

Malibu's Sea Save Foundation to attend United Nations Ocean Conference

Representatives of local nonprofit recently attended preparatory meeting in New York

LAUREN COUGHLIN, Editor

Georgienne Bradley will go to just about any length when it comes to urging conservation.

Whether she's deep in the ocean, diving amid sharks, or on dry ground, presenting troubling scientific realities amid delegates, Bradley is purposeful in her movements.

Last month, the founder and director of the Malibu-based nonprofit Sea Save Foundation, did the latter — setting her scuba gear aside as she trekked to New York to attend the United Nations Ocean Conference preparatory meeting, held Feb. 4-5 at the UN Headquarters. Traveling with her were Sea Save Foundation representatives Katerina Sidorenko, director of programs, and Jay Ireland, media director.

The meeting — a warm-up for the Ocean Conference, to be held June 2-6 in Lisbon, Portugal — is held every three years, Bradley explained, and though it was Sea Save's second time attending, it was the first time the nonprofit was an official participant rather than a guest.

Ocean Conference 2020 is to focus on the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goal No. 14, which seeks to "conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development."

The goal has 10 targets: to reduce marine pollution; to protect

and restore ecosystems; to reduce ocean acidification; to employ sustainable fishing; to conserve coastal and marine areas; to end subsidies contributing to over-fishing; to increase the economic benefits from sustainable use of marine resources; to increase scientific knowledge, research and technology for ocean health; to support small-scale fishers; and to implement and enforce international sea law.

"Our objective is to get as many win-win situations where countries understand the importance of each of these targets for the future of the oceans [and] the future of their countries, and present them with a plan," Bradley explained, noting the importance of working globally to effect true change.

At the latest meeting, each member nation has a delegate at the front of the floor, with official nonprofit organizations seated behind them. A secretary will bring up proposal after proposal, and debates ensue, Bradley explained.

While many of the specifics remain under wraps and will be further discussed come June, the attendees come away with an idea of what is ahead.

"In the next few months, we're going to be creating our white paper of demands and sort of brainstorming with other stakeholders how to accomplish [those demands]," Bradley explained.

The solutions need to mesh science, economics and culture, creating a delicate balancing act. The ultimate goal, Bradley said, is to formulate a plan that is "ambitious and based in science, and also will be acceptable and will be passed."



Sea Save Foundation Founder Georgienne Bradley (right) poses with Katerina Sidorenko (middle), director of programs at Sea Save, and Jay Ireland, media director, while the trio was in New York last month for the United Nations Ocean Conference preparatory meeting. PHOTO SUBMITTED

For Sea Save Foundation, as well as for many other nonprofits that are part of the conversations surrounding the United Nations Ocean Conference, Bradley says another major goal is to ensure that action is swift.

"We're really pushing for timelines to be shortened, because we don't think we have the time," Bradley said. "It's not business as usual anymore. We're seeing the warming of our oceans faster than we thought."

"... The science is not only true, but it had been understated. We're finding out things are happening faster than we previously thought."

Still, Bradley finds hope in the fact that the targets are defined and being focused on.

"I think people are waking up and saying, 'Not only is this real,

but it's real and it's affecting us,'" said Bradley, citing examples like the Maldives being underwater.

The drive for tourism to keep up, she said, is the low-hanging fruit in the conversation with many coastal countries, serving as one of the strongest arguments for change, Bradley said.

Coming from Malibu has its perks, Bradley said, as it's a world-recognized town.

"People here care," Bradley noted. "They want their beaches clean, and they want to be able to go out and surf."

And while not all in Malibu have a reserved seat in Lisbon this June, Bradley urges residents who are passionate about conservation to stay informed on the global picture, and to truly do their research. To that end, Sea Save Foundation puts out an Ocean Week In Re-

view newsletter, which interested residents can sign up to receive at seasave.org/week-in-review/.

"People need to go back to what they learned pre-high school and do their research — not just believe everything that is being said and to look for solutions in the reading," Bradley said. "This is not a football game. This is something that requires careful thought."

Meaningful solutions will likely require a retraining of habits on an international level; Bradley, for one, is up to the challenge.

At June's meeting, Bradley, Sidorenko and Ireland are to be joined by Phil Coles, communications director for Sea Save Foundation.

For more on the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals and the Ocean Conference, visit un.org/en/conferences/ocean2020.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Realtors step up efforts to support Soles4Souls

On Feb. 21, Coldwell Banker announced the results of its shoe collection effort, with Malibu offices playing a key role in the initiative.

Between Jan. 14-31, representatives at the Malibu Colony and Malibu West offices gathered 46 pairs of new and gently used shoes for Soles4Souls, a nonprofit that creates sustainable jobs and

provides relief through the distribution of shoes and clothing around the world.

Altogether, Coldwell Banker's 31 Los Angeles area offices collected 2,664 pairs of shoes for the

nonprofit.

"To put that into perspective, proceeds from the sale of 1,000 pairs of shoes can provide a year's worth of food, shelter and education for families in countries like

Haiti and Honduras," Coldwell Banker stated on its website.

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