

July 30, 2004

The Honorable George W. Bush  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush,

Despite their importance to America's history, economy and quality of life, our oceans have never had a champion in the White House. I am writing to request that you make history and articulate an aggressive proposal to secure our oceans and coastal future.

The recent report by the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy echoed the Pew Ocean Commission's 2003 findings on the state of our oceans. They're in trouble. Populations of some important species, like tuna, swordfish and shark have been reduced by 90%. Many commercial fisheries are dangerously overfished, and the hodge-podge of well-intended laws passed to ease the problem are making fishermen work harder than ever, sometimes in dangerous conditions, to catch as many fish as they can in harried derby-style seasons.

The cost of continued neglect of our oceans and the rules that govern them is not only environmental. More than 50% of Americans live in coastal communities, which rely on healthy oceans to sustain their seafood and tourism industries. Failing to change course could threaten hundreds of communities and hundreds of thousands of jobs, and make a multi-billion dollar dent in our national economy.

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Teddy Roosevelt illustrated America's commitment to protecting our land by building our system of national parks, forests and monuments; he is still regarded as the father of our country's conservation effort. Today, we need a Teddy Roosevelt for our oceans.

In that spirit, I urge you to commit to measures that:

- Use protected areas and other tools to protect fragile ocean and coastal habitats;
- Use market-based incentives and science-based management to transform failing fisheries into sustainable ones that generate more economic and environmental benefits;
- Curb runoff that pollutes the oceans and harms wildlife;
- Maintain the longstanding bipartisan moratorium on offshore oil and gas drilling to protect our shores;
- Establish strong environmental standards for aquaculture to protect marine ecosystems;
- Enforce conservation laws to protect ocean and coastal wildlife and essential ecosystems;
- Double federal funding for ocean science, exploration and education over the next 5 years; and
- Improve coordination of ocean protections programs by creating a Cabinet-level interagency National Oceans Council to conserve, protect and restore marine life.

Our oceans pose both a monumental challenge and momentous opportunity, where only the most thoughtful conservation and management policies – and presidential support – can bring them back to health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fred Krupp". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Fred Krupp  
President  
Environmental Defense

cc: Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., Undersecretary, Commerce for Oceans and  
Atmosphere  
James Connaughton, Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality  
Don Evans, Secretary, Department of Commerce