



# PRESS KIT

## MAY 2022

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Tetiaroa, French Polynesia** - [Blue Climate Initiative](#) announced that its inaugural **Blue Climate Summit** for accelerating ocean-related solutions to climate change will take place in French Polynesia on May 14-20, 2022. This high-profile, global event will galvanize task forces, launch major announcements, present impact investment opportunities, and provide Pacific Islanders with an international forum to spearhead action on ocean and climate issues. The program will focus on accelerating collaborative projects that target six missions: climate change mitigation, ocean protection, CO2 removal, healthy blue communities, sustainable tourism, and improved ocean understanding.

The Summit will be co-convened by H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco, President Edouard Fritch of French Polynesia, Richard Bailey, Dr. Sylvia Earle, Marc Benioff, Nainoa Thompson, Laura Turner Seydel, and Dr. Andrew Forrest. Over 250 scientists, innovators, policymakers, business and financial experts, community leaders, and environmental and youth activists will be brought together to work on ocean and climate strategies. The event is an endorsed action of the [United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#). Co-hosts and sponsors include the Government of French Polynesia, Atitia Center, Fare Natura, Centre de Recherches Insulaires et Observatoire de l'Environnement (CRIOBE), University of California Gump Research Station, Tetiaroa Society, The Brando, Pacific Beachcomber, Ponant, Air Tahiti Nui, the Forsythia Foundation, and others to be announced.

The Summit will commence at the Presidential Palace on Sunday, May 15, with a welcome address from President Fritch followed by remarks from other dignitaries and the presentation of \$1 million to winners of the Blue Climate Initiative's [Ocean Innovation Prize](#). On Wednesday, May 18, Tahiti's voyaging canoe Fa'afaite will join Hokulea at Taputapuatea for a convening of the Pwo navigators, including Nainoa Thompson, and the launch of an initiative about the protection of the ocean. The Summit will conclude on Friday, May 20, with a community welcome at the Arue town hall, an exhibition of Tahiti environmental organizations and school programs on the Papeete waterfront, and a public ocean benefit concert at Place To'ata. The concert will bring together international and local artists to raise public awareness and inspire action for ocean and climate. **Program highlights can be found [here](#).**

The Summit is a program of the Blue Climate Initiative, which was born in French Polynesia and is now a flagship program of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. Other major Blue Climate Initiative programs over the past year include a \$1 million Ocean Innovation Prize with 236 applicants from over 80 countries, a global Community Awards program celebrating community action on climate change, and publication of the book *Transformational Opportunities for People, Ocean & Planet* prepared with the assistance of over 60 of the world's top experts on ocean and climate issues.

### Monsieur Edouard Fritch, President of French Polynesia:

*'o te miti nei ra te marae mo'a roa  
'e te hanahana o teie nei ao  
(ē) vāhi hāhano, (ē) vāhi ra'a  
(ē) fa'atupura'a manava hirahira*

*The Ocean is the Marae, the ultimate sanctuary,  
Splendor of the world  
Symbol of mystery, symbol of respect  
for it awakens the consciousness of space.*

*In the Polynesian tradition, the ocean is not an obstacle. It is a path, a road, a space where one lives, where one fishes and where one travels.*

*Historically, global economic development has been based on the exploitation of resources, often to the detriment of natural cycles and ecosystems. Today, as the climate crisis looms, our challenge for the future is to establish a robust balance between human development and the preservation of Nature.*

*For this, French Polynesia is carving an innovative path, avoiding the pitfalls leading to the irreversible degradation of its two pillars: "moana" (the ocean) and "fenua" (the land). These pillars constitute the framework of our Common Heritage, bringing together all spaces, resources and natural environments, sites and landscapes, air, water and soil quality, animal and plant species, ecosystems and the services they provide, diversity, and the biological balance which they both thrive from and contribute to.*

*Why is it important to organize the Blue Climate Summit in French Polynesia? Because there is Tainui atea, the largest managed marine area in the world; a sanctuary of 5 million km<sup>2</sup> that protects all species of marine mammals, all species of sharks, all species of sea turtles and all species of Mobula and in which fishing is certified environmentally friendly; because there is the Biosphere Reserve of the Fakarava Municipality which, with its 19,000 km<sup>2</sup> is the largest biosphere reserve in the French network; and because, above all, the people of the largest ocean continent carry a message to offer to the World.*

*On the occasion of the Blue Climate Summit, I invite the world to come to French Polynesia, to Listen to us, and above all, to Hear us.*

### Short Version

French Polynesia is carving an innovative path, avoiding the pitfalls leading to the irreversible degradation of its two pillars: "moana" (the ocean) and "fenua" (the land). Framework of our Common Heritage, these pillars bring together all spaces, resources and natural environments, sites and landscapes, air, water and soils, animal and plant species, ecosystems and their services, diversity, and the biological balance which they both thrive from and contribute to. With the largest managed marine area in the world; its 19,000 km<sup>2</sup> Biosphere Reserve, our people of the largest ocean continent carry a message to offer to the World. On the occasion of the Blue Climate Summit, I invite the world to come to French Polynesia, to Listen to us, and above all, to Hear us.

