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Casa Presidencial, República de Costa Rica  
Apartado Postal 520-2010  
Zapote, San José

RE: Law Project No. 17.383 entitled "Law to rectify the Leatherback Marine National Park's Boundaries and Creation of Guanacaste's Leatherback National Wildlife Refuge"

As scientists from around the world concerned with the biodiversity extinction crisis exacerbated by global climate change, we urge you to reject the proposed legislation that will downgrade the Las Baulas National Park.

In 1995 Costa Rica recognized its unique responsibility in ensuring the continued survival of the Pacific leatherback by protecting one of the last nesting beaches in the eastern Pacific and the other delicate ecosystems of Ventanas, Grande, and Langosta Beach, through the creation of Las Baulas National Park by Law. Las Baulas National Park is critical to the survival of the Pacific leatherback sea turtle (*Dermodochelys coriacea*), declared as critically endangered by the World Conservation Union (IUCN). Populations of Pacific leatherback sea turtles have crashed by 90 percent over the past two decades and are not recovering. Today, fewer than 1,000 nesting female leatherbacks survive in the entire eastern Pacific. Las Baulas National Park has an exceptional global value as it provides the most important nesting site for this remaining eastern Pacific population.

On behalf of the undersigned scientists we are writing to urge you to reject Law Project No. 17.383 pending before the Environment Commission of the Legislative Assembly, that proposes to downgrade Las Baulas National Park to a Mixed National Wildlife Refuge and open its beaches up to coastal construction projects. With Pacific leatherback sea turtles so perilously close to extinction it is inconceivable to remove this protection and allow development in sensitive areas near the turtles' nesting sites. Such developments will have a negative impact on the nesting process of the leatherback through lighting, additional access of people, vehicles and domestic animals, and could likely lead to the elimination of this most important population of leatherbacks. Furthermore, global climate change is expected to bring rising seas, and development behind the current nesting beaches will prevent leatherback turtles to adapt to a changing environment.

In addition, if this legislation is passed it will undermine Costa Rica's reputation as a global leader in conservation through its "Peace with Nature" initiative. This policy catapulted Costa Rica to the front of the line of countries committed to the preservation and protection of their natural resources and its longstanding commitment to the preservation of sea turtles.

Over the past few years multiple bills have been written proposing to rezone Las Baulas National Park and open its beaches up to coastal construction projects, and fortunately every one of these bills has been rejected. We urge you to do the same with bill 17.383 and continue Costa Rica's commitment to protecting the critically endangered leatherback sea turtle, preserving its national parks, and investing in the extraordinary abundance of life protected within their boundaries.

Dr. Sylvia Earle	National Geographic Society	Oceanographer	United States of America
Dr. David Ehrenfeld	Rutgers University	Professor of Biology	United States of America
Dr. Carl Safina	Blue Ocean Institute	Oceans Scientist, Author Director, Hopkins Marine	United States of America
Dr. David Epel	Stanford University	Laboratory Director, Marine Spatial	United States of America
Dr. George Shillinger	Center for Ocean Solutions	Planning Endowed Chair for	United States of America
Dr. Thoma Shirley	Harte Research Institute, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi	Biodiversity and Conservation Science Distinguished Professor or	United States of America
Dr. Daniel Costa	University of California, Santa Cruz	Ecology & Evolutionary Biology	United States of America



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Dr. George Shillinger	Center for Ocean Solutions	Planning Endowed Chair for	United States of America
Dr. Thoma Shirley	Harte Research Institute, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi	Biodiversity and Conservation Science Distinguished Professor or	United States of America
Dr. Daniel Costa	University of California, Santa Cruz	Ecology & Evolutionary Biology	United States of America

