



# STATE OF THE COAST

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jimmy Frederick, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, 225-412-1784, [jimmy.frederick@crcl.org](mailto:jimmy.frederick@crcl.org)

### **Governor to Headline Impressive Slate of Speakers at State of the Coast 2018**

*Speakers to Provide Outside Perspective on Louisiana's Land Loss Crisis*

**Baton Rouge, LA (May 22, 2018)** The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana (CRCL), in partnership with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) and The Water Institute of the Gulf, is excited to announce that Governor John Bel Edwards will open the fifth biennial State of the Coast conference (SOC18) which will be held May 30-June 1, 2018 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans. This is the second time Governor Edwards has been the opening keynote speaker for the preeminent coastal conference in Louisiana. Along with Governor Edwards, SOC18 will feature Marvin Odum, Chief Recovery Officer for the City of Houston; and Dr. Jason Clay, Senior Vice President for Markets and Food for the World Wildlife Fund, as featured speakers during the two and half day conference.

The State of the Coast will bring together more than 1,000 scientists, natural resource managers, landowners, industry leaders and decision makers to share information and ideas.

"We live on a delta that is sinking while the water around us is rising. We need to work together to address our land loss crisis. The conference provides us a great opportunity to come together share information and consider our progress and plans," said Kimberly Davis Reyher, Executive Director of CRCL and host of the Conference. "We are very pleased that Governor Edwards will kick off that dialogue this year."

Governor Edwards will open the conference on Wednesday, May 30 at 9am. Marvin Odum, who's address is titled, "**Water, Water Everywhere: A conversation on urban flood resilience at the intersection of public and private sectors**" will speak at noon on Wednesday.

Dr. Clay will address the conference at noon on Thursday, May 31. His keynote will focus on "**Partnerships and Platforms: Learning at the speed and scale of change.**"

"We are not alone in the challenges we face. We need to consider lessons and insights from other regions and from around the globe as we chart our course. Marvin Odum and Jason Clay are dynamic speakers who will provide inspiration and perhaps challenge our thinking about what is possible for our coast," said Reyher.

Members of the media can register to attend all or part of SOC18 by clicking [here](#). We ask that you do so as soon as possible so that we can get an accurate count of attendees. Contact Jimmy Frederick at [jimmy.frederick@crcl.org](mailto:jimmy.frederick@crcl.org) to reserve a spot during these sessions.

#### **About Marvin Odum**

Mr. Odum serves as chief recovery officer for the City of Houston. He was appointed by Mayor Sylvester Turner in September 2017 after the historic damage Houston suffered as a result of Hurricane Harvey. Odum is retired chairman and president of Shell Oil Company and executive committee member of Royal Dutch Shell. He began his Shell career as an engineer in 1982 and served in a number of management positions. He also led Shell's major role in supporting New Orleans' recovery after Hurricane Katrina.

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Odum is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations and board member of the National Urban League. In addition, he is a member of the Dean's Council of the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and the Advisory Board of the Cockrell School of Engineering at The University of Texas at Austin. He earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from The University of Texas at Austin and a master's degree in business administration from the University of Houston.

#### **About Jason Clay, Ph.D.**

Dr. Clay serves as the Senior Vice President for Markets and Food and Executive Director of the The Markets Institute at the World Wildlife Fund. Dr. Clay joined the World Wildlife Fund in 1993 as a Consultant. He has taught at Harvard and Yale and spent 15 years with human rights non-governmental organizations (NGO) working with indigenous people, refugees and famine victims. In 1988, Clay invented Rainforest Marketing, created one of the first U.S. fair-trade ecolabels, and set up a trading company within an NGO. He has co-convened multi-stakeholder roundtables of producers, investors, buyers, researchers and NGOs to identify and reduce the impacts of salmon, soy, sugarcane, cotton and beef. In the past, Clay launched aquaculture, agriculture, and market transformation programs within the WWF Network. He has helped create corporate commitments around deforestation and brought attention to global issues such as illegality, degraded land and long-term contracts to use the market to change it. He is the author of 20 books and is National Geographic's first-ever Food and Sustainability Fellow. Clay was awarded the 2012 James Beard Award for his work on global food sustainability. He studied at Harvard University and the London School of Economics and holds a doctorate in anthropology and international agriculture from Cornell University.

#### **About SOC18**

The State of the Coast conference strives to provide an interdisciplinary forum to exchange timely and relevant information on the dynamic conditions of Louisiana's coastal communities, environment, and economy and to apply that information to existing and future coastal restoration and protection efforts, policies, and decision-making.

The **Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana**, in partnership with the **Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority** as well as **The Water Institute of the Gulf**, is proud to bring Louisiana the fifth State of the Coast conference, the definitive conference centered on the restoration and protection of Louisiana's coast.

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