



THE OCEAN GALA

## MaiTai Global Pledges \$100,000 To Support Dr. Sylvia Earle's Mission Blue -- A Movement To Bring The National Park Idea To The Sea

*Grant will be awarded at The Ocean Gala featuring Sir Richard Branson, Dr. Sylvia Earle, Solar Impulse Pilot Dr. Bertrand Piccard, Captain Don Walsh, Supermodel Jessica Stam, and Sharkwater's Rob Stewart*

Sir Richard Branson, Ocean Gala Keynote Speaker introduces Dr. Sylvia Earle During Last Year's Inaugural Gala. Photo Credit: Ruprecht Studios



**SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 19, 2016** -- MaiTai Global will award \$100,000 to 'Living Legend' ocean champion Dr. Sylvia Earle's Mission Blue to advance the movement for blue parks through expeditions and public outreach. With this grant, to be awarded at The Second Annual Ocean Gala on December 3rd in San Francisco, MaiTai Global will further Dr. Earle's 2009 TED wish to ignite broad public support for a global network of marine protected areas, which Dr. Earle calls 'Hope Spots'.

"We are proud to support one of the most prominent global leaders in conservation and Ocean Elder, Dr. Sylvia Earle, and the Mission Blue Hope Spot Initiative," said The Ocean Gala Chair Maria Stermer.

This pledge to Mission Blue comes on the heels of several major advancements to create marine protected areas, including the announcement by President Obama to expand Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument in Hawaii creating the world's largest marine protected area. Currently less than four percent of the ocean is protected in any way, and less than one percent is designated a "no-take" zone.

"There is still time to act if we make the next decade and century count for the ocean and wildlife within it," said Dr. Sylvia Earle. "This generous \$100,000 grant will fund voyages that explore our most critical ocean habitats to create awareness, foster partnerships and build public support for the creation of marine protected areas 'Hope Spots' across the globe."



## **MaiTai Global Pledges \$100,000 To Support Dr. Sylvia Earle's Mission Blue -- A Movement To Bring The National Park Idea To The Sea**

The second annual Ocean Gala, organized by MaiTai Global and OceanElders, brings together global leaders in the business and kiteboarding communities for a fundraiser to support ocean causes. The evening will include a live and silent auction, the announcement of the VR Challenge winner, and a performance by the San Francisco Ballet. Unique auction items include donations and endorsements from celebrities such as: Oliver Stone, Josh Groban, and The Fray. This year's gala hails attendees from over seven countries and launch parties will be held in Los Angeles (hosted by: Permacity), San Francisco (hosted by: Modernist Club) and New York City.

Sponsors include: Virgin Unite, Other World Computing, Macsales.com, Bitfury, Fairwarning, Setili & Associates, Events.com, Breathometer and, Unofficial Cardboard.

[www.theoceangala.com](http://www.theoceangala.com) #TheOceanGala

**MaiTai Global**, founded by Susi Mai and Bill Tai, is a group of extraordinary entrepreneurs, innovators and athletes whose collective passion of kiteboarding brings them together. [www.maitaiglobal.com](http://www.maitaiglobal.com) #MaiTaiGlobal

**OceanElders**, founded by Gigi Brisson, is an independent group of global leaders who have joined together to serve as a catalyst in the conservation and protection of the ocean. Notable members include Dr. Sylvia Earle, Sir Richard Branson, Captain Don Walsh, Jean-Michel Cousteau, Jim Cameron, Ted Turner, Jackson Browne, Dr. Bertrand Piccard, E.O. Wilson, Wade Davis, and Gerry Lopez. [www.oceanelders.org](http://www.oceanelders.org) #OceanElders

**Mission Blue** is an initiative of the Sylvia Earle Alliance (S.E.A.) to ignite public support for the protection of Hope Spots—special places that are vital to the health of the ocean, the blue heart of our planet. [www.mission-blue.org](http://www.mission-blue.org) #MissionBlue

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BryteBox Consulting for The Ocean Gala