Global Scientists in Support of Las Baulas National Park

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	Todd	Steiner	Turtle Island Restoration Network	Sea Turtle Researcher United States of America
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Dr. Stuart	Pimm			United States of America
Dr. Matthew	Witt	University of Exeter	Leatherback Turtle Biologist	United Kingdom
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Dr. Shaya	Honarvar	Drexel University	Sea Turtle Researcher	United States of America
Dr. Dean	Bagley	University of Central Florida	Sea Turtle Biologist Distinguished Research Professor & Australian Laureate	United States of America
Dr. William	Laurence	James Cook University		Australia
			Distinguished Professor	
Dr. Victor	Vacquier	Scripps Institution of Oceanography	Emeritus of Marine Biology Professor and Director, Institute of Earth Science & Engineering	United States of America New Zealand
Dr. Peter	Malin	University of Auckland		New Zealand
Dr. Kostas	Alexandridis	University of the Virgin Islands	Assistant Professor	Virgin Islands
Dr. Nilda	Aponte	University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez	Professor	Puerto Rico
Dr. Don	Armstrong	University of California, Riverside	Postdoctoral Researcher Research Professor of Marine Sciences	United States of America
Dr. Peter	Auster	University of Connecticut		United States of America
Dr. Allen	Austin	University of California, Riverside	Researcher	United States of America
Dr. Gerald J.	Bakus	University of Southern California	Professor of Biology	United States of America
Dr. Richard	Barber	Duke University	Oceanographer	United States of America
Dr. Giacomo	Bernardi	University of California, Santa Cruz	Professor	United States of America
Dr. Brian	Bowen	University of Hawaii Romberg Tiburon Center for Environmental Studies	Scientist	United States of America
Dr. Kathy Marie	Boyer	San Francisco State University	Associate Professor, Biology	United States of America
Dr. Jeanne	Buscot	Charles Darwin University	Scientist	Australia
Dr. Craig	Cary	University of Delaware	Professor	United States of America
Dr. Hsu	Cheng Wei	Ntou	Postgraduate	Taiwan
Dr. Peter	Chesson	University of Arizona	Professor	United States of America
Dr. Maria	Christanen	Radboud University Nijmegen	Researcher	Netherlands
Dr. Leslie	Cornick	Alaska Pacific University	Professor Marine Biology	United States of America
Dr. Charles	Cox	Scripps Institution of Oceanography	Scientist, Retired	United States of America
Dr. John	Culliney	Hawaii Pacific University	Professor of Biology Director, Regional Monitoring Program	United States of America
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Dr. Richard	Di Giulio		Professor	United States of America
Dr. Alan	Duckworth	Blue Ocean Institute	Research Scientist	United States of America
Dr. Chris	Evans	Hawaii Pacific University California Department of Toxic Substance Control	Faculty	United States of America
Dr. Brian	Faulkner		Environmental Toxicologist	United States of America
Dr. Rita Malia	Fincher	Samford University	Assistant Professor	United States of America
Dr. Sabrina	Fossette	Swansea University	Researcher	United Kingdom
Dr. Jed	Fuhrman	University of Southern California	Professor of Biology	United States of America
Dr. Robinson	Fulweiler	Boston University	Scientist	United States of America

Global Scientists in Support of Las Baulas National Park

Dr. Silvia	Galli	University of Pisa	Scientist	Italy
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Dr. Denis	Goulet	University of Mississippi	Professor, Lecturer	United States of America
Dr. Erin	Grey	Tulane University	Postdoctoral Fellow	United States of America
Dr. Thomas	Grothues	Rutgers University	Marine Scientist Lecturer, Department of	United States of America
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Dr. David	Hastings	Eckerd College	Professor of Marine Science	United States of America
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Dr. Xavier Laura	Hoerner	Charles Darwin University	Scientist	Australia
Dr. Graciela	Huaquin	Chile University	Retired, Associate Professor	Chile
Dr. Stephen	Hubbell	University of California, Los Angeles	Professor	United States of America
Dr. Stuart	Hurlbert	San Diego State University	Professor	United States of America
Dr. Sarah	Inkpen	College of the North Atlantic Qatar	Professor	Qatar
Dr. Tara	Ivanochko	University of British Columbia	Professor	Canada
Dr. Jeremy	Jackson	University of California	Professor	United States of America
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Dr. Les	Kaufman	Scientist, Conservation International	Marine Biologist	United States of America
Dr. Les	Kaufman	Boston University Marine Program	Marine Biologist	United States of America
Dr. William	Kirby-Smith	Duke University Marine Laboratory	Professor Emeritus Professor of the Practice of	United States of America
Dr. William	Kirby-Smith	Duke University Marine Laboratory	Marine Ecology	United States of America
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Dr. Arthur	Kopelman	CRESLI	Professor	United States of America
Dr. Patricia	Kremer	University of Connecticut	Research Professor	United States of America
Dr. Michael	Landry	Scripps Institution of Oceanography	Professor	United States of America
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Dr. David	Mellinger	Oregon State University	Resources Studies	United States of America
Dr. Manuel	Merchán	Asociación Chelonia	Biologist Ph.D.	Spain
Dr. Glenn	Morris	University of Toronto	Professor	Canada
Dr. Brian	Nelson	Ithaca College Only One Planet Consulting	Professor	United States of America
Dr. Jonathan	Nevill		Director Postdoctoral Research	Australia
Dr. Beth	Orcutt	University of Aarhus	Associate	Denmark
Dr. Paresh	Pandya	University of Windsor	Professor/Director	Canada
Dr. Neil	Pelkey	Juniata College	Associate Professor	United States of America
Dr. Frank	Pezold	Texas A&M University	Professor	United States of America
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Dr. Stephen	Pond	University of British Columbia	Professor Emeritus	Canada

