

Title 3—

Proclamation 7065 of January 28, 1998

The President

Year of the Ocean, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

More than 70 percent of the Earth's surface is covered by water, and more than half the world's population lives within 50 miles of a coastline. We rely on the ocean as both a source and sustenance of life on our planet. It contains a wondrous abundance and diversity of life, from the smallest microorganism to the mammoth blue whale. It is a key source of food, medicine, energy, commerce, and recreation for the peoples of the world, and the more we learn about its influence on climate and weather, the more we realize its impact on our safety and quality of life.

We are only beginning to understand the depths of the ocean's mysteries, but we are quickly learning one crucial lesson: the ocean's resources are limited, and we must work together to preserve them. Many areas are already overfished; decades of pollution, including industrial waste, sewage, and toxic runoff, has taken its toll on the health of the ocean and its living creatures. Many species of fish are threatened with extinction, and even our precious coral reefs, once a safe haven for an amazing variety of animal and plant life, have suffered greatly.

Because the ocean is a treasure that all nations of the world share in common, we must work in partnership to become wise stewards of its many riches. We must strive together—at local, national, and international levels—to preserve the ocean's health, to protect the marine environment, and to ensure the sustainable management of the myriad resources the ocean contains.

Dedicating 1998 as the Year of the Ocean is an important first step in this worldwide endeavor. Throughout the year, individuals, organizations, and governments will participate in activities designed to raise public awareness of the vital role the ocean plays in human life and of the equally vital role that human beings must play in the life of the ocean. The Year of the Ocean provides us with an extraordinary opportunity to learn more about the ocean's unique environment and to collaborate on protecting and preserving its invaluable resources.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim 1998 as the Year of the Ocean. I encourage the Governors of the States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and officials of other areas subject to the jurisdiction of the United States to participate in the observance of this year. I invite all Americans to take this opportunity to learn more about the ocean and its vast biodiversity and to become involved in keeping our coastal waters safe and clean.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-eighth day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William J. Clinton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "W".

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