



For Immediate Release

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Decision time for world's largest marine reserve proposals in Antarctica's Southern Ocean *"Opportunity for global leadership and lasting legacy"*

BREMERHAVEN, Germany, July 11, 2013 – As representatives of the 25 Members¹ of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) started their meeting in Bremerhaven, Germany today the Antarctic Ocean Alliance called it a landmark opportunity for ocean protection. CCAMLR Members will decide the fate of two key proposals for Antarctic marine protection, either of which would be the world's largest Marine Protected Area (MPA) if designated.

The special CCAMLR meeting, from 11 – 16 July, has been called because the Commission could not agree on the two proposals, years in the making, at its meeting last October. All CCAMLR decisions require consensus of the Members. The CCAMLR Scientific Committee will meet from 11 – 13 and CCAMLR Delegates, or decision makers, will meet from 15 – 16 July to decide the outcome of the two proposals.

The United States and New Zealand propose that CCAMLR designate a Ross Sea MPA of 2.3 million square kilometres including a "fully protected" area of 1.6 million square kilometres. The Ross Sea is often referred to as "the last ocean" because it is one of the only large ocean habitats that is still relatively intact and home to a unique array of marine wildlife. A second proposal from Australia, France and the European Union would designate seven marine protected areas in East Antarctica covering about 1.63 million square kilometres.

"More than 1 million people around the world have joined the global call for large-scale marine protection in Antarctica over the last two years," said Steve Campbell, Director, Antarctic Ocean Alliance. "If CCAMLR Members decide in favour of the Ross Sea and East Antarctic proposals, that will leave a lasting legacy of immense value to the world."

The Southern Ocean is home to more than 10,000 unique species including most of the world's penguins, whales, seabirds, colossal squid and the commercially targeted Antarctic toothfish. The region is critical for scientific research, both for studying how intact marine ecosystems function and for determining the impacts of global climate change.

The Antarctic Ocean Alliance partners will attend the CCAMLR meeting in Bremerhaven working to ensure CCAMLR delegates to step up to the challenge and designate the Ross Sea and East Antarctic proposals.

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¹ CCAMLR Members includes 24 countries and the European Union.

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Note: High-resolution video b-roll and photos of Antarctica's Southern Ocean and interviews with AOA partner experts in English and German are available at:

http://www.reru.com.au/Mediafiles/Antarctic_Ocean_Alliance/Videos/.

Information:

www.antarcticocean.org, www.pewenvironment.org/SouthernOcean

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Antarctic-Ocean-Alliance/233933866663875?fref=ts>

Twitter: #Antarcticocean, #JointheWatch

About: The Antarctic Ocean Alliance is a coalition of high-profile individuals such as actor Leonardo DiCaprio, actor and UN Biodiversity Ambassador Edward Norton, oceanographer Dr. Sylvia Earle and entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson as well as 30 leading environmental groups. These include The Pew Charitable Trusts, Greenpeace, WWF, Humane Society International, the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC), the Blue Marine Foundation (UK), Mission Blue (US), Oceans 5 (US), Deep Wave (Germany), The Last Ocean, the Korean Federation for Environmental Movement (KFEM), Greenovation Hub (China), Forest & Bird (NZ), ECO (NZ), and associate partners the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Oceana, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) and Ocean Planet (Australia).