



HILLARY INSTITUTE

THE ASCENT OF GREAT LEADERSHIP

Press Release

EMBARGOED 7AM JUNE 5TH

HILLARY STEP PRIZE AWARDED

Named after the final reach of the ascent of Mt Everest, the 2015 Hillary Step (NZD100K) prize has been awarded co-jointly to Hillary Institute global Laureates ATOSSA SOLTANI, Founder/Chair of Amazon Watch and MICHAEL BRUNE, Executive Director of the Sierra Club.

Responding to the COP 21 imperative of keeping global warming to below 2⁰ C, Hillary Laureates Soltani (2013) and Brune (2014) have crafted a consortium of 60 NGO and indigenous leaders from the top of Alaska, to the tar sands of Canada to the forests of the South American Amazon, creating a coordinated, action strategy for '*Keeping it in the Ground across the Americas*'. The outcome will impact the UN Climate Summit in Paris, but will importantly also go beyond it.

"Mike and Atossa put a compelling proposition to our international governors in this vital year for concerted global action on Climate Change" says Hillary Institute Executive Director Mark Prain.

Acknowledgement that major impacts of our fossil fuel economy are frequently borne not by those who profit most, but by front-line and indigenous communities (with the least resources to adapt), is core to the strategy – and core to the Institute's 2012-15 focus on Climate Equity.

"These two Laureates have provided remarkable mid-career leadership over two decades, heading extraordinary organisations across North and South America" adds Institute Chair Anake Goodall.

"The Hillary Institute was established to champion exactly this calibre of future-focused leadership in a time of unprecedented global challenges".

2010 Laureate Peggy Liu (China) was the first recipient of the Hillary Step prize in 2012 to support the development of the "China Dream" project, a low carbon re-imagining and programme of action for the aspirations of the world's fastest-growing middle class.

Founded to honour the global leadership legacy of Sir Edmund Hillary and launched with him in 2007, the Hillary Institute has named six global Hillary Laureates since 2009 for exceptional mid-career leadership in Climate Change solutions and Climate Equity.

The inaugural Laureate was Jeremy Leggett (UK). He was followed by Peggy Liu (China – 2010); Aimee Christensen (US – 2011); President Anote Tong (Kiribati – 2012), Atossa Soltani (Amazon Watch – 2013) and Mike Brune (US – 2014).

For more info on all Laureates and the work of the Institute, based in New Zealand, see

www.hillaryinstitute.com

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