



PRESS RELEASE

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EXTREME THREATS TO OCEAN MOUNT! OCEAN PROTECTION LAW NEEDED NOW *Campaign Seeks OCEAN VOICES for the COZ*

Seaside Park, NJ – Given the unprecedented massive industrial assault proposed to the ocean, Clean Ocean Action (COA) revived the Clean Ocean Zone (COZ) legislative campaign originally developed years ago for a federal law to protect the rich vibrant life off the NY/NJ coast and lock-out harmful industrialization and pollution. The campaign was launched in Seaside Park, the “middle of the Jersey Shore” today and was welcomed by Mayor John Peterson, Seaside Park, Trisha DeVoe, a naturalist; and ocean advocacy speakers including concerned citizen Leslie Mangold.

The event kicked-off with a press conference on the beach at Funtown Beach, Stockton Avenue & North Ocean Avenue, Seaside Park, NJ, and was followed in the afternoon with a Campaign Open House to educate and motivate citizens to become “Ocean Rebels for the COZ.” The day of public education, engagement, and ocean advocacy concluded after a 7pm Call to Action at the water’s edge.

While World Ocean Day was June 8th, Clean Ocean Action rescheduled today’s event from June 8 due to dangerous air quality conditions in the region. The nonprofit organization, based in Long Branch, NJ, noted at the press conference that “every day is ocean day” for ocean advocates. Over the last 40 years, Clean Ocean Action has led campaigns to end ocean dumping, reduce pollution and garbage wash ups, and blocked numerous proposals for oil and gas drilling, and other fossil fuel projects.

“We have come a long way and the ocean is now thriving. Everyone knows the ocean is key to the health of the planet, but few know a healthy ocean is also the planet’s best buffer against climate change. Sustaining a healthy ocean is the key to solving climate change,” said **Cindy Zipf, Executive Director, Clean Ocean Action**. “Yet threats not only remain but are growing at a reckless pace. Massive industrialization at an unimaginable scale now threatens the health of the ocean and the clean ocean economy,” Zipf added.

“It’s my honor and my duty to participate in the World Ocean Day Event held in Seaside Park, so that we can work together to increase citizen participation, and to raise public awareness of the vital need to protect the ocean, our many ocean marine species, our fishing industry and tourism and the very way of life of the Jersey

Shore,” said **Mayor of Seaside Park John A. Peterson, Jr.** “Just as I have worked hard over the years to protect the ocean from such devastating threats as ocean dumping, wood burning at sea, Ciba Geigy’s pipeline, and New York City’s garbage barges, I pledge to work tirelessly with elected officials on both sides of the aisle and at all levels of our government, to protect and preserve marine life, the Jersey Shore and the Atlantic Ocean,” he added.

During the event, Clean Ocean Action identified some of the state and federal actions that have caused alarm and the need for a strong comprehensive law to protect the ocean. These include:

- President Biden’s Executive Order calling for 30 gigawatts (30,000 megawatts) of offshore wind by 2030 along with fast-tracking implementation without transparency, due diligence and good science, as well as concerns about the undermining of agencies that protect marine life and the environment and national security.
- The Biden Administration’s Ocean Climate Action Plan, which includes ocean injection of carbon, mining, and massive scale aquaculture and ocean confined animal feed lots.
- The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) ties offshore wind development (OSW) to offshore oil and gas development. How will connecting OSW to increasing fossil fuels reduce climate change? For example: *“During the 10-year period after the IRA was enacted, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) may not issue a lease for offshore wind development unless the agency had offered at least 60 million acres for oil and gas leasing on the Outer Continental Shelf in the previous year.”^[1]*
- New Jersey is fast-tracking permits and does not have a robust action plan to ensure ocean protection. COA has submitted numerous detailed comments on different projects, permits, rules, and authorization highlighting the lack of due diligence, transparency, and good governance.
- And concerning state actions by NY and NJ.

“While some elements of these programs do help address climate change, such as more green infrastructure, energy reduction may do so by undermining the health of the ocean, the overall drive is to industrialize the ocean at an unsustainable scale.” said **Zipf**.

“Whales are a powerful weapon in the fight against climate change. We need to protect the ocean and save our whales now!” said Trisha DeVoe, Conservation Biologist and founder of SaveOurWhalesNow.org.

“It is unfathomable to see the lack of investigation and lack of transparency into the string of deaths of whales and other marine mammals, especially with endangered species at grave risk,” said **Kari Martin, COA Advocacy Campaign Manager**. “While federal agencies so boldly and confidently contend that offshore wind energy has nothing to do with the deaths of these marine mammals, they have provided no evidence. In fact, the agencies highlight “noise” as a major factor in marine mammal harm. This is alarming as the impacts on marine life from noise are only growing and intensifying with the increase of offshore wind activity. When will the federal and state governments acknowledge the unprecedented activity happening in the ocean and make a true determination of the cumulative impacts from these power plants? That’s why we need a pilot project,” she added.

^[1] “Offshore Wind and the US Inflation Reduction Act,” Mayer Brown, August 19, 2022, <https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=6e61efb6-437f-499e-9938-0568c646b289#:~:text=Among%20other%20things%2C%20the%20IRA%20modifies%20the%20investment,and%20transmission%20of%20electricity%20generated%20by%20offshore%20wind>

“As a young adult who will soon be entering the field of environmental advocacy post-graduation, the threat of ocean industrialization is alarming. My generation understands the urgency surrounding climate change, as we know this will be the world that we inherit and make our lives in. However, climate change solutions must not come at the cost of the life that makes our oceans and ecosystem so healthy and beautiful. When looking at the **526,066** level A and B marine mammal takes pending to be authorized in the last year, it is clear to me that we have stopped caring about these important creatures. These ever-growing numbers of harassment authorizations should be alarming, and must compel our elected officials to take action to protect our ocean life,” said **Fiona Griffin, COA Ocean Advocacy and Policy Intern.**

The Clean Ocean Zone was launched as a campaign against old, new, and renewed threats. The organization continues to call for a pilot project to determine the true impacts of offshore wind industrialization, and continues to serve its mission to stop ocean pollution sources.

“The ocean is our last great open space, which should not be sold, leased, developed, industrialized or used for profit. It must be protected and preserved. There is a connectedness and balance to all of our natural environments and ecosystems; harming one will have a ripple effect on others, and on us,” said **Leslie Mangold**, concerned citizen and ocean advocate. “We cannot stand idly by and let the ocean be used as collateral damage in the fight against climate change; if we do, then we are complicit in helping to destroy it,” Mangold added.

The event also included a large whale kite soaring above the event and a sand sculpture of a whale and marine life as a backdrop while people pledged to take action. Later in the day, the public was invited to speak to advocates at two action “stations” and “comment booths.” Some of the actions available for people to participate in were signing and sharing petitions, submitting comments in real-time to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) regarding the two thousand-plus page Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for two offshore wind projects, Atlantic Shores 1 and 2, and signing-up to be engaged in the campaign for the COZ either as campaign leaders, petition captains, outreach and advocacy volunteers, and more.

“What the ocean needs now more than ever are the voices of all the people who enjoy and/or depend upon the rich vibrant living resources to contact their elected leaders to take a stand to save the sea, and save the planet,” Zipf added.

The organization will be reaching out to federal and state elected officials to inform them of the new campaign. More information is forthcoming, but the organization has the many action steps available at CleanOceanAction.org for the public to complete and share.

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