

Feeding the Planet, Protecting our Oceans

Climate Week 2024

This event will highlight the potential of blue foods – foods derived from aquatic ecosystems – to help ensure resilient global food systems. The conversation will spotlight policy tools and innovative, scalable solutions that support both the environment and food security.

The program will include remarks from:

- **Stephanie Cornell**, Executive Director of the Walton Family Foundation
- **Jennifer R. Littlejohn**, Acting Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of State Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
- **Jim Leape**, Co-Director of the Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions
- **Dr. Cary Fowler**, U.S. Special Envoy for Global Food Security
- **Dr. Valerie Hickey**, Global Director for Environment at the World Bank
- **Ambassador Jeffrey Prescott**, U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture
- **Dr. Essam Yassim Mohammed**, Director General, WorldFish
- **Honorable Hassan Ali Joho**, Cabinet Secretary of Mining, Blue Economy, and Maritime Affairs, Government of Kenya

Speaker Bios



STEPHANIE CORNELL

Executive Director, Walton Family Foundation

Stephanie Dodson Cornell is a social entrepreneur, advocate and thought leader who has dedicated her career to tackling some of the world's most complex challenges at mission-based organizations. Today, she leads the Walton Family Foundation as its executive director. In her role, Stephanie works in close partnership with the Foundation Board to execute strategic priorities. Collaborating with more than 100 staff in four locations, she leads all aspects of day-to-day foundation operations, including grantmaking, strategic planning and evaluation. Prior to joining the Walton Family Foundation, Stephanie served as Managing Director at the Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation, a venture philanthropy firm supporting early-stage, high-impact social enterprises. She is the co-founder of several successful social ventures in the United States and internationally. These include Strategic Grant Partners, Project Healthy Children (now Sanku) and the Maranyundo Initiative. Currently, Stephanie serves on the advisory boards of The Elevate Prize and One8 Foundation. A fellow with Harvard's Advanced Leadership Initiative, she holds a BA in English and Environmental Studies from Oberlin College and an MBA from Stanford University.



JENNIFER R. LITTLEJOHN

Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Department of State

Jennifer “J.R.” Littlejohn is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and serves as the Acting Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs where she most recently served as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary. Prior to that, she served as the Deputy Director of the Secretary of State’s Policy Planning Staff and as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Skopje, North Macedonia. In Washington, Ms. Littlejohn has served as the Director for Central and Northern European Affairs on the National Security Council staff at the White House; Director for Policy Planning and Public Diplomacy in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor; Senior Advisor on the Secretary of State’s Executive Staff; and Special Assistant to the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs. Overseas, she has served as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Dili, Timor-Leste and the Executive Secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, in addition to assignments in Brazil, Thailand, and Germany. Ms. Littlejohn earned a Master of Science in National Resource Strategy from the National Defense University; a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University; and a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Morgan State University. She is a 2022-2023 International Women’s Forum Leadership Fellow, and the recipient of several State Department Superior Honor Awards. Prior to joining the Foreign Service, she was a Robert Bosch Foundation Fellow in Berlin, Germany, and a Thomas R. Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellow.



JIM LEAPE

Co-Director, Stanford Center for Ocean Solutions

Jim Leape serves as co-director of the Center for Ocean Solutions and is the William and Eva Price Senior Fellow in the Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment. Through research, writing, and direct engagement with private and public sector leaders, Jim looks at how to drive large-scale systemic shifts to sustainability, with particular interest in expanding private sector leadership on sustainability globally. Jim has more than three decades of conservation experience, spanning a broad range of conservation issues on every continent. From 2005 to 2014, he served as Director General of WWF International and leader of the global WWF Network, which is one of the world’s largest conservation organizations, active in more than 100 countries. Before going to WWF International, Jim directed the conservation and science initiatives of the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, a leading philanthropy in the U.S. Previously, he served as executive vice president of WWF-US in Washington, D.C.; as a lawyer for the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi, Kenya; as a law professor; and as a litigator for the National Audubon Society and for the U.S. Department of Justice. Jim serves on the boards of the Marine Stewardship Council, Mission 2020 and the Luc Hoffmann Institute, and on the Global Future Council for the Food Security and the Environmental Stewards Board of the World Economic Forum. Leape received an A.B. with honors from Harvard College and a J.D. with honors from Harvard Law School.



DR. CARY FOWLER

**Special Envoy for Global Food Security, Office of Global Food Security,
Department of State**

Known as the “father” of the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, Dr. Fowler currently serves as the Special Envoy for Global Food Security. He is the former Executive Director of the Global Crop Diversity Trust, an international organization cosponsored by Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Prior to leading the Crop Trust, he was a Professor at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences, and a senior staff member of Bioversity International. Earlier, he oversaw the UN’s first global assessment of the State of the World’s Plant Genetic Resources. He was responsible for drafting and negotiating the first FAO Global Plan of Action on the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources, formally adopted by 150 countries in 1996. Following this, Dr. Fowler twice served as Special Assistant to the Secretary General of the World Food Summit and represented the CGIAR in the multi-year negotiations on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources. In 2015, Dr. Fowler was appointed to the Board for International Food and Agricultural Development by President Obama. Born and raised in Tennessee, Cary Fowler served as the Chair of the Board of Trustees of Rhodes College in Memphis. He earned a B.A. with honors from Simon Fraser University in Canada, and his Ph.D. from Uppsala University in Sweden.