### **Hinano Murphy, Cultural Director of Tetiaroa Society:**

*The Blue Climate Initiative is like a va'a, a polynesia canoe, that rides the winds and currents of modernity. She tours the planet carrying a strong message from the people of Te Moana Nui a Hiva De ce fare Pora. First of all, I would like to pay tribute to the resilience of all the peoples of the Pacific, to recognize this strength they carry within, their ancestral wisdom and the intelligence of our Pacific navigators, recognized at last.*

*Over the course of their journeys, our sailors have been able to weave in their sails and ropes all this knowledge that today constitutes this strong and deep bond that unites us to our Gods, our ancestors and our sacred spaces MOANA-FENUA-REVA.*

*Like our pacific cousins from Te Moana nui to HIVA, we have, often unwillingly, contributed to the prestige of the great nations that govern us. Let's not rewrite the past, but let us confront what "may be", in order to heal our future. Thus we, the people of Te Moana nui a Hiva, must now all together step forward and find sustainable solutions rooted in our deep values, to secure the health of our blue planet.*

*E E Taaroa e  
A tono mai na to marama  
I ni'a I teie nei Moana  
E Faaora te fenua e ha he....*

### **Stan Rowland, Blue Climate Initiative CEO:**

*There has never been a more important or urgent time for the world to come together to address ocean protection and climate change. With tipping points rapidly approaching, we can't afford to wait.*

*The Blue Climate Summit is focused on action, not talk. Rather than talking about problems, we are focusing on solutions.*

*There is no better place to hold an ocean summit than in the heart of the Pacific: French Polynesia. Pacific islanders have had some of the smallest impact on climate change but are among those who will suffer the most. It's time to listen to what they have to say, and for all of us to work together on the greatest environmental challenge humankind has faced: climate change.*

---

### **About Blue Climate Initiative:**

Blue Climate Initiative, sponsored by the nonprofit organization Tetiaroa Society, engages scientists, innovators, community leaders, investors, and global experts through evidence-based action. It enables innovation, research, and collaboration to combat climate change while protecting our oceans and unlocking solutions to urgent challenges like renewable energy, sustainable food supplies, improved human health, flourishing biodiversity, stewardship of the ocean's resources, and vibrant ocean economies.

### **Contact**

Julie Mai  
Program Officer, Communications  
[julie@blueclimateinitiative.org](mailto:julie@blueclimateinitiative.org)  
[Blueclimateinitiative.org](http://Blueclimateinitiative.org)

The Blue Climate Summit will be held May 14 - 20, 2022 in French Polynesia. The Summit will accelerate ocean-related solutions to climate change, match investors with ocean and climate needs and opportunities, galvanize task forces and spur major announcements.

Co-Conveners include H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco, President Edouard Fritch of French Polynesia, Richard Bailey, Marc Benioff, Dr. Sylvia Earle, Nainoa Thompson, Laura Turner Seydel, and Andrew Forrest.

This important global event will provide a unique opportunity for 250+ carefully selected leaders and doers to come together to accelerate solutions to some of the most critical challenges facing humankind.

The Blue Climate Summit is an endorsed action of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and is co-hosted with the Government of French Polynesia.

## SUMMIT OBJECTIVE AND MISSIONS

The overarching objective of the Blue Climate Summit is to accelerate ocean-related solutions to climate change. Missions will provide the Summit's structure, and Projects will be the focus of action, collaboration, and commitments.

