TERRY GARCIA

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Nzatu Board of Advisors

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1. Can you tell us about your life and professional path?

My professional path has been one of interesting twists and turns. After working for several international NGOs early in my career, I made the decision to obtain a law degree. Following graduation and for the next 14 years, I represented domestic and international corporations and financial institutions at major global law firms in Los Angeles. I also developed a subspecialty in political law representing the California Democratic Party and various candidates for local, state and national office. In 1994, I was asked to join President Bill Clinton's administration as the General Counsel of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Two years after arriving in Washington, DC, I was nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate to be the Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere and the Deputy Administrator of NOAA. At the end of President Clinton's term in office I was hired by the National Geographic Society as Executive Vice President, a position I held for 17 years. While at National Geographic, I was appointed by President Obama in 2010 to serve on a Presidential Commission investigating the root causes of the explosion on the BP Deepwater Horizon drilling platform in the Gulf of Mexico. In 2016, I started my own consulting firm, Exploration Ventures.

2. You have played a key role in the growth and development of the National Geographic Society and steered the "Mission of Explorers". What is the role of NGS in addressing Environmental issues?

I was the Executive Vice President and Chief Science and Exploration Officer for National Geographic for 17 wonderful years. I like to tell people that I won the job lottery. My position at National Geographic was like no other in the world and I was fortunate to have held that position during what I consider to have been the golden age of the organization. In those roles, I was responsible for the Society's vast exploration enterprise that supported and managed more than 400 scientific field research, conservation and exploration projects annually. As a result of my team's efforts, the Society's science and education programs experienced significant growth in global impact and prominence. We developed and launched several major multi-year science and conservation initiatives in archaeology, ocean exploration genetic science, and wildlife conservation. We provided resources and expertise to United Nations and US Government efforts to raise public awareness and support for effective actions relating to climate and ocean issues, including assistance with the UN Secretary General's "High Level Event on Climate Change", and Secretary of State John Kerry's "Our Ocean Conference". I was also responsible for the National Geographic Museum and its international exhibitions' business which included exhibitions of Egypt's Tutankhamun treasures, the National Museum of Afghanistan's Hidden Treasures, one of the longest running traveling exhibitions in history, among others. I also oversaw the Society's retail licensing business and large format films.

However, I think I am most proud of the impact we had on protecting the world's natural, cultural and historical resources. Time and again by coupling our scientific research and exploration efforts with the powerful storytelling capabilities of the organization's media we were able to make meaningful contributions to conservation initiatives around the world.

3. Over the last few years you have created your own company, still focused on protecting cultural and natural heritage. Can you tell us more about it?

When I left National Geographic I founded a consulting company, ***Exploration Ventures****, a company that provides strategic advice and counsel to global clients in a range of industries, including science and technology, conservation, art, media, and education. Among the projects I am currently working on are several focused on climate and biodiversity protection. One such project is utilizing green finance (including carbon and biodiversity credits) to fund "at-scale" conservation efforts. Another involves application of new remote sensing technologies to better manage and protect marine protected areas.*

4. How do you see the global state of biodiversity loss and climate change? What is your idea on how to better protect life on our planet ?

Climate change and biodiversity loss are the defining issues of our time. At the UN Biodiversity Conference in Montreal, the message was loud and clear. One-third of the world's biodiversity is already degraded, impacting every aspect of life on earth. Habitats are being destroyed, natural resources are being depleted, and literally, thousands of plant and animal species have either gone extinct or are about to. Urgent action is needed at the global, regional, and local levels to find effective mechanisms to protect, conserve and restore these critical assets. And as important as decarbonization is, it's clear that it alone won't be enough to save the planet.

It's easy to be overwhelmed by the magnitude of the problems facing us. But there is good news: We know what needs to be done. We know how to do it. Together, we have the capacity to shape our destiny. It's just a matter of will.

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5. CoP 28 has started in Dubai. What is your opinion on these CoPs? Do you think that key decisions can be taken, or it is just a nice gathering of people with common interests? Paris 2015 has not yet brought serious results, should we hope that things can improve?

I do believe these conferences are constructive. They are important forums for elevating critical issues and communicating them to a global public. Will they alone solve the problem? No. But they can lay out a path forward if we're willing to take it. As I just noted, these are not insoluble problems. We know what needs to be done. The public and the business community needs to communicate forcefully to our governments the need to take action now.

6. You have joined Nzatu, a project born in Africa for Africa. Can Nzatu's strategy be a new economic model replacing donations?

Triple impact should be the standard for all conservation projects. Nzatu represents a new, exciting and powerful economic model that has the potential to accelerate and expand global efforts to improve conditions for people, wildlife and habitat.

7. Is regenerative agriculture a real solution? Can conservation organizations tap into it to create a larger impact on wildlife protection?

Yes, regenerative agriculture absolutely will play a critical role in protecting habitat and wildlife. Its emphasis on improving soil and water quality, reducing human wildlife conflict, creating diverse ecosystems, adopting measures that mitigate climate change, necessarily benefits wildlife and habitat.

8. Is the donation-based model, standard for most NGOs an archaic one? Or does philanthropy still have a role to play?

Philanthropy has and must continue to play an important role in conservation but it alone will not be sufficient. We have less than a decade to take the actions necessary to stabilize the planet's climate and biodiversity. To achieve this ambitious goal, the government, philanthropic and private sectors must be actively and meaningfully engaged.

9. What should be the roles of the private and public sectors? Is there enough investment and commitment? Should we think of a much larger communication effort on biodiversity losses, climate change ?

The Paulson Institute's ***Financing the Biodiversity Gap*** *estimated that to reverse the decline in biodiversity by 2030 we would need an additional $711 billion per year. With philanthropy and government alone, reaching this number is likely impossible. If we are to successfully meet this challenge, we must bring to bear the combined resources of government, philanthropy, and the private sector.*

And yes, communication is critical. We need to be relentless in communicating how important a healthy environment is to economic growth and stability of our communities and our daily lives. If I learned anything at National Geographic, it is that storytelling can change the world.

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10. What is the future of exploration? Is it tied to conservation? How can we push the frontiers for the good of humanity?

During my time at National Geographic, hundreds of scientists and explorers came through my office on their way into the field in search of the truth. Almost without exception, each of them returned with a commitment to improve our planet. Because the truth they found was that things were slipping away. Our planet's natural, cultural and historical resources were disappearing.

I recently wrote a book with photographer Chris Rainier called ***The Future of Exploration****. We recruited 36 prominent scientists and explorers to provide their views on the importance of exploration how it is changing (particularly with the advent of new technologies) and where it may lead us in the future. Interestingly many of the explorers, particularly those early in their careers, argued that exploration in the future must be about more than finding new lands, rather it must be about finding solutions to global challenges—"exploration with purpose".*

Its axiomatic, that you can't manage and protect what you don't know. And there's so much about our planet that we don't understand. This means exploration and explorers are more important than ever. As oceanographer Sylvia Earle has often said: ***the first step in changing the world is knowing. And with knowledge comes caring, and with caring comes action.***

THE FUTURE OF EXPLORATION

A STORY OF HOPE FOR PLANET EARTH

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