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# Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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## **Bahamas Honours Environmental Champion and Founder of The Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation (BREEF)**

A memorial service was held for Sir Nicholas K.L. Nuttall, founder of the Bahamas Reef Environment Educational Foundation, on the 28<sup>th</sup> July. The memorial was held by the water at the Clifton Heritage Park.



Over 230 family and friends attended the sunset memorial, honouring the life of a champion for protecting the Bahmian waters. Sir Nicholas was recognised by Minister of the Environment Hon. Earl Deveaux as drawing the public and the government's attention to the need to be proactive in protecting our marine environment and sustaining our fisheries resources.

Sir Nicholas played a crucial role bringing together fishermen, scientists, the public and decision-makers to embrace the concept of marine protected areas. The Bahamas is now in the process of establishing a network of reserves that will encompass 20 percent of the marine habitat of the country. In addition, Sir Nicholas was instrumental in encouraging the protection of Nassau grouper during their spawning period, in order to sustain this valuable but endangered species. Many other countries in the region have since followed The Bahamas' lead to implement protection for this fish and the fishery and tourism industries that depend on it.

BREEF executive director, Casuarina McKinney Lambert, acknowledged Sir Nicholas' care for both the environment and all people who rely on a healthy marine environment for their livelihood and way of life.

Chris Maxey, director of the Cape Eleuthera Island School, remembered Sir Nicholas' enthusiasm and sense of fun when teaching young Bahamians about the environment. Kim Aranha, a founding BREEF board member, recognised that the characteristics of perseverance, strength and good humour that he developed during his earlier training as a soldier and an engineer equipped him well for his later role as environmentalist. Cyprianna McWeeney, reminded the gathering about Sir Nicholas' important role in protecting Clifton as a national park for the enjoyment of present and future Bahamians. A plaque will be installed at Clifton to honour him there.

BREEF, under Sir Nicholas' leadership, has had a strong impact building an environmental ethic in The Bahamas, encouraging the public to call for action to protect the seas and coastal areas around us. This increased awareness has been achieved particularly through BREEF's marine conservation teacher training workshops that have given hundreds of Bahamian educators intensive hands-on experiences in the marine environment that they can take back to their schools and share with thousands of students.

The Bahamas has lost a champion for the marine environment, but his legacy will live on in the hearts and minds of all the people who came into contact with him, and through BREEF with the leadership of Eugenie Lady Nuttall and Craig Symonette (co-chairs of the BREEF board of directors), BREEF executive director, Casuarina McKinney Lambert, and the members and supporters of BREEF.

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Founded in 1993, BREEF is a non-profit Bahamian foundation that promotes a sustainable relationship between Bahamians, visitors and our marine environment. It achieves this through teacher training, public education, fisheries workshops and school programmes. The organization is supported entirely by membership dues and grants and donations from members and sponsors. Please contact BREEF with any questions, or to find out how you can get involved. BREEF is located at Caves Village, West Bay St., New Providence. Tel: 327-9000, Fax: 327-9002, email: [breef@breef.org](mailto:breef@breef.org).