



MEDIA CONTACT: SOA@globalstrategygroup.com

Sustainable Ocean Alliance Announces Expansion of Board of Directors

Newest board members include leaders from the private and philanthropic sectors enhancing SOA's mission to restore our ocean in our lifetime

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – (April 12, 2023) Today, [Sustainable Ocean Alliance](#) (SOA), the world's largest network of young ocean leaders and home to the world's first Ocean Solutions Accelerator program, announced the expansion of its Board of Directors. The board includes leaders from institutions like Salesforce, YouTube and For Good Ventures, utilizing their diverse backgrounds to support the organization's work to solve the greatest challenges facing our ocean.

"Our board includes unmatched talent and knowledge as we work to cultivate ocean restoration solutions," **said board member Daniela Fernandez, founder and CEO of SOA.** "These accomplished individuals bring a breadth of experience and knowledge to the SOA Board in the sustainable technology, entrepreneurship, innovation, and social investment space. As we seek to cultivate young leaders and create a community dedicated to ocean restoration, we are proud to have such distinguished changemakers on our board."

About SOA Board of Directors:

- **Bob O'Connor, Corporate Partner, Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati.** O'Connor's global practice focuses on the representation of high-growth enterprises, with an emphasis on those innovating in the energy, infrastructure, mobility, consumer products, and sustainability sectors, as well as the representation of venture capital and private equity firms, corporate venture groups, family offices and impact investors that finance them. Bob is credited with having founded the firm's energy and infrastructure practice in 2003 and co-leads the firm's industry initiative today.
- **Eric Brisson, Co-Founder, Resonance Philanthropies.** Brisson is proud of his role as an impact investor watching the businesses, nonprofits and other NGOs he seeks to invest in grow and evolve. Transitioning from a highly successful career in the tech industry, Eric is laser-focused on supporting and investing in these NGOs, and businesses who connect with his purpose-based passion of responsibly caring for our earth's natural resources.
- **Kim Kolt, Co-Founder & General Partner, Bay Bridge Ventures, an institutional ESG and Sustainability focused venture capital firm.** Prior to Bay Bridge Ventures, Kim founded For Good Ventures, a family office group backing exceptional technologies benefiting humanity and the environment. Prior to For Good Ventures, Kolt worked at Goldman Sachs in their Technology, Media and Telecom Investment Banking Groups in San Francisco and Los Angeles, and Deutsche Bank M&A in NYC.



- **Trond Wuellner, Director of Product Management, YouTube.** Focused on creator empowerment, Wuellner is an angel investor, a long-time ocean advocate and mentor with Sustainable Ocean Alliance. Prior to joining YouTube, Trond worked at Google for nearly 14 years leading new technology development for global products.
- **David Brekke, Senior Associate at Goodwin Law.** Brekke focuses on corporate formations, venture capital financings, mergers and acquisitions, strategic transactions and corporate governance for clients operating primarily in the renewable energy and sustainability technology spaces. David advises founders, investors and early-to mid-stage companies as they bring technologies that improve our world to the market, to scale and to profitability.
- **Jitendra Kavathekar, Global Vice President at Salesforce.** Kavathekar is a technologist, entrepreneur and investor with an extensive track record in bringing the "new" to market at scale. Prior to Salesforce, he co-founded and led Accenture Ventures and Open Innovation to be a force multiplier of innovation at scale for their clients globally. He has led product development for iconic tech companies such as Yahoo, Motorola, Palm and HP pioneering their milestone "firsts" with award winning products. As CEO, advisor, and investor he has brought young startups funded by industry leading Venture Capitalists to market.
- **Eva Zlotnicka, Founder, Managing Partner, and President of Inclusive Partners.** Zlotnicka's San Francisco-based investment firm partners with companies that enable solutions to address environmental and social problems. Prior to founding Inclusive Capital Partners, she was a Founder and Managing Director of the ValueAct Spring Fund and Head of Stewardship at ValueAct Capital.
- **Christina Ochoa, Actress, Activist, Science Communicator.** She's the grand niece of Nobel Prize winner Severo Ochoa, daughter of sculptor Victor Ochoa, and her entire life she was surrounded by members of both the scientific and artistic academies. After graduating she went on to study Oceanographic Engineering at Universidad de las Palmas de Gran Canaria in the Canary Islands, and advanced Marine Biology studies in James Cook University – Australia. Soon after, she started gaining interest in performing arts and content development. She has successfully worked on both mediums ever since. You can see Ochoa in TNT's "Animal Kingdom", Hulu's "Promised Land", ABC's "A Million Little Things", CW's "Valor", as well as several films. Christina is a board member of OCEANA, Earth's Oceans, and has recently joined the Board of Directors for the Sustainable Ocean Alliance.
- **Daniela V. Fernandez, Founder & CEO of Sustainable Ocean Alliance.** Daniela is an award-winning social entrepreneur, thought leader and internationally sought-after speaker on the entrepreneurial mindset, ocean innovation, technology, youth empowerment and sustainability. She founded Sustainable Ocean Alliance in her dorm room at Georgetown University when she was only 19 after attending a United Nations meeting on climate change and realizing she was the only young person in the room. She is a Forbes 30 under 30 Social Entrepreneur, a LinkedIn Top Voices in Social Impact creator and thought leader who has dedicated her life to empowering young leaders as they create a sustainable future.

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About Sustainable Ocean Alliance

SOA is a global organization created for youth – by youth – dedicated to restoring the health of the ocean in our lifetime. We were founded in 2014 by Daniela Fernandez during her first year of college, after she attended a United Nations meeting on climate change – and was stunned to realize none of the experts had a plan to stop it. Since then, SOA has grown into the world’s largest network of young ocean leaders, innovators, and policymakers, and we have accelerated 266 solutions to the greatest threats facing our ocean...and counting. These solutions include for-profit startups and community-led nonprofit projects around the world.

Why focus on the ocean?

The ocean sustains almost all life on this planet – and is our greatest protection against climate change. It produces more than half our oxygen, and stores 50 times more carbon dioxide than our atmosphere. Mangroves, salt marshes and seagrass meadows remove 10 times more CO₂ than the rainforest and store 3 to 5 times more carbon. Coral reefs reduce 97% of wave energy, while mangroves reduce 66% of wave height. Right now, the situation is critical. We must protect the ocean, so it can continue to protect us. Did you know: **93% of excess heat** from global warming is absorbed by the ocean; **1 in 3 marine animals face extinction** due to the rise of ocean temperatures; **250,000 people will die every year** from 2030-2050 as a direct result of climate change.