

World Ocean Festival and National Geographic Host Ocean Experts on Governors Island on June 4

On **June 4, 2017**, the inaugural [World Ocean Festival](#), organized by **The Global Brain Foundation** and hosted by the [City of New York](#), will feature leading marine biologists, ocean advocates, entrepreneurs, and more speaking at a free, public program called **World Ocean Festival Speaker Forum sponsored by National Geographic Encounter: Ocean Odyssey**. The Festival is an effort to bring together people and organizations who care deeply about the Ocean and who will stand together for its protection in advance of “The Ocean Conference” at the United Nations (June 5-9). The World Ocean Festival Speaker Forum will feature interactive panel discussions about coral reefs, plastic pollution, fishing and seafood and urban Ocean conservation on Sunday, June 4, 11:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Eastern Time. The program is free and open to the public at the Ocean Village exhibition area at Picnic Point at the southern tip of Governors Island. The program will be capped off with a closing ceremony and awards presentation. “Fueled by the power of exploration and storytelling, National Geographic strives to connect people with the world around them and inspire them to make a difference,” said Declan Moore, Chief Executive Officer of National Geographic Partners. “We continue to look for new and exciting ways to bring the story of our world’s oceans to life through projects like the Pristine Seas Initiative and National Geographic Encounter Ocean Odyssey – a new immersive entertainment experience that uses ground-breaking technology to transport visitors through the Pacific Ocean where they encounter its greatest wonders and mightiest creatures. The World Ocean Festival is a unique opportunity to further engage with our audience on the importance of ocean preservation and provide a platform for leaders in ocean advocacy, exploration, and research to discuss how we can all work together to improve the health of our oceans.” “We are thrilled to have all of these incredible voices of the ocean coming to join us at Governors Island on June 4,” said Natalia Vega-Berry, Founder and Executive Producer of World Ocean Festival and The Global Brain Foundation. “World Ocean Festival is merely providing the moment for people and organizations to stand together for the ocean in advance of the UN convening to show world leaders how strongly we feel.” “We depend on the ocean for everything from the food we eat to the air we breathe,” said Maria Damanaki, Managing Director for Oceans at The Nature Conservancy. “Now more than ever, the future health of our oceans depends on us. It is exciting to see the United Nations call on governments, NGOs and citizens to commit to protect the ocean and ensure that it will continue to provide for us and for generations to come echoed by this Festival and met with global support.” Curated and moderated by Ayana Elizabeth Johnson, Ph.D., Founder [Ocean Collectiv](#), the World Ocean Festival Speaker Forum will delve into the issues that threaten the ocean as well as solutions for addressing them in an engaging way. The program includes panel discussions with the world’s experts on topics **including “Coral Reefs and Climate” (11:00 a.m.), “Plastic Pollution” (1:30 p.m.), “Fishing and Seafood” (2:30 p.m.) and “Urban Ocean: Conservation” (3:30 p.m.)**. The program will include a rally featuring global youth ambassadors for the ocean. Featured speakers include:

- David Gruber, Marine Biologist, Emerging Explorer, National Geographic
- Jeremy Jackson, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, Scripps Institution of Oceanography
- Jessica Harvey, Cayman Islands Project Manager, Guy Harvey Foundation
- Jon Forrest Dohlin, VP & Director, Wildlife Conservation Society & New York Aquarium
- Judd Harner, Vice President of Marketing, S’well Bottle

- Karin Stratton, Partnership Manager, Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch Program
- Lasse Gustavsson, Executive Director Europe, Oceana
- Lea D'Auriol, Founder, Oceanic Global
- Dr. Lisa Emelia Svensson, Director for Ocean, United Nations Environment
- Martha Jeffries, Producer & Director, *Years of Living Dangerously*
- Matt Gove, Mid-Atlantic Policy Manager, Surfrider Foundation
- Melati Wijsen – Co-Founder, Bye Bye Plastic Bags
- Miranda Massie, Director, The Climate Museum
- Murray Fisher, Founder, Harbor School & Billion Oyster Project
- Nishan Degnarain, Chair Oceans Committee, World Economic Forum
- Stephanie Wear, PhD., Senior Scientist & Strategy Advisor, The Nature Conservancy
- Wybe Bruinsma, CEO, Van de Sant
- Youth Ambassadors from Sea Youth Rise Up and NYC Junior Ambassadors