DR. VALERIE HICKEY

Global Director for Environment at the World Bank

Valerie Hickey is the Global Director for Environment (ENV) at the World Bank. Prior to that she was a manager for Advisory and Operations in the Climate Change Group, where she oversaw the implementation of the World Bank’s commitments on climate change, climate mainstreaming and climate finance, and before that the Practice Manager for ENV in Latin America and the Caribbean where she managed a cross-sectoral team that supported countries and communities on issues related to climate change, sustainable forest management, integrated conservation and development, integrated coastal zone management, fisheries, pollution management and environmental health, environmental economics and environmental risk management. Valerie joined the World Bank in 2003 as a specialist in East Asia and the Pacific, working on environment and rural development projects in Cambodia, China and Lao. Valerie has since worked across the Bank’s regions providing design and implementation support to a variety of operations, including in fragile states, where she led the Bank’s environment portfolio in Haiti following the earthquake in 2010. She has also led analytical work and technical assistance on frontier issues related to the blue economy, biodiversity and wildlife crime. Valerie focuses on solving problems and deploying the World Bank’s capital, convening services and analytical powers to unlock healthy nature as an engine of jobs and GDP, ensure healthy environments set communities, cities and whole countries up to succeed, and build green, inclusive and resilient economies. Before joining the World Bank, Valerie worked for World Wildlife Fund, the Wildlife Conservation Society and the US National Park Service where she worked on invasive species programs in Lake Mead, the reservoir to the Hoover Dam. Valerie holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Science and Policy from Duke University.



AMBASSADOR JEFFREY PRESCOTT

U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture

Ambassador Jeffrey Prescott serves as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture with the rank of Ambassador, at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations Agencies in Rome, Italy. Ambassador Prescott previously served as the Deputy to the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, leading Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield's Washington office at the Department of State.

Ambassador Jeffrey Prescott was nominated by President Biden on June 21, 2023, and confirmed by the Senate on February 8, 2024, to serve as the U.S. Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture with the rank of Ambassador, at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations Agencies in Rome, Italy. Ambassador Prescott previously served as the Deputy to the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, leading Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield's Washington office at the Department of State. During the Obama-Biden Administration, Ambassador Prescott served as then-Vice President Biden's Deputy National Security Advisor and his Special Advisor for Asian Affairs. He also served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Iran, Iraq, Syria, and the Gulf States on the National Security Council. Ambassador Prescott joined the Obama-Biden Administration in 2010 as a White House Fellow. Prior to the Biden-Harris Administration, he was Executive Director of National Security Action and Strategic Consultant to the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement at the University of Pennsylvania. Raised in Wichita, Kansas, Ambassador Prescott earned his B.A. from Boston University and his J.D. from Yale Law School.



DR. ESSAM YASSIM MOHAMMED

Director General, WorldFish

Dr. Essam Yassin Mohammed is the Director General of WorldFish, where he leads efforts to advance research and innovation in aquatic food systems. With a distinguished career in both fisheries science and environmental economics, Dr. Mohammed has authored numerous influential publications that have shaped policies and practices in sustainable development. His work emphasizes the integration of economic principles with conservation strategies, aiming to balance planetary health with human wellbeing. Dr.

Mohammed's leadership at WorldFish is marked by a commitment to leveraging science and technology to enhance food security, nutrition, and livelihoods across the globe. Under his guidance, WorldFish has expanded its impact through strategic partnerships and collaborative projects, reinforcing its role at the forefront of addressing global challenges related to water environments and fisheries. An acclaimed speaker and thought leader, Dr. Mohammed's expertise is regularly sought in international forums where he advocates for policy reforms and innovative approaches to manage aquatic ecosystems sustainably. His vision extends beyond immediate challenges, focusing on long-term strategies that foster resilient communities and thriving, diverse aquatic habitats.



HONORABLE HASSAN ALI JOHO

**Cabinet Secretary for Mining, Blue Economy and Maritime Affairs,
Government of Kenya.**

Cabinet Secretary Joho oversees the Ministry of Mining, Blue Economy, and Maritime Affairs for the Government of Kenya. Prior to his current role, Joho was the governor of Mombasa County and the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) deputy party leader. He was also elected to represent the Kisauni Constituency in the National Assembly of Kenya during the 2007 Kenyan parliamentary election.[2] On 4 March 2013, during the general election, Joho was elected as the first governor of Mombasa County. He holds a BA in Business and Human Resource Management from Kampala University.