Global Scientists in Support of Las Baulas National Park

			Associate Professor of	
Dr. Keith	Probert	University of Otago	Marine Science	New Zealand
Dr. William	Redfoot	University of Central Florida	Biologist	United States of America
Dr. Peter	Reed	Self Employed	Professor	United States of America
Dr. Kristine	Richardson	University of California, Riverside	Environmental Toxicologist	United States of America
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Dr. Jeffrey	Schell	Sea Education Association	Professor of Oceanography	United States of America
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Dr. Jesse	Senko	University of Florida	Biologist	United States of America
Dr. Barry	Sherr	Oregon State University	Professor of Oceanography	United States of America
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Dr. Thomas	Thomas	Texas A&M University	Professor	United States of America
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Dr. Nicolas	Wienders	Florida State University	Oceanographer	United States of America
Dr. Stephen	Wood	Florida Institute of Technology	Professor	United States of America
Dr. Gerald	Bakus	University of Southern California	Professor	United States of America
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Dr. David	Block	Block Environmental Services	CEO	United States of America
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Ciapha G.	Abule	SAMFU	Conservationist	Liberia
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Kevin	Aceituno	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Environmental Toxicologist	United States of America
			Science and Environment	
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Global Scientists in Support of Las Baulas National Park

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Dupré	Alai	SOPTOM/CHELONEE	Vice-President	France
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Jane	Allen	Jumby Bay Hawksbill Project	Producer	United States of America
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Claude	Bigot	Private	Scientist	France
Jason	Bloom	Concerned Citizen	Scientist Student	United States of America
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		Programa Restauracion de Tortugas		
Andy	Bystrom	Marinas (PRETOMA)	Sea Turtle Researcher	Costa Rica
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Global Scientists in Support of Las Baulas National Park

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Mary	Foley	Shark Alliance	Teacher	Ireland
Chialing	Fong	National Taiwan Ocean University	Student	Taiwan
Christine	Fontaine	Self	Scientist	United States of America
Gwendelyn	Foster	De La Salle University Manila	Scientist Student	Philippines
Charles	Fox	EBSP Turtle Patrol	Scientist, Retired	United States of America
Andrea	Freeman	Awakening Wonder	Teacher, Naturalist, Poet	United States of America
Sarah	Frias-Torres	Ocean Research & Conservation Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation	Marine Biologist	United States of America
Rebecca	Frick	Commission	Biologist	United States of America
Jean-Pierre	Furio	Private	Scientist	Belgium

Global Scientists in Support of Las Baulas National Park

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Gaye	Gamble	Self Employed	Artist	United States of America
Alexander	Gaos	ICAPO	Scientist	United States of America
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Maeva	Gartheir	James Bay Marine Ecology Program	Masters Candidate	Canada
Elena	Geoagiadou	Self Employed	Scientist	United Kingdom
Michelle	Giberti	Self Employed	Revenue Manager	United States of America
Wendy	Gibson	Homemaker	Housewife	Singapore
Jann	Gilbert	Australian Seabird Rescue	Marine Science Student Self Employed Horse	Australia
Martha	Gilchrist	Self Employed	Trainer	United States of America
Anna	Givens	Save the Turtles, Inc.	RN	United States of America
Adrian	Gleiss	Swansea University	Student	United Kingdom
Maria	Gonzalez			
Eugenia	Castellanos	Self Employed	Business Administrator	Mexico
Andrea	Grabman	EBSP Environmental Learning Center	Scientist Naturalist	United States of America
Kristine	Halager	NOVA/Broward Co Sea Turtle Project	Sea Turtle Specialist	United States of America
Kathy	Hall	Proyecto Tortugas Marinas	Marine Biologist	Puerto Rico
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Helga	Hansmann	Self Employed	Assistant	Germany
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Christopher	Hilpl	Sea Turtle Restoration Project Lakshadweep Marine Research and	Retired, Scientist	United States of America
Jafer	Hisham	Conservation Centre	Chief Executive Officer	India
Ray	Hobbs	WIDECAST	Scientist, Consultant	United States of America
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Chia-Yi	Hou	Wildlife Trust	Program Assistant	United States of America
Rebecca	Howland	Hanging Cup Pictures	President	United States of America
Dr. Kerstin	Huf	Individual	Entrepreneur	Germany
Tom	Hughes	Wildlife Trust	Project Coordinator	Malaysia
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Thanhthao	Huynh	Medicine	Student	United States of America
Jose	Infante	Pace University	Enrollment Management	United States of America
Marie	Jayne	University of Richmond	Scientist Student	United States of America
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Cathy	Johnson	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Environmental Toxicologist	United States of America
Leslie	Julian	Self Employed	Realtor	United States of America
Maria	Justice	P/C Company	Technical Support	United Kingdom
Raiyan	Kamal	Mukto Software Ltd.	Software Engineer	Bangladesh

Global Scientists in Support of Las Baulas National Park

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L. Tess	Keith	University of the Pacific	Masters Candidate	United States of America
Lucy	Keith	Wildlife Trust	Marine Biologist	United States of America
Jennifer	Keller	NIST	Scientist	United States of America
Caroline	Kelly	Kappa Alpha Theta	Scientist Student	United States of America
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Global Scientists in Support of Las Baulas National Park

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Global Scientists in Support of Las Baulas National Park

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Global Scientists in Support of Las Baulas National Park

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