

*Marine reserve dinner  
Davos, 24th January 2013  
Address of H.S.H. the Prince*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear Friends,

Our discussions have proved to be quite constructive on the issue of marine protected areas. Through them, not only is our relationship with nature at stake, but also with the economy and development.

From our conversations have emerged many essential aspects on marine protected areas: our capacity to protect the sea of course, our model of development, our food, and more broadly our relationship between nature and humanity.

Since it is time to conclude this evening, I would like to return briefly to a few key benefits, beyond the ecological ones that have been widely pointed out.

The first is the exemplary nature of these areas in terms of governance.

At a time when we openly question the ability of States to take action for the environment against a backdrop of crisis, marine protected areas offer new opportunities for cooperation at local, regional and even cross-border levels, as we have proved with the sanctuary. It offers great potential, not only for the marine protected areas, which need to be increased and strengthened, but more broadly speaking for other actions in favour of the environment.

The second point that I would like to highlight are the spin-offs in relation to fisheries.

The creation of off-shore reserves prohibited to fishing has enabled us, as we have seen, to increase the species, their size and their reproductive capacity. As such, these areas have had a positive impact on all the stocks, for which fisheries gain an indisputable advantage provided that they respect the non-fishing areas.

More generally, marine protected areas offer opportunities for very substantial economic spin-offs.

In this way, they embody a concept for environmental protection which is dear to me and which I believe is essential: a concept that does not separate ecology from the economy, but on the contrary builds on the strength of private stakeholders and humanity's thirst for development in order to invent a new model.

This is an aspect that we must promote with determination, as nothing can be achieved without the support of economic dynamics.

However, the protection of these critical areas cannot be considered exclusively from the immediate economic perspective either.

If we want to change the relationship of humanity with nature, we need to profit from the resources found in the marine protected areas in order to develop their cultural appeal, encompassing the scientific, educational and tourist sectors. We must

use them to pursue our fight for the environment: the mobilisation of our contemporaries, scientists, politicians, economic players and citizens...

Today, as in the past, I believe that these lobbying efforts are of utmost importance. As Lao Tzu stated "It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness."

Despite the darkness that surrounds the future of the ocean we must not lose hope. We still have so many candles to light!

Thank you.