U.S. Coral Reef Task Force
Award Recipients
Washington, D.C.
May 2006

Outstanding Scientific Advancement of Knowledge

Dr. Joseph H. Connell *For advancing scientific understanding of coral reef community dynamics and the mechanisms that maintain, harm and facilitate coral reef recovery through outstanding long-term observations, research, and the development of ground-breaking ecological theories.*

Dr. Joseph Connell is a Research Professor in the Ecology, Evolution & Marine Biology Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Connell's research has contributed to effective management of coral reefs through the development of invaluable ecological theories and empirical knowledge. His research was designed to increase the understanding of the mechanisms that maintain, harm, and facilitate recovery in coral reef ecosystems. Connell has spent over four decades studying the processes that influence community structure and species patterning in the coral reefs and rain forests of Australia, as well as the California coastal marine environment. Long-term observation and sampling by Connell of ecological communities of corals and algae on the Great Barrier Reef has arguably produced the single most valuable data set available for coral reef communities. Connell has been continuously funded (since 1962) by the National Science Foundation's Division of Ocean Sciences and Division of Environmental Biology.

Dr. John C. Ogden *For outstanding efforts to promote scientific understanding of coral reefs, from advancing undersea research to facilitating the application of science in organizations undertaking coral reef research, management and conservation throughout the world.*

Dr. John Ogden has been a Professor of Biology at the University of South Florida and Director of the Florida Institute of Oceanography since 1988. Ogden also helped to build the West Indies Laboratory in St. Croix (USVI), operate the saturation diving facility *Hydrolab* for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and direct the construction and initial operations of *Hydrolab's* successor, *Aquarius*. He was a member of the founding Advisory Council of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and is the former President of the International Society for Reef Studies. Ogden serves on the national boards of The Ocean Conservancy, SeaWeb, and the Florida Ocean Alliance of business and academia. He is a former national board member of the World Wildlife Fund and currently serves on its National Council. In addition, he is an appointee of the Secretaries of Commerce and Interior to the Marine Protected Area Federal Advisory Committee.

Outstanding Public Awareness and Education

Paul Humann and Ned Deloach *For outstanding efforts to advance public awareness and education through the creation of the authoritative guides to the identification of*

corals and coral reef organizations, and for founding an educational organization dedicated to enhancing scientific and public understanding of reef fish through volunteer monitoring.

Mr. Humann and Mr. DeLoach are a team of individuals that have made extraordinary contributions to increasing public awareness, appreciation, and understanding of coral reefs. They have published numerous field guides for the identification of corals, coral reef fishes, and other coral reef organisms, as well as described the behavior of coral reef organisms through books and video. Their authoritative guides are thoroughly researched and cover coral reefs in the Caribbean, tropical Atlantic, tropical Eastern Pacific and tropical Indo-Pacific regions. As a result of their work, the level of public awareness, appreciation, and knowledge about the diversity, beauty, and richness of coral reefs has been significantly enhanced. One of their important lasting contributions is the creation of the non-profit and non-advocacy organization, Reef Environmental Education Foundation (REEF). Through their efforts and vision for REEF, over 90,000 volunteer diver fish surveys have been conducted by the public over the last decade for use by scientists and managers. As coral reefs face increasing stress, community stewardship will play an increasingly critical role in promoting wise management decisions. REEF and the groundbreaking materials developed by Mr. Humann and Mr. DeLoach are playing a critical role in educating and inspiring innumerable divers, snorkelers, and other citizens about the splendors of the coral reefs and the need to protect and wisely manage them. Their combined efforts have done for coral reef fishes in particular, what Audubon has done for birds.

