

# iFAST: The International Forum on Advanced Environmental Sciences and Technology

*A series of distinguished seminars by eminent scientists*

8 a.m. CDT; 9 a.m. EDT; 1 p.m. GMT; 9 p.m. Beijing

Wednesday, May 26, 2021



**Nancy Knowlton**  
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Nancy Knowlton is a coral reef scientist who has spent much of her career at the Smithsonian, initially at the Tropical Research Institute and most recently at the National Museum of Natural History, where she is the Sant Chair Emerita of Marine Science. She was also a professor at Yale and the founding director of the Center for Marine Biodiversity and Conservation at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California San Diego. She is the author of *Citizens of the Sea* and former editor-in-chief of the Smithsonian's *Ocean Portal*. In 2013 she was elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and to the U.S. National Academy of Sciences. She is a winner of several environmental awards, most recently the International Coral Reef Society's Darwin Medal. For over a decade, she has focused on sharing solutions to environmental problems. In 2014 she helped launch #OceanOptimism on Twitter, and in 2017 she co-hosted the inaugural Smithsonian Earth Optimism summit.

## Earth Optimism: Changing the Conservation Conversation and the Earth's Trajectory

An unrelenting torrent of bad news about the environment has led many to believe that a trajectory of ever worsening environmental catastrophe is inescapable. While the gravity of the climate and biodiversity crises is undeniable, the past decades have also witnessed a growing number of successes, from saving species and protecting places to reducing pollution, restoring habitats and addressing climate change. However, too many of these successes are poorly known, even among conservation professionals, and ignoring them makes failure more likely. This is why I helped to launch the #OceanOptimism initiative and more recently the Earth Optimism Summits, whose goals are to recognize, learn from, replicate and celebrate conservation success. In this talk I will share some examples and the lessons they provide.



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