

FLORIDA KEYS HOPE SPOT

A Petition for Support



An aerial photograph of a vast coral reef system. The water transitions from a deep blue at the horizon to a vibrant turquoise and green near the reef. The reef itself is a complex, textured pattern of dark green and brown. In the top right corner, there is a small white plus sign and a black dot. A semi-transparent blue vertical bar covers the left half of the image.

IMAGINE...

...you could help protect all
of this with just a few
taps of your keyboard?

We need your support now!

- We at the World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation (WFCRC) are excited to invite you to join us in the initiative to make the Florida Keys the next Mission Blue Hope Spot by writing a short letter of support.
- Our team at WFCRC has spent the last year creating an in-depth proposal to present to Mission Blue explaining why the Florida Keys is the best candidate for this monumental designation this August.
- The only thing missing.. is you!





What is a Hope Spot?

- Hope Spots are ecologically unique areas of the ocean designated for protection under a global conservation campaign overseen by Mission Blue, a non-profit organization founded by Sylvia Earle.
- See more details by clicking [HERE](#)

Sources:

<https://mission-blue.org/hope-spots/>

What support do Hope Spots receive?



- SCIENCE ADVISORY Mission Blue, in partnership with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) maintains a scientific council headed by Dr. Earle that reviews Hope Spot applications from communities around the world and approves those that meet specific scientific and conservation criteria.
- EXPEDITIONS Mission Blue has launched more than a dozen expeditions around the world to explore Hope Spots highlighting research, conservation and educational efforts. Our team influences policymakers and creates compelling documentaries that educate and inspire the public.

Sources:

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What support do Hope Spots receive?

- **COMMUNICATIONS** Mission Blue is a leading global ocean conservation brand that has a million followers online and uses its power to elevate Hope Spots and create public pressure for their official protection.
- **PARTNERSHIPS** Over 200 organizations, from large multinationals to small nonprofits, have signed on as Mission Blue partners in support of Hope Spots.
- **TECHNOLOGY** Mission Blue has created a proprietary technology platform where the public can access information, photos, videos, scientific data and other materials about each Hope Spot.
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** Through the Hope Spots network, Mission Blue engages communities around the planet in pursuit of deeper ocean conservation literacy and accelerated action for change.



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Sources:

<https://mission-blue.org/hope-spots/>



Why the Florida Keys?

Coral reef ecosystems are severely threatened. Threats like the below can stress corals, leading to coral bleaching and possible death, while others cause physical damage to these delicate ecosystems. This is the grim reality of the Florida Keys and now is time to take action.

- **Water Pollution**
- **Urban Development**
- **Invasive Species**
- **Overfishing**
- **Vessel Bottoming**
- **Marine Debris**
- **Improper Anchoring**
- **Derelict Fishing Equipment**
- **Rising Sea Levels**
- **Ocean Acidification**
- **Single Use Plastic**



Florida Keys checks all the boxes!

What qualifies as a Hope Spot ?

- A special abundance or diversity of species, unusual or representative species, habitats or ecosystems
- Particular populations of rare, threatened or endemic species
- A site with potential to reverse damage from negative human impacts
- The presence of natural processes such as major migration corridors or spawning grounds
- Significant historical, cultural or spiritual values
- Particular economic importance to the community

The idea is that anyone can nominate a site special to him or her—a site that gives HOPE.

Sources:

<https://mission-blue.org/hope-spots/>



What are our goals?

- **To build a knowledge base** and exchange from which to build on, delivered by GIS/outreach programs, local events, knowledge sharing, comradery and inclusion. Make better data driven decisions that apply locally.
- **To engage the next generation** to be part of a conservation effort. To make all around improvement in engagement.
- **To support local** conservation efforts and gather information relevant specifically to the Florida Keys.
- **To create** the cohesive factor for government agencies, NGO's, and facilitate community-lead development of sustainable practices.
- **To develop** a reproducible and scalable conservation model available for all NGO's in many other locations in coastal regions.
- **To share** our efforts and results with our network members and locally.

The World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation fosters stewardship of the Florida Keys' marine ecosystem by engaging private, public and governmental entities as well as promoting advocacy and supporting Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary's programs and partnerships as well as the [United Nations Sustainable Goal 14](#) which we were among the first organizations to make voluntary commitments for action items.

Hope Spots



Your support ..

- Partnerships and Community Engagement are two of the pillars of this program and we hope we can count you in.
- Your support is imperative in the process to be selected as the next Hope Spot by Mission Blue.



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What can you do?

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- We are looking to create and develop long standing relationships as we move forward in our mutual goals, unifying our efforts to make the most impact.
 - Today we ask for your support, to help us take the first steps in solidarity to make a difference that will last forever.
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Join as a partner in this mission of Hope

- Under Pressure Sports
- Dive 21
- Captain Slate
- NAUI
- John Pennekamp State Park
- ...And growing!



Example (on your organization's letterhead)

Dear Sir, Madam

I would like to provide my support for the nomination of coastal waters proposed by The World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation (WFCRC) as a Mission Blue Hope Spot designation for the Florida Keys.

The Keys are a unique, highly connected enclave and the largest reef complex in the US, and represents a refuge for reef building corals.

I have been concerned about the survivability of our ocean treasures for some time now and now feel like it's time we all should be engaged.

For years now, many federal, state and individuals organizations have documented an exceptional diversity in the Keys. Like the lionfish rapid invasion that revealed that The Keys are especially susceptible to invasive species.

The Keys are highly connected to the marine science and tourism industry for Florida. Making a substantial contribution to the wellbeing of our ocean treasures.

I am much aware that further degradation of nursery areas for many species will impact not only The Keys, but also other locations in the network. An implementation of a Mission Blue Hope

Spot will protect habitats that are vital to the life cycle of iconic Keys species and to the scale biodiversity to which The Keys are connected. I sincerely hope that the efforts of The World Federation for Coral Reef Conservation are supported by the Mission Blue Council.

Yours Sincerely,





Contact

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THANK YOU!

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