In addition to World Ocean Festival Speaker Forum, the World Ocean Festival will include the first-of-its kind Ocean March parade of boats in New York Harbor led by the historic John J. Harvey fireboat. The Festival Village on Governors Island will feature a performance by a Fijian military band and awards for luminaries in the field of ocean science, environmental sustainability, global and local organizing, and ocean advocacy. The full program of activities can be found online at the World Ocean Festival website (www.worldoceanfest.org) with registration information and a detailed program listing and speaker bios. National Geographic Encounter: Ocean Odyssey is a first-in-kind immersive entertainment experience that transports audiences on a jaw-dropping, never-before-seen undersea journey. Developed by a team of Academy, Emmy and Grammy Award-winning creative minds, National Geographic Encounter harnesses groundbreaking digital technology to create a completely new kind of entertainment experience that enables visitors to explore the depths of the Pacific Ocean and come face-to-face with its greatest wonders and mightiest creatures. National Geographic Encounter opens October 2017 and is located in the heart of New York City's Times Square. The City of New York and [The Global Brain](#) are joined by leaders in ocean conservation, advocacy, and sustainable development our Founding Partners [Mission Blue](#), [Ocean Elders](#), [Oceanic](#) and [The Nature Conservancy](#). This event is made possible by support from Founding Sponsor Toyota USA, creator of the Mirai fuel cell vehicle and [National Geographic](#). Core Supporters of the World Ocean Festival include [Peace Boat](#), [Connect4Climate](#), [Ocean Collectiv](#) and [NGO Committee of Sustainable Development-NY](#). Additional supporters include: [Classic Harbor Line](#), [Conscious Good](#), [Ocean Film Festival](#), [Style & Resilience](#), [TerraCycle](#), [Waterkeeper Alliance](#), [AEFocus](#), [Connect 4 Climate](#), [NGO Committee of Sustainable Development-NY](#), [Metcalf Institute](#), [Sustainable Ocean Alliance](#), [We Are The Oceans](#), [Clean Seas](#), [Bye Bye Plastics](#), [Monterey Bay Aquarium](#), [National Educators Association](#), [Mukaro](#), [RiseUP](#), [Blue Mind](#), [The Foundation Center](#), [Waterfront Alliance](#), [Sailors for the Sea](#), [Earth Day Network](#), [The Lonely Whale Foundation](#), [Sea Youth Rise Up](#), [Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation](#), [Blue Ocean Network](#), [Second Muse](#), [Wildlife Conservation Society](#) and [NYC Junior Ambassadors](#). The World Ocean Festival is a public event hosted by the City of New York and organized by [The Global Brain Foundation](#) to raise peoples' voices for the preservation and sustainable use of the Ocean ([Sustainable Development Goal 14](#)) in advance of the [The Ocean Conference](#) at United Nations Headquarters, which aims to be the game changer that will reverse the decline in the health of our ocean for people, planet and prosperity. For more information about the World Ocean Festival and to register for the Ocean March on June 4, 2017, visit: <http://www.worldoceanfest.org/> or follow us on Twitter [@WorldOceanFest](#), on Instagram [@WorldOceanFestival](#), and on Facebook [@WorldOceanFestival](#). **ABOUT: National Geographic Partners** LLC (NGP), a joint venture between National Geographic and 21st Century Fox, is committed to bringing the world premium science, adventure and exploration content across an unrivaled portfolio of media assets. NGP combines the global National Geographic television

channels (National Geographic Channel, Nat Geo WILD, Nat Geo MUNDO, Nat Geo PEOPLE) with National Geographic's media and consumer-oriented assets, including National Geographic magazines; National Geographic studios; related digital and social media platforms; books; maps; children's media; and ancillary activities that include travel, global experiences and events, archival sales, licensing and e-commerce businesses. Furthering knowledge and understanding of our world has been the core purpose of National Geographic for 129 years, and now we are committed to going deeper, pushing boundaries, going further for our consumers ... and reaching over 730 million people around the world in 172 countries and 43 languages every month as we do it. NGP returns 27 percent of our proceeds to the nonprofit National Geographic Society to fund work in the areas of science, exploration, conservation and education. For more information visit natgeotv.com or nationalgeographic.com, or find us

on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Google+](#), [YouTube](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Pinterest](#). **The Nature Conservancy** is a global conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together. We are tackling climate change, conserving lands, waters and oceans at unprecedented scale, and helping make cities more sustainable. Working in more than 65 countries, we use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. To learn more, visit www.nature.org or follow [@nature_press](#) on Twitter. **The Global Brain Foundation** is a 501 C3 not for profit corporation. Our mission is to create new initiatives and ventures to tackle issues where mass participation and collective action can unlock big change. Our current initiatives are in support of the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals and new climate agreements. To learn more, visit: <http://www.globalbrain.is/>. MEDIA CONTACT: **Courtney Rowe** National Geographic Courtney.Rowe@natgeo.com