Outstanding Management

Dr. Alan E. Strong *For the innovative development and application of technology to create tools that advance effective management of coral bleaching, a major threat to coral reef ecosystems worldwide.*

Dr. Alan Strong recently retired from NOAA after 36 years of service developing ocean temperature technology for use in the management of coral reefs. In the 1990s, Dr. Strong developed the "Coral Bleaching HotSpot," a product that detects high temperatures likely to cause corals to bleach. Subsequently, Dr. Strong created the "Degree Heating Week" product which NOAA's Coral Reef Watch uses to "nowcast" coral reef bleaching from space. Dr. Strong received the Department of Commerce's Silver Medal and NOAA's Bronze Medal for this work. These products helped provide advance warning to coral reef managers and scientists of the record-setting 2005 Caribbean bleaching event. Moreover, these products have had a significant impact on advancing management and research on coral bleaching and raised public awareness of coral bleaching. Dr. Strong's work created an invaluable tool for the management of coral reefs, and a model upon which coral bleaching products and services are being developed worldwide.

Atlantic *Acropora* Biological Review Team (BRT) *For excellent collaborative research and assessment of the status of Caribbean Acroporids for potential listing under the Endangered Species Act. This status assessment allowed NOAA to fulfill its regulatory requirements in a timely fashion, and has proven invaluable in advancing scientific understanding of and management planning for these key coral species.*

Mr. Rafe Boulon
National Parks Service, Virgin Island National Park

Mr. Mark Chiappone
National Undersea Research Center, Florida Keys Research Program
Dr. Bob Halley
U.S. Geological Survey
Mr. Walt Jaap
Fish and Wildlife Research Institute
Dr. Bill Kruczynski
S. Florida Office of Water Management, Environmental Protection Agency
Dr. Brian Keller
Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
Dr. Margaret Miller
Southeast Fisheries Science Center, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
Dr. Caroline Rogers
U.S. Geological Survey, Caribbean Field Station

In 2003, NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) received a petition to list three species of coral under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Pursuant to federal regulations, NMFS convened a Biological Review Team (BRT) to review the status of the Caribbean Acroporids (*Acropora palmata, A. cervicornis*, and *A. prolifera*) in order to provide guidance to NOAA in determining if these species warranted protection under the ESA. The status review, "Atlantic *Acropora* Status Review," is a peer-reviewed compilation of scientific information and an assessment of current threats to *Acroporids*. The review describes the life history, abundance and distribution, long-term changes, and threats to *Acroporids*. Each member of the BRT dedicated invaluable time and effort in writing, editing and finalizing the review. The BRT's incredible efforts helped NOAA to fulfill its regulatory requirements in a timely fashion. The review has received many accolades from numerous peers on its quality, thoroughness, and utility. Currently, the review is being edited for submission as a NOAA Technical Memorandum; it is already utilized as required reading in undergraduate marine science and policy classes and as reference material at the graduate school level.

Coral Champion

Senator Daniel K. Inouye *For outstanding leadership and dedication to the conservation of our nation's coral reef ecosystems for future generations by fostering a culture of respect and stewardship, empowering coastal communities to nurture their connections to the fragile reefs that lie beside them.*

Daniel K. Inouye, the third most senior member of the U.S. Senate, is known for his distinguished record as a legislative leader, and as a World War II combat veteran who earned the nation's highest award for military valor, the Medal of Honor. Senator Inouye was first elected to the U.S. Senate in 1962 and is now serving his eighth consecutive term. When Hawaii became a state in 1959, he was elected the first Congressman from the new state, and was re-elected to a full term in 1960. As the Co-Chairman of the Commerce, Science and Transportation Subcommittee, Senator Inouye has been able to focus on ocean protection and conservation issues that are crucial for Hawaii, given its location in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. His efforts in this arena benefit not only the State of Hawaii, but enhance the quality of life for coastal communities around the

United States and its Territories, the Freely Associated States and other Pacific Island neighbor nations. Year after year, the Senator has bolstered coral reef research, conservation and protection efforts legislatively and through various appropriations. Senator Inouye has worked to create a robust, thriving and growing portfolio of marine conservation legislation and programs that benefit Hawaii and coral jurisdictions throughout the United States.