

terminate the national emergency declared in Executive Order 13396 and revoke that order.

I am enclosing a copy of the Executive Order I have issued.

BARACK OBAMA

The White House,
September 14, 2016.

NOTE: The message referred to Executive Order 13739, which is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at the Our Ocean Conference at the Department of State September 15, 2016

Thank you, everybody. Have a seat. Well, thanks, John, for the introduction and the vision to create this conference.

I am obviously grateful to John Kerry for a whole host of reasons. But one thing that we all owe to John is his conviction that a healthier ocean and a healthier planet are about more than just our environment, they are also vital to our foreign policy and to our national security. And so he has elevated the profile of climate change, ocean protection to the point where we have conversations about this not just in the Oval Office, but in the Situation Room. And that is critical in helping us mobilize all of Government around the issues that all of you care so deeply about.

And it is no wonder that John feels this way. Our Secretary of State is the descendant of sea merchants and sailors. He's a Navy veteran himself. So, in a lot of ways, the ocean is in his blood. Many years ago, John's father passed to his son a sailor's love of the sea, its wonder and its beauty and its power. But John's dad also loved what he called "the sailor's environment": reading the weather and the waves and the different ways that one adapts to the ocean.

Of course, the problem that confronts all of us today is that we're asking far too much of our ocean in asking it to adapt to us.

And John's right that this is also personal for me. I grew up in Hawaii. The ocean's really nice there. *[Laughter]* And anybody who grows up on an island—certainly, those of us who grew up in Hawaii—learn to appreciate very early on its magic, how it inspires awe, and sometimes, if the waves are a little too big and you've gone a little too far out, how it inspires fear—*[laughter]*—and a healthy respect.

And the notion that the ocean I grew up with is not something that I can pass on to my kids and my grandkids is unacceptable. It's unimaginable. And so the investment that all of us together make here today is vital for our economy, it is vital for our foreign policy, it's vital for our national security, but it's also vital for our spirit. It's vital to who we are.

Dangerous changes in our climate, caused mainly by human activity; dead zones in our ocean, caused mainly by pollution that we create here on land; unsustainable fishing practices; unprotected marine areas, in which rare species and entire ecosystems are at risk—all those things are happening now. They've been happening for a long time. So, if we're going to leave our children with oceans like the ones that were left to us, then we're going to have to act. And we're going to have to act boldly.

And that's why the pledges and the partnerships from all of you at Our Oceans Conference are so vital. The more than \$4 billion that governments and philanthropies committed towards conservation at the first two gatherings, here in Washington and in Chile; the more than 2 million square miles of ocean we came together to protect over these last 2 years, and what you'll add to those totals this week through more than 100 new initiatives and contributions—all of that's going to make a difference. It's probably not enough, but it's a pretty good down payment. And more importantly, it's signaling the fact that just as we did with the Paris Agreement, increasingly, we are able to construct an international architecture that addresses some of these most vital environmental challenges in a serious way.

One of the reasons I ran for President was to make sure that America does our part to pro-

tect our planet for future generations. And I am very proud that America has become a global leader in the fight against climate change, from tripling the electricity we get from wind, multiplying solar electric power more than thirtyfold, to the Clean Power Plan that will limit the pollution we spew into our skies, to our role in rallying nearly 200 nations around the Paris Agreement and our work that continues to bring it into force this year.

We cannot truly protect our planet without protecting our ocean. I have not gone to as many countries as John has. Few humans have. [Laughter] And I've got to say, by the way, he never looks tired—[laughter]—which is impressive. But whenever I go abroad, including to many of the countries that are represented by heads of state and Foreign Ministers and other high-ranking officials here, I set aside time to talk to young people. And they rarely ask about poll numbers and political gaffes and whatever is flashing across the little trailer at the bottom of the newscast. They give you a sense of what's really important: what haunts them and what inspires them.

And on my very first overseas trip as President, I held a town hall in France, where a young woman asked me about sustainability. Then, a few days later in Turkey, the first question I got was about climate change. The same thing happened last year in Malaysia. Just last week, in Laos, another young person asked me what I'm doing to protect our lands and waters.

