



James five minute remarks to AIPA GA

- Good morning/afternoon and greetings to all of the honored people here today.
- Firstly, I'd like to thank the President of AIPA and the President of the National Assembly of Kingdom of Cambodia, Samdech Akka Moha Ponhea Chakrei Heng Samrin, for the gracious invitation to be here today at this General Assembly.
- I'd also like to recognize the AIPA Members of Parliaments; AIPA Observers Parliaments; and other honored Guests of the Host, like ICCF Group.
- Welcome to the 43rd AIPA General Assembly, where legislators can showcase their country's leadership in a multitude of issues and committees, but I'm here today to support strong conservation policy.
- My name is James Ward, and I'm the Asia Director of ICCF Indonesia, which is part of the ICCF Group.

- ICCF Group is a global NGO that works to advance conservation governance by building political will and providing on-the-ground environmental solutions to legislators and parliamentarians around the world.
- At ICCF Group, we build caucuses in parliaments with the goal to improve natural resource governance and be caretakers of our natural resources for the benefit of the environment, the wildlife, and local communities.
- In ASEAN nations, Indonesia and Thailand, we serve as the Secretariat to the Conservation Caucuses hosted within the respected parliaments.
- What is a conservation caucus? It's an informal way for lawmakers to network and understand the shared interests of environmental concern.
- Our caucuses are a diverse group of Members from every political faction and they represent multiple commissions or committees.
- We are nonpartisan and believe that strong agreement across all parties, regions, or constituencies is the best way to advance conservation policy.
- However, Members of our caucuses do, in fact, share only one goal, and that is genuine interest in advancing conservation policy while bettering the environment for all of its stakeholders.

- In addition, our global network consists of caucuses in over 20 other countries, and in every major region of the world of environmental concern.
- We have active Caucus Members in North America, South America, Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, and across Central to Southeastern Asia.
- Our successes are far reaching and our goals are shared with our Members to make a better world.
- For example, in South America, we assembled a national action plan for reopening coastal areas after COVID-19 in a sustainable way so as to reduce land-based pollution and promote sustainable nature-based tourism for economic growth.
- In Sub-Saharan Africa, we raised legislative awareness on the importance of mangroves to coastal management, and feasibility of carbon markets, which resulted in a regional accord on Blue Carbon and Mangroves.
- In Southeast Asia, our Members understand the importance of mangrove ecosystems, the benefit of sustainable fisheries, the need to improve water quality, the importance of storm buffering and climate adaptation.
- Our Members are also interested in the feasibility of carbon markets and how that will contribute to global carbon reduction goals.

- We've already hosted and convened several programs on fisheries management and tools for the restoration of coral reefs, or as I like to call them, the "rainforests of the sea."
- We're also advancing maritime security by providing ideas, tools, and capabilities that will empower leadership and enforcement across the region to secure sovereign maritime boundaries.
- In our current AIPA countries, Indonesia and Thailand, we hope to continue our important work and advance solutions to coastal erosion, land-based marine pollution, and promote circular economic business practices.
- We also hope to improve the policy gaps in governance over national parks, protected areas, or areas of other effective area management for conservation known as OECMs.
- We're supporting conservation-led legislation, such as the updates to the Conservation bills and Maritime Security bills to combat IUU Fishing.
- Even during election years, we continue working to include natural resource governance policies and improvements for consideration.
- But we need your help.
- At the end of the day, the message is simple.

- Conservation takes courage.
- It takes a lot of courage and a lot of work to think holistically about the issues that affect our planet and our people.
- So, today and over the course of the General Assembly, I hope to meet with all of you and learn more about your domestic and regional policy challenges.
- I hope to explore how we at ICCF Group can be a resource and a tool in your toolbox to advancing the conservation needs of your respected countries and with respect to economic recoveries.
- In sum, we're looking to expand our Membership and you're welcome to join.
- We plan to continue growing, learning, and being a convener for all of you interested in conservation and the improvement of local peoples.
- We look forward to more collaboration between AIPA and ICCF Group, and we wish you a fruitful discussion over the course of this week.
- I also hope to meet you individually and learn more about your priorities this week.
- Thank you very much.