



THE OCEAN FOUNDATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ANNOUNCEMENT

President of The Ocean Foundation appointed to the Sargasso Sea Commission

The Ocean Foundation is pleased to announce that its president, Mark J. Spalding, has been appointed to a three-year term on the Sargasso Sea Commission by the Government of Bermuda. Candidates are selected through a consultation process by governments who support the aims of the Hamilton Declaration.

[The Sargasso Sea Commission](#) was established pursuant to the Hamilton Declaration on Collaboration for the Conservation of the Sargasso Sea, signed on 11 March 2014, by the governments of the Azores, Bermuda, Monaco, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The Commission will “encourage and facilitate voluntary collaboration toward the conservation of the Sargasso Sea.” The Commission will “exercise a stewardship role for the Sargasso Sea and keep its health, productivity and resilience under continual review.”

“I am honored to serve on the Sargasso Sea Commission, the first formal international body to promote the need for thoughtful conservation of the resources of this extraordinary region of the Atlantic Ocean,” said Mark Spalding regarding his three-year appointment. “I look forward fulfilling the vision of the Hamilton Declaration, which emerged from the hard work of the Sargasso Sea Alliance and important champions such as Dr. Sylvia Earle and the late Richard Rockefeller.”

The Sargasso Sea is the only sea not bounded by a coastline; it is a gyre in the North Atlantic, bounded on the west by Gulf Stream, to the north by the North Atlantic Current, to the east by the Canary Current, and to the south by the North Atlantic Equatorial Current. All of these currents sweep their floating plant matter into the gyre—as well as whatever debris the currents have picked up in their flow. The Sargasso Sea serves as a home for part or all of the life cycle of a diverse array of ocean animals, from sea turtles to albacore, yellowfin, and bluefin tuna, and of both the American eel and European eel among others.

Sargassum is a genus of golden brown (class *Phaeophyceae*) macroalgae (seaweed) in the order Fucales, and has numerous species throughout the world oceans. The Sargasso Sea in the Atlantic Ocean is home to two species (*S. natans* and *S. fluitans*), which have become holopelagic — reproducing vegetatively and never attaching to the seafloor during their lifecycle.

Mr. Spalding, a former professor and editor of *The Journal of Environment & Development*, focused on international law and marine policy for nearly a decade, is well-versed in the workings of national, regional, multilateral and international institutions with these topics in their portfolios. He brings specialized knowledge on high seas governance, ecosystem-based fisheries management, maritime shipping issues, seabed mining, and land-based sources of marine pollution. His recent work has focused on human marine resource use and its impacts, including economic valuation of natural resources, ocean acidification, marine spatial planning, and marine migratory species.

About The Ocean Foundation

The Ocean Foundation is a unique community foundation with a mission to support, strengthen, and promote those organizations dedicated to reversing the trend of destruction of ocean environments around the world. For more information, visit: <https://www.oceanfdn.org>. The Ocean Foundation is headquartered in Washington, DC.

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