So the generation behind us, they understand what's at stake.

It's been said that we don't inherit the Earth from our parents so much as we borrow it from our children. They know that. Our children prove every day that they care deeply about this planet. Their right to inherit a healthy planet is a sacred responsibility for all of us. And how we treat our oceans is a big part of that burden.

Now, at an Oceans Conference, with a bunch of experts, I assume I don't have to tell you that oceans are pretty important. [Laughter] The—you guys know this. But for those of you who are listening outside the hall, it is the dominant feature of our planet. It's why we

share a blue marble, as opposed to a brown or gray one. Our oceans feed us, protect us, regulate our climate, our weather, anchors industries from transportation to tourism to trade of all kind. The health of our planet's oceans determine in large part the health of our own bodies and the health of our economies. And while it is our oceans' contours that shape our coastlines, it is what we decide and do here that will shape our oceans' future.

And that's why my administration has protected more waters than any in history. We established the first-ever national oceans policy, which brings together government leaders with fishermen and boaters and researchers and everyday citizens and ensures the decisions we make and resources we use are grounded in science. We cracked down on illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing. We've created and expanded marine sanctuaries. And, as John mentioned, just last month we created the largest marine protected area on Earth. It is now twice the size of Texas, home to more than 7,000 species, including some that are endangered and threatened.

Our conservation efforts and our obligations to combat climate change, in fact, go hand in hand because marine areas already have enough to worry about, with overfishing and ship traffic and pollution, like those patches of plastic waste floating in the Pacific and the invisible pollutants like carbon that we cannot see. The more of those threats that we eliminate through conservation, the more resilient those ecosystems will be to the consequences of climate change.

So today we're building on this approach by establishing the first marine national monument in the Atlantic. We're protecting fragile ecosystems off the coast of New England, including pristine underseas canyons and seamounts. We're helping make the oceans more resilient to climate change. And this will help fishermen better understand the changes that are taking place that will affect their livelihood, and we're doing it in a way that respects the fishing industry's unique role in New England's economy and history.

So I'm proud of what America's done, that we are doing our share. But it's no secret that we're all going to have to do a lot more, and we're going to have to do it fast. And that's why it's so critical that the tradition of this conference continues after John and I leave this office. That the EU so quickly raised its hand to host next year's Our Ocean Conference is a testament to the fact that these challenges demand collective action and deserve the world's attention. It's a recognition of the reality that the ocean's health is our health, and we've got our work cut out for us.

The ocean acts like a sponge, absorbing most of the extra heat caused by our greenhouse gases. And it's been growing warmer and more acidic for decades now. In other words, the very chemistry of our oceans is changing, which is risking marine life and rippling all the way up the food chain. As oceans warm and sea levels rise, our lives and livelihoods are likely to change too: homes becoming uninhabitable, floods devastating communities, crops withering, industries like fishing disrupted. Cultures that have coexisted with the ocean for millennia are forced to flee to higher ground.

This is not a far-off problem; it's happening as we speak. It's happening here in America. By the end of this century, nearly one in five homes in John's hometown of Boston could be at risk; the same for a quarter of the homes of my childhood home of Hawaii.

I spent my childhood on those shores, looking out over the endless ocean, and was humbled by it. And I know that, in a contest between us and the oceans, eventually, the oceans will win one way or the other. So it's us that has to adapt, not the other way around.

Our oceans' very vastness, however, presents another threat: We don't touch the depths of the ocean in the course of our day. We don't see it—we don't see the effects of climate change every single day with our own eyes. We just see this great, big ocean; we assume that it's too big to be wrecked. It's easy, as a consequence, to dismiss the urgency of the challenge. But part of what I hope this conference is about is recognizing that we cannot shy away

from problems because they're too big. We cannot pretend that the problems don't exist because we're going to have to make some changes in our own ways of doing business in order to confront them. Instead, we have to come together, and we've got to find solutions. And we can.

