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SAVE THE WAVES

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Surfers of course, but also scientists, professionals and ordinary people. United against the overbuilding of the coast because the waves are the breath of the planet

SAVE THE WAVES

SHOULD YOU FIND YOURSELF IN SAN FRANCISCO ON THE 15TH OF JUNE, DON'T MISS THE SAVE THE WAVES COALITION PARTY FOR THEIR YEARLY FUNDRAISER, which celebrates – with music, art, film and fashion catwalks of vintage surf wet suits – the roots of surf culture, supporting the waves, the marine conservation area and the coast ecology. Amongst the sponsors, some of the most important brands, major players of the continually developing industry that support and sponsor the love for the sea, the centuries-old tradition of riding the waves, as well as the many worldwide top surfers. Just like any worthwhile story, ours have an interesting beginning: in 2001, Will Henry, journalist and photographer, is on holiday in Madeira, Portuguese Atlantic Ocean's surfers paradise, when he finds out about a government project that is due to destroy the famous point break of the Lugar de Baixo's waves, and replacing it with a touristic marina. A few days after the perfect wave, the perfect Lusitanian wave dies thanks to the sterile undertow of the new coastal profile. Will experiences first hand the despair of the local surfers and decides to intervene. Upon his return to the United States, together with some old friends, former pro surfers, scientists, celebrities and sports people – including the champion João De Macedo, portuguese, whose notch proudly displays the most dangerous and famous pipelines of the world, including Maverick – founds Save The Waves Coalition, with the objective to protect and prevent the destruction of eco systems, endangered surfing areas and surf culture and beaches across the globe.

“We want to protect the waves from over development and speculative buildings”, declares Ginaia Kelly, director of Save The Waves “from



SAVE THE WAVES

the political and industrial world has won over nature, with examples like Copacabana, the Maldives, Recife in Brazil, Long Beach in California, La Barre in France and The Cove in Washington, all places where there's nothing left to do.

“Our objective is to let the world know the value that waves have from an ecological point of view, and not only from an aesthetic point of view or as a sporty pastime” continues Ginaia. “I am 45 years old and have been surfing for the past 22. My passion for surf came about watching surfers and their respect for the sea which has brought me to understand the energy that waves bring about. The wave does not only represent the vital cycle, but a deep rooted connection with the world's thinking; when we are surfing, it talks to us, it penetrates us, the wave becomes us. And this is true for all, even to those who never enter the water. You don't need to live in the Amazon's forest to want to protect it”.

In the last 30 years, surf is no longer a hippies' pastime, it has become a status sport, a business, with its own economical and social impact wherever it is practiced. The geographical areas where surf is practised” declares Will Henry “have an immeasurable value, undervalued by politicians and business people. The clothing industry alone is worth over 8 billion dollars each year. In the United States alone there are over 2 million surfers, double the number compared to 20 years ago. The wave's value is a bit more complicated to monetize, because waves like those in Hawaii, Puerto Escondido in Mexico, Bali and the Mentawai islands in Indonesia, draw in not only those who surf, but also those who enjoy watching those who practice this sport. The reputation that an area earns where surf is practiced brings to the local community a massive value, even though many places where surf is becoming popular this value is underrated. An example is Half Moon Bay in California, that after discovering the Mavericks has attracted not only tourists, but one of the most important yearly international competitions in the world. Or let's think about Costa Rica, which has become one of the richest countries and



SAVE THE WAVES

the most economically stable of all Central America. In 2006, the numbers of surfers that visited the area were 100.278, with a profit of almost 208 million dollars, divided amongst a population of 4.4 millions inhabitants. The lesson to learn here for any government in the world is simple: don't mess with the waves". Of the same views father Patagonia, Yvon Chouinard: "The surf breaks are natural resources that should never be scarified, destroyed or modified, for any reason. They should be considered humanities resources, places of worldwide common interests, protected for and by all". Donations are welcome and necessary. Hang Loose, dude! ●

www.savethewaves.org

