



23rd Heinz Awards Honor Marine Ecologist Enric Sala for His Work to Protect the World's Last Pristine Ocean Places

Sala's research and exploration of critical ocean ecosystems, and his work to convey the economic benefits of protecting them, is inspiring change and leading to the establishment of marine protected areas around the globe

PITTSBURGH, September 18, 2018—The Heinz Family Foundation today named marine ecologist Enric Sala, Ph.D., the recipient of the prestigious 23rd Heinz Award in the Public Policy category. Dr. Sala is recognized for his worldwide efforts to survey, research and protect the Earth's remaining pristine ocean places. A passionate communicator, his work to convey scientific findings on the conditions of the world's ocean ecosystems—and the economic return of protecting them—has resulted in impactful conservation and inspired government leaders to action, leading to the establishment of marine protected areas (MPAs) around the globe.

As part of the accolade, Dr. Sala will receive an unrestricted cash award of \$250,000.

A National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence, Dr. Sala's career is dedicated to restoring the health and productivity of the Earth's oceans, and his more than 120 scientific publications are widely recognized and implemented in conservation efforts. He led the creation of a model used to establish large MPAs such as the Pacific Remote Islands Marine National Monument in the United States, the Revillagigedo National Park in Mexico, and the Galápagos Marine Sanctuary, among others. The creation or expansion of these reserves, which include the establishment of no-take areas, allows for the conservation and restoration of marine ecosystems.

Dr. Sala is the founder and leader of National Geographic's Pristine Seas, a project that draws on exploration, research, economic and policy analysis, together with effective media outreach, to inspire country leaders to protect the last truly wild places in the world's oceans, while ensuring that they will be effectively managed for years to come. Pristine Seas works in partnership with heads of state, local governments and communities, non-governmental organizations and business leaders to implement change. Since its creation, Pristine Seas has undertaken 26 expeditions and has helped to establish 19 marine reserves to help safeguard more than five million square kilometers of the ocean. Two additional MPAs are expected to be established this year.

The 19 marine reserves inspired by the exploration and research conducted by Dr. Sala and his team include a broad representation of marine ecosystems, from shallow coral reefs to deep seamounts, from the Russian Arctic to Cape Horn in Chile, through tropical archipelagos and temperate seas harboring underwater forests of giant kelp. The best-known of these areas is probably in Ecuador, where Dr. Sala worked with the government to create a new marine sanctuary around the Galápagos Islands of Darwin

and Wolf. The sanctuary designates a third of the Galápagos Marine Reserve as a no-take zone, a critical step, as the area around Darwin and Wolf constitutes what is said to be one of the most spectacular and significant marine ecosystems on the planet, harboring the largest shark biomass in the world.

“The world’s oceans are among our most precious natural resources, essential to the healthy ecological balance of our planet,” said Teresa Heinz, Chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation. “Enric’s leadership is having global impact in efforts to halt the progressive decline of our oceans and in creating vast protected areas dedicated to the conservation and restoration of marine ecosystems. His contributions as a scientist are acclaimed internationally, but it is his passion and charisma in communicating not only data, but also solutions and approaches that have enabled him to change hearts and minds, instilling hope and inspiring renewal.”

Dr. Sala’s long-term vision is to see half of every ocean habitat protected. That includes eliminating fishing on the high seas—those areas of open ocean beyond the 200 miles from any country’s shoreline—and to end the \$4 billion being used to subsidize high seas fishing, which often involves the use of massive nets that pull up everything in their path, leaving behind entire swaths of the ocean devoid of marine life. This furthers the cycle of industrial fishing boats traveling greater and greater distances to find fish, increasing costs and diminishing economic return.

“Research shows that when ocean areas are protected, there is a spillover effect that results in healthier, larger fish populations in the areas near them,” says Dr. Sala. “Recent research, including some of our own, shows that protecting the high seas will actually benefit the fishing industry, allowing them to increase their catch and operate more profitably within their country’s designated waters, rather than incurring the costs of traveling long distances to reach the high seas.”

“Today, only two percent of the ocean is fully protected from fishing and other activities,” he adds. “That is not enough. Studies suggest that we need at least 30 percent of the ocean under protection, not only to save marine life, but to save us as well. The ocean gives us more than half of the oxygen we breathe. It absorbs carbon pollution, and it cools the planet. Humans need a healthy ocean to survive.”

Pristine Seas is contributing to the target set by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity to protect 10 percent of the ocean by 2020.

“2020 will be an important year, when we will all take a breath and look at what we’ve achieved, and agree on what is still needed. Pristine Seas will continue in its mission, targeting more places and working with more governments to inspire them to protect as many large ocean places as possible.”

Established to honor the memory of U.S. Senator John Heinz, the Heinz Awards this year recognize those who have made significant contributions in five distinct areas of great importance to Senator Heinz: Arts and Humanities; Environment; Human Condition; Public Policy; and Technology, the Economy and Employment. Now in its 23rd year, the Heinz Awards has recognized 139 individuals and awarded more than \$27.5 million to the honorees. For more information about the awardees visit www.heinzawards.net/2018.

In addition to Dr. Sala, the 23rd Heinz Awards honored the following individuals, who will receive their awards in Pittsburgh on October 24, 2018:

- **Arts and Humanities: Ralph Lemon**, an innovative choreographer and multidisciplinary artist whose richly moving body of work addresses concepts of race, justice and identity in performances that interweave movement, media, visual arts and language;
- **Environment: Ming Kuo, Ph.D.**, a psychologist whose research on the impact of urban green space on physical and mental health is changing urban forest and landscape design policy;
- **Human Condition: Norman Atkins**, an educator whose bold new models for preparing, equipping and training teachers and school leaders is effecting dramatic, positive change in public school classrooms across the country;
- **Public Policy: Sherri Mason, Ph.D.**, a global expert on freshwater microplastic pollution whose research is raising awareness of the sources and volume of microplastics and microfibers in U.S. freshwater systems, leading to state, federal and international policy change; and
- **Technology, the Economy and Employment: Linda Rottenberg**, a social entrepreneur whose global nonprofit is opening doors of economic opportunity for entrepreneurs in both emerging countries and the United States.

EDITORS/REPORTERS: To obtain photos of Dr. Sala or any of the other recipients, please contact Abby Manishor at amanishor@burness.com or 917-539-3308.

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About the Heinz Awards

Established by Teresa Heinz in 1993 to honor the memory of her late husband, U.S. Senator John Heinz, the Heinz Awards celebrates the accomplishments and spirit of the Senator by recognizing the extraordinary achievements of individuals in the areas of greatest importance to him. The awards, administered by the Heinz Family Foundation, recognize individuals for their contributions in the areas of Arts and Humanities; Environment; Human Condition; Public Policy; and Technology, the Economy and Employment. Nominations are submitted by invited experts, who serve anonymously, and are reviewed by jurors appointed by the Heinz Family Foundation. The jurors make recommendations to the Board of Directors, which subsequently selects the Award recipients. For more information on the Heinz Awards, visit www.heinzawards.net.

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