One of the most—well, let me close with two stories, I'm going a little off script. One of the most encouraging things that I heard this year, a year full of tough news in various places around the world, is the news that many of you heard that the hole in the ozone was actually shrinking. Now, for those of us of a certain age, you'll remember, that was quite worrisome. We weren't really sure what the ozone layer did, but the idea that there was a big hole in it was a problem. [Laughter] And I remember as we slowly began to phase out aerosol deodorant cans, which were kind of noxious anyway, because when you sprayed them, you couldn't breathe, so you knew they weren't really that good for you—[laughter]—it felt like a nice thing to do. But I don't know about you. I was not convinced that this was actually going to solve the problem and that whatever it is that was going to happen to these ozone layers up there, that it was just going to keep on getting worse.

And lo and behold, just this year, we get reports back that actually that hole that we had blew in the ozone layer began to shrink. And by the way, we figured out other ways to produce deodorant. [Laughter] I say that because it gives you a sense of human ingenuity. When we make up our minds to do something, we can do it.

The same was true with acid rain in much of North America. People were skeptical, thought it was going to be too expensive to try to figure this out. We figured it out. Nobody talks about it anymore. My kids don't know what acid rain is. That has to be a cause for optimism.

These are problems we can solve. And part of the power of conferences like this is to insist on human agency, to not give in to hopelessness, or to suggest that somehow this—these problems are just too big. We can solve them.

We just have to have the will to pursue collective action.

And the second thing I'll just end with is the trip we took to Midway, which is right in the center of this new marine preserve. And as many of you know, this is a historic monument not only for conservation reasons, but because this was a major turning point for the war during World War II. At its peak, it—there were about 5,000, 6,000 troops on this island. Now there are exactly 45 people and 3 million birds, I think it is. [*Laughter*] The population—the bird population had shrunk drastically, and then we figured out that if you eliminated some of the people and the rats that the people had brought to the island, the birds would actually do pretty good. And they are thriving.

And so we drove around and went to a beach in which there were six or seven turtles on—lying in the sun. And we have sea turtles down in Hawaii. In fact, they nest up around Midway and then come down to Oahu and the beaches where I used to bodysurf. But we'd never see them on the beach. But up in Midway, they didn't have people chasing them away, and so they felt pretty comfortable. It turns out, they like sun when we're not overcrowding the beaches.

And then we went out snorkeling. And the coral was purple and it was orange, and there were monk seals sunning themselves on some rocks. And one of them dove in, which made one of the people on my team, who I shall not name, pretty nervous. [*Laughter*] And we spent the afternoon looking at this incredible variety of fish. And we had to leave before 5:30 because that's when the birds start coming

back, and then you're plain stuck, because you can't fight the birds.

And that, too, was a great cause for optimism because it reminded us that nature is actually resilient if we take care to just stop actively destroying it; that it will come back. And certainly the oceans can come back if we take the steps that are necessary. I saw it. It was right there, evidence of the incredible power of nature to rebuild itself if we're not consistently trying to tear it down.

So I wanted to leave you with those two images just to remind us that what you are doing here is important and that we can be successful. It is going to require work. It is going to require vision. It will require occasional sacrifice. But as long as we make sure that the sacrifices are not borne just by a few people, but are spread broadly and fairly and justly, then my hope is, is that my children and your children and our grandchildren, they'll be able to take that trip to Midway at some point, and they'll be able to watch seals swimming through water. And they'll thank us for it. And we will have done what is probably the most important thing that you can do on this planet Earth, and that is, make sure that you're making it just a little bit better for future generations.

Thank you very much, everybody.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:14 a.m. in the Loy Henderson International Conference Room. In his remarks, he referred to Proclamation 9496, signed September 15, which established the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts Marine National Monument and is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Statement on the Death of Former Governor Rose Mofford of Arizona *September 15, 2016*

Michelle and I were saddened to learn of the passing of former Arizona Governor Rose Mofford. Rose was once fired from a government position because her boss “felt it was better to have a man in that particular job.” But she was undeterred, eventually rising to become secretary of state and then Governor, the first woman in Arizona to hold that office. In

all, her career in public service spanned more than a half-century. It's a story of tireless service, steady leadership, and a trailblazing spirit that inspired not only a State where three more women would eventually follow her in office, but an entire country. Rose showed us all what to do when somebody says we're not good enough because of who we are: Don't believe