### MISSIONS

1. **Ocean Carbon Dioxide Removal:** Develop safe and equitable strategies for reaching net-zero and restoring a healthy climate
2. **Blue Climate Change Mitigation:** Avoid carbon emissions through ocean-related innovations
3. **Ocean Protection:** Scale up conservation efforts that benefit both nature and people
4. **Healthy Blue Communities:** Strengthen networks of coastal and island communities in advancing ocean-based solutions, accelerating the role of the ocean as a solution for communities and communities as stewards for the ocean
5. **Sustainable Blue Tourism:** Support tourism programs in island and coastal destinations, contributing to climate change mitigation, poverty alleviation, and the protection of natural & cultural heritage
6. **Ocean Understanding:** Advance inclusive understanding of the ocean to support our missions of climate mitigation and ocean protection

## SUMMIT PROGRAM

Summit discussions will be held primarily on the *Paul Gauguin*, with a number of events also held on shore in the course of the week. The tentative daily itinerary is as follows:

- **Day 1: Welcome:** Reception aboard the ship the Paul Gauguin.
- **Day 2: The Vast Ocean-Climate Challenge:** A welcome at the Presidential Palace will lay down the call for action, after which participants will immerse themselves in the six blue-climate missions.
- **Day 2 and 3: Project Acceleration:** Diverse projects will undergo multiple rounds of iteration and support, benefiting from peer expertise and links to potential funders. Projects are as varied as blue carbon exchange, wave power, seaweed farming, reef restoration, and a deep sea mining watch.
- **Day 4 and 5: Scaling for Impact:** Together, the projects must seed a wider transformation. Participants will be challenged to address dependencies, identify synergies, and tackle underlying constraints such as finance, data, law, and coordination. The Summit will join a historic convening of Polynesian voyagers who will make a Declaration of the Rights of the Ocean.
- **Day 6: A Message to the World:** The Summit concludes with an exhibition of local projects and ocean aid concert on the Tahiti waterfront, bringing together international and local artists to raise public awareness and inspire action for ocean and climate.

Participants staying at The Brando will be able to engage in on-site discussions on Tetiaroa and participate in programs on the *Paul Gauguin* or on Moorea or Raiatea at their option.



## WHY A SUMMIT IN FRENCH POLYNESIA?

Pacific Islands have contributed minimally to climate change, but may be among the most vulnerable to its effects. Mobilizing the world to protect the ocean while sustainably tapping its potential requires locally-led blue climate action. French Polynesia, in the heart of the Pacific, provides a powerful forum for a global convening on the ocean/climate nexus.

## PRINCIPLES & SPIRIT OF THE EVENT

- **Locally situated, globally relevant** - celebrating local expertise alongside a global change agenda
- **Impact-focused** - catalyzing and scaling tangible action with measurable outcomes
- **Dynamic and interactive** - tapping the expertise, ideas and capacities of all participants
- **Creative, generative and emergent** - exploring new ideas and collaborations
- **Inclusive and cross-sectoral** - leveraging diversity for holistic solutions

## THE OCEAN CONCERT

An ocean benefit concert will be held on the Tahiti waterfront on the last day of the Summit, May 20, 2022. The event will bring together international and local artists to raise awareness and inspire action on ocean and climate issues. Between performances, local and world leaders will speak out on the ocean and climate crisis. There has never been a more important time for the world to come together around the threats facing our oceans and our planet.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **Carbon Offset:** This will be a climate-positive, carbon net-negative event, with all travel and event carbon footprint being compensated multiple times through both emissions reduction and carbon sequestration programs focused on the Pacific islands.
- **COVID-19 Protocols:** We are hopeful that by May Covid will largely be under control throughout the world. Nevertheless, everyone on the *Paul Gauguin* (participants and crew) will be required to provide proof of vaccination prior to boarding. Also, in addition to government-mandated testing before and after arrival in French Polynesia, everyone will be tested prior to boarding and during the Summit.

## SPONSORS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Tetiaroa Society, a nonprofit organization which hosts scientific research and carries out conservation and education programs on the island of Tetiaroa in French Polynesia, is the fiscal sponsor of the Blue Climate Initiative. Summit partners, sponsors and co-hosts are featured below. Additional sponsors are welcome.

For additional information about the Blue Climate Initiative visit [blueclimateinitiative.org](https://blueclimateinitiative.org) or contact Stan Rowland ([stan@blueclimateinitiative.org](mailto:stan@blueclimateinitiative.org)), Victoria Rowland ([victoria@blueclimateinitiative.org](mailto:victoria@blueclimateinitiative.org)) or Jeanne Everett ([jeanne@blueclimateinitiative.org](mailto:jeanne@blueclimateinitiative.org)).



From May 14 - 20, 2022, French Polynesia will host the [Blue Climate Summit](#). Over 250 carefully selected leaders and doers will come together for this important event to accelerate ocean-related solutions to climate change, galvanize task forces, launch major announcements, and match investors with ocean and climate needs.

The Summit is an endorsed action of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and is co-hosted with the Government of French Polynesia. Co-Conveners include H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco, President Edouard Fritch of French Polynesia, Richard Bailey, Marc Benioff, Dr. Sylvia Earle, Andrew Forrest, Nainoa Thompson, and Laura Turner Seydel.

