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Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance Charts New Course

Dorry to Take the Helm as Coordinating Director

Saco, Maine - Following an extensive search for the new coordinating director, the Board of Trustees of the Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance (NAMA) welcomes Niaz Dorry on board. In addition to hiring their new director, the NAMA board itself is changing leadership with Curt Rice, a commercial fisherman for 30 years, taking over the role of Board Chair.

"We are thrilled at what the future holds for NAMA with the addition of Niaz and the new energy of our board," said Rollie Barnaby, outgoing board chair and one of the original founders of NAMA. "Niaz brings a wide range of skills, an international perspective and solid on the ground experience that can help NAMA chart its new course for the future."

The selection of Dorry follows a search that began following the resignation of Craig Pendleton, a founding member of NAMA and its director for the past 10 years.

"I have pretty big feet, but there is no way I can fill Craig's shoes," said Dorry. "His work was essential to NAMA's development and the health of the region's marine ecosystem and fishing communities. Now we have to determine how best to build on that work in order to take NAMA into its next decade. I'm excited to play a part in forming that vision and body of work."

Over the next three months, NAMA's new board and staff will work with Niaz to focus on the organization's strategic direction.

"The need for NAMA is as critical today and our principles as strong as they were ten years ago," said Curt Rice, the new board chair. "We have a very solid foundation to build our future upon and our board is looking forward to working with Niaz to design and implement our new plans."

Niaz took NAMA's helm on March 1, 2008. She is a veteran activist living in Gloucester, Massachusetts who began working with small-scale, traditional, and indigenous fishing communities in the U.S. and from around the globe as a Greenpeace oceans and fisheries campaigner. After leaving Greenpeace in 2001 she continued her work in advancing the rights and ecological benefits of the small-scale fishing communities as a means of protecting global marine biodiversity.

In 2005, she founded Clean Catch which later became a project of NAMA. She ran the project as a volunteer. The project's mission initially was to investigate the impact of persistent bio-accumulative toxicants and fossil fuels on the reproduction and overall health of marine species, particularly species under local, state, federal, or international rebuilding programs intended to revive stocks to biologically healthy levels. But the tragic events of the 2004 tsunami drove NAMA and Clean Catch to work together in supporting the lives and livelihoods of fishermen in Asia putting Clean Catch's original mission on hold.

Since she began working on fisheries issues in 1994, Niaz' main objective has been to bridge the gap between small-scale fishing communities, the environmental movement and the larger progressive community. Time Magazine named Niaz as a "Hero For The Planet" for her work with fishing communities. She is also an accomplished writer whose articles have appeared regularly in Fishermen's Voice, SAMUDRA (publication of the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers) and a range of other publications.

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