Join us in bringing the wisdom and leadership of coastal tribes from across the United States and Territories to the global conversation on climate change: how to solve it and how to adapt to it.

The Inaugural Symposium
July 17-20, 2012
National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, DC.

Hosted by the four coastal treaty tribes in Washington state—the Hoh, Makah, Quileute and Quinault Nations

With partners:
American Native Renewables
EA Engineering, Science, and Technology
National Congress of American Indians
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Salmon Defense
The Nature Conservancy
The Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian
United South and Eastern Tribes
Uncas Consulting Services
Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council

Everyone I know seems to have a story about how climate change is affecting their family. Coastal cultures are on the leading edge of this change, and we need to make sure our stories are heard.

Native communities around the world have been adapting to changes in our surroundings for millennia. Whether reacting to changes due to natural occurrences or human interference, our cultures have won the struggle for survival by finding balance in a new world order.

Today we are wondering what the new balance can and should be in the face of climate change. We are not alone in this plight, but we have unique insights to share. The symposium is an invitation from the four coastal treaty tribes in Washington state for Native and non-Native leaders to bear witness to the impacts of climate change on coastal tribal cultures.

The Makah, Quileute, Hoh and Quinault Nations—whose lives and cultures are at severe risk—are actively searching for a new balance on both the adaptation and the solution sides of climate change—for all of us. They have asked coastal tribes from the Pacific Islands, Alaska, East Coast, Great Lakes and the Gulf of Mexico to join them and begin a new conversation about climate change at a symposium entitled FIRST STEWARDS: Coastal Peoples Address Climate Change.
Become a Sponsor

Your organization can play a prominent role in this historic event by joining us as a Sun or Moon sponsor.

Sun sponsors ($100,000) will be recognized by symposium leaders at special events over the course of the symposium.

Moon sponsors ($50,000) will join symposium partners and other leaders at a special evening reception.

The attached packet provides specific sponsorship information.

The key questions before more than 300 Native and Western leaders in attendance will be:

"What can we, as the oldest inhabitants and living cultures of the planet, do to help our communities adapt to climate change? What can we add to the knowledge and work of Western scientists to predict and respond to climate change?"

Each coastal region has unique stories and science to share about the impacts of climate change and their experiences as sentinels. These stories will be witnessed collectively so that they can become part of the worldwide conversation about climate change and how we respond.

Together with the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian, two important science-based national organizations—NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and The Nature Conservancy—have joined the symposium partnership because they are convinced that Native cultures have essential knowledge and experiences to share.

I would like to discuss this with you in person, let you know why I see this as vital in the world’s work on climate change, and ask for your help to make your organization a sponsor of the inaugural First Stewards event.