## A CLIMATE-POSITIVE EVENT

The [Blue Climate Initiative](#) is committed to making the Summit a climate-positive, net-zero emissions event. Direct emissions reduction, carbon removal, and indirect emission avoidance are all vital forms of net-zero strategies (see the [Oxford principles for net zero aligned carbon offsetting](#) and [Decoding ADEME's opinion on carbon neutrality](#)). We have incorporated all types of offsets into our program. We also believe that travel-related carbon offsets should support climate action in the destination community itself, wherever possible. While working closely with Summit service providers to minimize their footprint through sourcing from most sustainable available channels and means of transport, we offset the Summit's carbon footprint by investing in both a carbon removal/sequestration project in the tropical IndoPacific and an emission reduction project in French Polynesia.

We estimate the footprint of the Summit, including participant travel, at roughly 900 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. While participants are encouraged to offset their own travel (e.g., through airline carbon credit programs), and the Summit program itself will of course stimulate and accelerate substantial new climate action, we are also investing over \$200,000 directly in projects that offset at least 1,800 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> (i.e., at least twice the Summit's carbon footprint).

As described more fully below, our carbon removal/sequestration project is a multiple year investment in the development and restoration of two hectares of mangrove forest in Malaysian Borneo; which also offers significant co-benefits for biodiversity and local livelihoods. Our emissions reduction program advances the decarbonization of Moorea (the Summit's host island in French Polynesia) through the installation of rooftop solar panels at a local community center and research station. Through this investment, we also support educational, scientific, and cultural programs linked to island sustainability and climate resilience.

## CARBON REMOVAL/SEQUESTRATION: NATURE-BASED SOLUTION PROJECT

Two hectares of mangrove forest will be restored and monitored in a nationally protected area of Malaysian Borneo by [Tēnaka](#), a French social business that offers companies the opportunity to contribute to net-zero strategies by investing in nature-based solutions such as the restoration of ocean habitats.

- 5,000 seedlings will be planted; an average of 2,500 marine and terrestrial species will be preserved as the forest grows.
- It will take three years for the forest to sequester approximately 870 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, equivalent to the full carbon footprint of the Summit. Monitoring and reporting on the site will be extended for a period of at least 10 years however.

Mangrove forests account for 14% of carbon sequestration by the global Ocean. Mangroves in the Indo-Pacific region are especially efficient, making them among the planet's best carbon removal mechanisms. Not only do mangrove forests absorb carbon from the atmosphere. They also "lock-up" carbon deep into oceanic soils, thanks to their vast root networks. As they act like nurseries for biodiversity, they also support a teeming ecosystem that plays an active role in CO<sub>2</sub> absorption. An added benefit is their role as a buffer against sea-level rise and climatic disasters.





### EMISSIONS REDUCTION: RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECT

We will install approximately 360 m<sup>2</sup> of rooftop solar panels on Moorea, replacing electricity currently provided by the island's diesel-fired power station. In addition to helping decarbonize Moorea - one of French Polynesia's primary tourist destinations - the investment supports programs at the [Atitia Center](#), operated by the Association Te Pu Atitia—a local community-based organization dedicated to documenting and preserving Polynesia's biocultural heritage—and at the [University of California Gump South Pacific Research Station](#), which carries out globally-significant ecological research on coral reefs.

- 6,220 WP of rooftop solar will be installed in three arrays that will cover daytime power needs of the neighboring sites.
- 884 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> will be avoided over the first 10 years of the equipment's usage.



### SPONSORS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Tetiaroa Society, a US 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization which hosts scientific research and carries out conservation and education programs on the island of Tetiaroa in French Polynesia, is the fiscal sponsor of the Blue Climate Initiative. For additional information about the Blue Climate Initiative, visit [blueclimateinitiative.org](http://blueclimateinitiative.org) or contact Stan Rowland ([stan@blueclimateinitiative.org](mailto:stan@blueclimateinitiative.org)), Victoria Rowland ([victoria@blueclimateinitiative.org](mailto:victoria@blueclimateinitiative.org)) or Jeanne Everett ([jeanne@blueclimateinitiative.org](mailto:jeanne@blueclimateinitiative.org)).





# THE BLUE CLIMATE INITIATIVE

## A Global Program Born in French Polynesia



### People

Building resilient, thriving and equitable communities



The Blue Climate Initiative (BCI) – a flagship program of the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development – engages scientists, innovators, investors, community members and global leaders, harnessing research and innovation to accelerate ocean-related strategies to combat climate change.

