



Paul Holthus
Founding President and CEO
World Ocean Council

Paul Holthus is the founding President and CEO of the World Ocean Council (WOC), the international, multi-sectoral ocean business leadership and collaboration in “Corporate Ocean Responsibility”. He is leading the WOC overall, including developing the “*Ocean Investment Platform*” to foster and facilitate investment in sustainable ocean development and the growing ocean economy.

The WOC brings together leadership companies from fisheries, aquaculture, shipping, oil and gas, ocean technology, offshore renewables, desalination, tourism, seabed mining, finance and investment, and other ocean industries. The growing WOC global ocean business community includes WOC Members (70+ leadership companies from a wide range of ocean industries) and the WOC network (34,000+ ocean industry stakeholders from around the world).

Paul’s experience ranges from working with the global industry associations and directors of UN agencies to fishers in small island villages. He has worked with companies, industry associations, UN agencies, international NGOs, foundations, governments and communities on coastal and

marine sustainable development in over 30 countries in Asia, the Pacific, Europe, North America, Central America and Africa.

He has held senior positions with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and international environmental organisations, including as Deputy Director for the IUCN Global Marine Programme. While at The Nature Conservancy, he originated the “Coral Triangle”, a successful large seascape approach to international ocean conservation and development.

Since 1998, Paul has worked primarily with the private sector to develop practical solutions for responsible ocean use. He is a frequent speaker at international business and ocean conferences. He is on the advisory board of the ocean conference of the *Economist* and the Arctic Circle Assembly, and was one of 5 people invited to be a member of the UN Secretary General’s Expert Group on Oceans for the 2012 Rio+20 conference. At the 2017 UN Ocean Conference, he was invited to speak to the UN General Assembly on behalf of the ocean business community.

Paul grew up close to the ocean in the Philippines, Hawaii and California. His personal commitment to sustainable seas has been shaped by lifetime of surfing, diving, spear fishing, sailing and windsurfing. His professional qualifications for ocean sustainable development took place at the University of California and the University of Hawaii, through degrees in marine science, coastal resource management and international business.