values of the Commonwealth for the benefit of its peoples.

www.thercs.org

Contact:

For more information about the competition and how to enter, please visit www.outofthebluecompetition.com; twitter @Outoftheblue_15

For more information about The Prince of Wales please visit www.princeofwales.gov.uk or contact the Clarence House Communications Team on 020 7024 5510.