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Date: Monday, November 16, 2009

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Viewers please note: This Internet newscast is a verbatim transcript of our evening television newscast. Where speakers use Kriol, we attempt to faithfully reproduce the quotes using a standard spelling system.

ENVIRONMENT

OCEANA makes waves and opens office in Belize



There are environmental groups that lobby for protection of national parks, animal life and even the reef. These Non Governmental Organizations often lack funds and survive on a shoe string budget. But OCEANA is not the run of the mill N.G.O. It was founded in 2001, and has since opened offices in Europe and the Americas. It has invested in costly multi- million dollar projects all to save the ocean. In 2006, Oceana spent nearly eight point four million U.S. dollars on direct program expenses. And in addition to marine scientists, Oceana has also taken on lawyers and economists on its payroll. This wave making N.G.O. is a worldwide force to reckon with and this morning Oceana opened an office on Regent Street in Belize City.

Jose Sanchez, Reporting

OCEANA, the largest international organization to focus on ocean conservation, has arrived in Belize. Its also has offices elsewhere in the Americas and Europe and this afternoon the well funded N.G.O. established its presence in the Jewel. World Renowned Fisheries Guru and Oceana Board member, Doctor Daniel Pauly, will review and approve the science that will push the conservation effort.

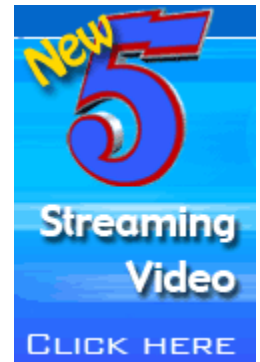
Daniel Pauly, Board Member, OCEANA

"They bring up issues at the level of the entire organization, which are more regional or local in nature, harmonize them with the goal of the organization and push them with the support of the entire organization."

The Oceana board includes Hollywood actor Ted Danson who sent a video message vouching for the woman who will shepherd the mission in Belize.

Ted Danson, OCEANA

"We are led in Belize by Miss Audrey Matura Shepherd. She is, as many of you know, a force of and for nature. Oceana is very lucky to have you represent us. Miss Matura Shepherd's goal is to work with



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Erica Wills



all of you to increase awareness about our ocean issues here in Belize and to help ensure that all of you are part of the decision making process on how to best preserve your invaluable marine resources.”

Audrey Matura Shepherd, Vice President, Oceana Belize

“We’ll come up a list and decide what are the practical goals that we can achieve; short term medium term and long term.”

Jose Sanchez

“Will you be looking at legislation? Where will the work be seen?”

Audrey Matura Shepherd

“Okay, the key thing for us is that we need to find the different issues, the information or evidence that supports it and then push for policy and legislative change. An advocacy group deals strictly with changing the way things are done through law but some can be done through policy. So that is exactly what we do; we don’t stay quiet about things. We go and we lobby even though quietly, we may lobby the government, whatever decision maker, whatever other entities that may see it as a problem so that we come together as a group.”

Daniel Pauly

“Your reef are behaving or even though they are big, you have a barrier reef, the trend observed are the same as in other parts of the Caribbean and in fact in other parts of the world. The reef are badly affected by all the things that we do that we shouldn’t do. The water quality is a part of it but also fishing. Fishing has very strong effect on reefs, the removal of predators and/or herbivores. Removing fish from the reef has the effect that algae grows on them and then they don’t grow themselves. So the policy implication of these various things, if you want to protect your reef you have to do certain measures to contain the fisheries either overall or locally, through setting up marine protected areas.”

Ted Danson

“The world’s oceans are in trouble. Science tells us that we are headed towards the brink of an irreversible collapse unless we can make the needed changes in how we manage our oceans. But the positive energy and support here today makes me believe that this can happen in Belize and throughout the world.”

The ribbon was cut by the Oak Foundation and representatives of the government. Oceana has the support of other NGO’s and promises of support from the politicians. Reporting for News Five, Jose Sanchez.

With the help of nearly three hundred thousand Wave Makers or sponsors worldwide, Oceana believes it has begun to turn the tide on ocean destruction. To find out more you can visit the website at www.oceana.org.

