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**Time to Fuse Science and Devotion: Carl Safina Proposes a Merger**

Cold Spring Harbor, NY –

Continuing where he left off with his critically acclaimed book *A View From Lazy Point*, Carl Safina, founder of Blue Ocean Institute at Stony Brook University, asked a rapt audience at the Institute's annual gala last night to merge knowledge and commitment to stabilize a rapidly overheating planet and a changing ocean.

"If science can't make biodiversity sufficiently sexy, and religion won't step up to love this blue planet, what's left? I propose a merger, but we can't expect scientists or religious people to do the merging...It is up to all of us, as usual, to carry this water. In our private and civic lives, our religious places, and our business dealings we must all merge a scientific love of knowledge with a devotion as consistent and values-based as any religion."

Speaking frankly about current challenges--from ocean acidification to overfishing-- Safina succeeded in conveying hope and inspiration. Part-poet, part-philosopher, and part scientist, Dr. Safina once again added his own refreshing twist. He followed his description of watching a Peregrine Falcon hunting high over the ocean with a quote from Yeats. He spoke of compassion, consumerism and values.

Safina referenced Jacques Cousteau's famous statement, "We protect only what we love" and went on to say that, "to protect effectively, we must fuse head and heart. Then, we can't just watch, and we can't just wait; we must also do. The falcon must search the waves, but it also must focus on a target and execute the plunge."

He concluded by asking listeners to merge and embody three things: "Passion in how we care. Cool-headedness in how we evaluate. Devotion in how we act." To celebrate the proposed merger Safina lead the crowd in a cheer of "The Ocean Is...Too Big to Fail!" He then encouraged all present to be part of the ocean's "bailout."

With over 200 ocean supporters in the room, Institute fund and friend-raising exceeded expectations at The Lighthouse at Pier 61 in Chelsea.

Another highlight of the evening was a talk by Sven-Olof Lindblad, founder of Lindblad Expeditions, who was honored for his role in introducing thousands of travelers to the beauty



and awe of nature. Sven's remarks gave the crowd a glimpse into the way serendipity led him from a love of Elephants and Black rhinos to founding an eco-tourism business that has raised over \$9 million to support local efforts in the destinations where it travels.

Safina told of a prolific year for the Institute which included two new books, his Saving the Ocean series airing on PBS, ongoing advances in ocean research, and successful educational programs such as Green Chefs/Blue Ocean. He previewed new initiatives such as an international youth ed program and companion tours of his books on Google Ocean.

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#### About Carl Safina

Carl Safina's writing explores the scientific, moral, and social dimensions of our relationship with nature. His writing has been awarded such distinctions as New York Times Notable Book of the Year, Los Angeles Times "Best Nonfiction," Library Journal's "Best Science Book," Lannan Literary Award, John Burroughs Medal and the National Academies' "Year's Best Book for Communicating Science." Safina is a recipient of the Pew Scholar's Award in Conservation and the Environment, Chicago's Brookfield Zoo's Rabb Medal, and a MacArthur "genius" prize, among many other honors. He is the founding president of Blue Ocean Institute and an adjunct professor at Stony Brook University.

#### About Blue Ocean Institute

Blue Ocean Institute creates an original blend of science, art, and literature that inspires a deeper connection with nature. Our books, films, and educational programs instill hope and enlighten personal choices, helping restore living abundance to the sea.

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