### Ocean

Understanding and protecting the ocean



In doing so, BCI unlocks solutions to urgent global challenges including improved human health, sustainable food supplies, renewable energy, flourishing biodiversity, protection of genetic resources, and vibrant ocean economies. Guided by the Sustainable Development Goals, the BCI advances collective attention, investment and innovative action for People, Ocean, and Planet.

### Planet

Restoring a healthy climate



# Action Priorities

The Blue Climate Initiative advances concrete action towards its mission in several ways

## ***Inspiring Action on Transformational Opportunities***

In 2021, the BCI published a book with supporting background papers, Transformational Opportunities for People, Ocean and Planet, featuring input from 60+ global ocean experts. The BCI works through its network and communication activities to promote collaborative action around these 40+ evidence-based solutions.

## ***Global Community Awards Program***

BCI sponsored a global challenge entitled “Community Awards for Ocean-Related Climate Solutions” to support grassroots programs around the world. BCI granted awards and now supports community programs in Tanzania, the Philippines, Palau, Peru, French Polynesia, and the Bahamas.

## ***Strategic Initiatives***

The BCI is collaborating across its network to translate ideas into action for selected Transformational Opportunities -- mobilizing attention, investment and implementation for tangible outcomes on the ground. This includes opportunities such as the Healthy Blue Communities Network and Deep Sea Mining Watch, among others. The BCI will maintain a pipeline of Strategic Initiatives and share tangible progress to date at the Blue Climate Summit.

## ***\$1 Million Ocean Innovation Prize***

In June 2021, BCI launched this prize in collaboration with the UN's Ocean Decade team and Sustainable Ocean Alliance. Its purpose is to inspire, fund and support innovations that mitigate climate change through ocean-related strategies.

BCI presented 21 semi-finalists at COP26 in November 2021. Alongside their cash award, and their announcement on February 9, 2022 at the One Ocean Summit in France, the three winners will receive visibility, matchmaking and mentoring and will be featured at the Blue Climate Summit in French Polynesia May 14-20, 2022.

## ***BCI Climate Change Education Program in French Polynesia***

In August 2021, the French Polynesia Minister of Education approved a BCI-sponsored climate change program for local schools. The curriculum was developed by a committee of Polynesian educators and community leaders and combines traditional knowledge and scientific understanding. To encourage creative thinking about solutions to climate change, the program includes a school competition offering prizes for the best community climate change mitigation programs. The program will be further developed in coordination with school administrators. Winners will be celebrated at the Blue Climate Summit.

## ***Blue Climate Summit***

Co-Convened by H.S.H. Prince Albert II of Monaco, President Edouard Fritch of French Polynesia, Richard Bailey, Marc Benioff, Dr. Sylvia Earle, Nainoa Thompson, Laura Turner Seydel, Andrew Forrest, and other ocean champions to be announced, the Blue Climate Summit in French Polynesia will be a key event on the global calendar. The Summit will help implement and accelerate programs and initiatives, match investors with opportunities, galvanize task forces, and spur major announcements. Its focus is on impact. The 250+-person, carbon net-negative event will take place from May 14-20, 2022.

# Transformational Opportunities for People, Ocean, and Planet

In 2020 BCI asked, “What would we do with a billion dollars to direct toward the most innovative, impactful solutions to climate change, using the power of the ocean?”

BCI answered that question in a book published in 2021, Transformational Opportunities for People, Ocean and Planet, which reflects the input of over 60 world-renowned ocean experts working in six focus areas: Health and Well-Being, Food and Nutrition, Marine Energy & Technology, Mineral & Genetic Resources, Biodiversity and Nature-Based Solutions, and Sustainable Tourism.

Together these experts identified over 40 Transformational Opportunities that can sustain Earth’s people, steward our ocean, and heal our planet. The book and underlying papers are available for download on the BCI website.

These Transformational Opportunities form the evidence base for BCI’s collaborative actions.





### Sponsors and Contact Information

Tetiaroa Society, which hosts scientific research and carries out conservation and education programs on the island of Tetiaroa in French Polynesia, is the fiscal sponsor of the Blue Climate Initiative. Other main sponsors include The Brando and Pacific Beachcomber SC.

For additional information about the Blue Climate Initiative, visit [www.blueclimateinitiative.org](http://www.blueclimateinitiative.org) or contact Stan Rowland ([stan@blueclimateinitiative.org](mailto:stan@blueclimateinitiative.org)), Victoria Rowland ([victoria@blueclimateinitiative.org](mailto:victoria@blueclimateinitiative.org)), or Jeanne Everett ([jeanne@blueclimateinitiative.org](mailto:jeanne@blueclimateinitiative.org)).



PACIFIC BEACHCOMBER