

The Walton Family Foundation and Darden Restaurants Announce Collaborative Commitment to Action at 2013 Clinton Global Initiative Annual Meeting

Fishery Improvement Partnership Fund Will First Support Spiny Lobster Fishery in Honduras

NEW YORK CITY, (Sept. 25, 2013) -- Today at the 2013 Clinton Global Initiative (CGI) Annual Meeting, the Walton Family Foundation (WFF), in collaboration with Darden Restaurants, announced plans to create a Fishery Improvement Partnership Fund as an investment model that will help address overfishing – one of the biggest threats to the global seafood supply. Developed as an official [CGI Commitment to Action](#), the Fund will leverage philanthropic, industry and government resources to help develop and advance Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs) worldwide.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) will manage the Fishery Improvement Fund. WFF and its partners will develop a structure for matching contributions to the Fund, select projects that the Fund will support and evaluate the effectiveness of funded projects. Darden Restaurants, with New England Aquarium as its advisor, is an initial contributor, and WFF and its partners plan to identify and recruit other contributors to the Fund.

It is estimated that more than 400 FIPs are needed to meet buyer demand for sustainable seafood supply. The Fund's first project will support the spiny lobster fishery in Honduras. This fishery is worth nearly \$50 million in annual exports to the U.S. and provides direct employment to more than 4,000 people from coastal communities. Despite its economic importance, national management strategies and weak fisheries governance have made the fishery unsustainable.

“The foundation supports efforts to improve the long-term health and sustainability of fisheries around the world, and this collaborative model is a natural next step in that commitment that we look forward to replicating across the globe,” said Scott Burns, director of the Walton Family Foundation’s environment program. “The Fishery Improvement Partnership Fund aligns with our mission to find lasting, common-sense conservation solutions that strengthen economies and support local communities that depend on healthy oceans.”

The Walton Family Foundation has been a long-time supporter of FIPs. With the increasing demand for these projects, the need for funds to support FIPs outstrips the capacity of the philanthropic community. By establishing the Fishery Improvement Partnership Fund, the Walton Family Foundation seeks to better leverage other sources of funding to support FIPs and increase industry support of and participation in FIPs.

“We believe in a collaborative approach to support healthy ecosystems and are proud to serve as an initial contributor to the Fishery Improvement Partnership Fund as a sustaining and solution-oriented model for change,” said Brandon Tidwell, Manager of Sustainability for Darden Restaurants. “We are committed to catalyzing and supporting healthy fisheries to ultimately ensure a sustainable global seafood supply for future generations.”

This commitment builds upon Darden's 2011 CGI Commitment to rebuild troubled fisheries through three targeted FIPs around the globe. Darden's collaboration with CGI, WFF, NEAQ, NFWF and others demonstrates a renewed multi-stakeholder approach to meet the demand for FIPs and to foster ownership of conservation projects by the seafood industry.

As the Fund's initial project, WFF and its partners will support the spiny lobster fishery by improving the management and sustainability of the trap fishery and the long-term prospects for the Honduran fishermen and their communities. NFWF will issue an RFP this fall to solicit proposals from organizations already working in the region.

About the Walton Family Foundation

The Walton Family Foundation promotes environmental solutions that make economic sense for communities and their natural resources. The foundation works to achieve change that lasts by creating new and unexpected partnerships and bringing conservation, business and community interests to the same table to build long-term solutions to big problems.

The Walton Family Foundation invested \$91 million in environmental initiatives in 2012. A majority of the foundation's grants are made to organizations and programs that pursue lasting conservation solutions for oceans and rivers while also recognizing the role these waters play in the livelihoods of those who live and work nearby. The foundation divides its environmental giving into two initiatives:

- Freshwater Conservation, which works to sustain healthy and resilient communities of both people and wildlife in the Colorado River basin and along the Mississippi River from its headwaters to the delta; and
- Marine Conservation, which supports initiatives that create economic incentives for sustainable resource management in some of the world's most ecologically rich ocean areas, from Indonesia to Ecuador to the Gulf of Mexico.

About Darden Restaurants

Darden Restaurants, Inc., (NYSE: DRI), the world's largest full-service restaurant company, owns and operates more than 2,100 restaurants that generate over \$8.5 billion in annual sales. Headquartered in Orlando, Fla., and employing more than 200,000 people, Darden is recognized for a culture that rewards caring for and responding to people. In 2013, Darden was named to the FORTUNE "100 Best Companies to Work For" list for the third year in a row and is the only full-service restaurant company ever to appear on the list. Our restaurant brands – Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, Bahama Breeze, Seasons 52, The Capital Grille, Eddie V's and Yard House – reflect the rich diversity of the people who dine with us. Our brands are built on deep insights about what our guests want. For more information, please visit www.darden.com.

About the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores our nation's wildlife and habitats. Created by Congress in 1984, NFWF directs public conservation dollars to the most pressing environmental needs and matches those investments with private contributions. In 29 years, NFWF has funded more than 4,000 organizations and committed more than \$2.1 billion to conservation projects. Learn more at www.nfwf.org.

About the New England Aquarium

The New England Aquarium is a leader in the sustainable seafood movement. Their Sustainable Seafood Programs aim to protect the world's ocean resources by raising public awareness and working with the seafood industry to advance sustainable practices within wild-capture fisheries and aquaculture operations. Learn more at www.neaq.org/sustainableseafood.

About the Clinton Global Initiative

Established in 2005 by President Bill Clinton, the Clinton Global Initiative (CGI), an initiative of Bill, Hillary & Chelsea Clinton Foundation, convenes global leaders to create and implement innovative solutions to the world's most pressing challenges. CGI Annual Meetings have brought together more than 150 heads of state, 20 Nobel Prize laureates, and hundreds of leading CEOs, heads of foundations and NGOs, major philanthropists, and members of the media. To date CGI members have made more than 2,300 commitments, which are already improving the lives of more than 400 million people in over 180 countries. When fully funded and implemented, these commitments will be valued at \$73.5 billion.

CGI also convenes CGI America, a meeting focused on collaborative solutions to economic recovery in the United States, and CGI University (CGI U), which brings together undergraduate and graduate students to address pressing challenges in their community or around the world, and, this year, CGI Latin America, which will bring together Latin American leaders to identify, harness, and strengthen ways to improve the livelihoods of people in Latin America and around the world. For more information, visit clintonglobalinitiative.org and follow us on Twitter @ClintonGlobal and Facebook at www.facebook.com/clintonglobalinitiative.

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