



## WCS at the 2017 Our Ocean Conference

The **Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)** is a global conservation organization, established in 1895, which aims to save *wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, conservation action, education, and inspiring people to value nature*. WCS operates the New York Aquarium, as well as four New York City zoos. With a presence in nearly 60 countries, and experience helping to establish and manage 288 protected areas across the globe, WCS's goal is to: *'conserve the world's largest wild places in 16 priority regions, which are home to more than 50% of the world's biodiversity'*.

**WCS's marine conservation program** operates in 23 countries and 5 oceans, with a particular focus on conserving key habitats through marine protected areas (MPAs), supporting sustainable fisheries, and protecting key marine species such as marine mammals and sharks and rays. WCS prioritizes its efforts on marine areas with the highest biodiversity value that face the greatest threats; for example, our priority seascapes cover 90% of coral diversity.



Coral Crab in Roviana Lagoon, Solomon Islands  
©Stacey Jupiter/WCS



Map of WCS priority regions (yellow outline) and locations of sites where MPA initiatives are underway (blue dots)

## WCS and the Our Ocean Commitments

### WCS Commitments in the 2017 Our Ocean Conference:

The Science for Nature and People Partnership (SNAPP), which includes WCS, is committed to spend an additional US\$598,537 to the previous US\$1.3 million already invested to deliver evidence-based, scalable solutions to global ocean challenges.

WCS announced US\$1 million annually for the next five years on its New York Seascape initiative to promote conservation of marine waters. In addition, WCS will incorporate an interactive exhibit on the impacts of plastics in the ocean, as part of the new Ocean Wonders exhibit to open at the New York Aquarium during the summer of 2018.

WCS and its partners reaffirmed their commitment to develop noise reduction targets. A Working Group will kick-off in 2018 to conduct a Situation Analysis on ocean noise, generating an inventory of primary sources, key industry actors, and best practices.

### WCS Commitments in the 2016 Our Ocean Conference:

WCS, with support from the Waitt Foundation, committed to raising US\$15 million for the WCS MPA Fund, which aims to support efforts to meet or exceed the Aichi and the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) targets of protecting 10% of the world's ocean by 2020. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) committed US\$33 million to the Fund, bringing its combined investment to US\$48 million.

**Progress:** To date, the Waitt Foundation has committed \$5 million and the Blue Moon Fund, the Tiffany & Co. Foundation, and other generous individuals have secured a further \$4.5 million. Initiatives to create new MPAs are underway in 19 countries, 11 of which began since the fund's launch in September 2016. Combined, these efforts will cover 710,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the world's oceans.



WCS staff survey coral reef health in Madagascar  
©Emily Darling/WCS

## WCS and the SDGs

WCS is contributing to the delivery of many of the SDG goals and targets, including implementation of the following targets under SDG goal 14 to 'conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources': 14.1 Reduce marine pollution; 14.2 Resilience; 14.3 Address ocean acidification; 14.4 End overfishing and illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing; 14.5 Conserve at least 10% of coastal and marine areas; and 14.7 Increase economic benefits from the sustainable use of marine resources.

## WCS and the European Union (EU)

WCS opened an office in Brussels in 2011 to increase our engagement with the EU and enhance our global conservation impact by influencing the development and implementation of EU policies in line with our conservation objectives. We are currently engaging with EU policymakers on a number of policy areas, to have a positive impact on wildlife and wild places, including, wildlife trafficking, wildlife trade implementing the SDGs, and tropical deforestation.

### Contacts

Jason Patlis, Executive Director Marine Conservation Program, [jpatlis@wcs.org](mailto:jpatlis@wcs.org)  
Janice Weatherley-Singh, European Policy Director, [jweatherleysingh@wcs.org](mailto:jweatherleysingh@wcs.org)

