



Sr. D. Mariano Rajoy Brey  
Presidente del Gobierno de España  
Complejo de la Moncloa  
Avda. Puerta de Hierro, s/n.  
28071 Madrid (Spain)

July 29, 2012

Dear Sr. Rajoy Brey,

I am writing you out of concern for the natural heritage of the Canary Islands. As you certainly know, the entire territory of Lanzarote and Fuerteventura, together with La Palma, la Gomera, and El Hierro islands, and almost half of the island of Gran Canaria, have being declared UNESCO "*Biosphere Reserves*", sustaining numerous protected terrestrial, coastal and marine environments.

I have personally been to the Canary Islands in 2011 and have witnessed the amazing marine biodiversity of the islands, so much that I plan to return there this summer to document the marine life. Among other beauties, the Canary Islands are home to dozens of species of marine mammals.

Because of the unique conditions and natural wealth of these islands, tourism and diving is possible all year-round, providing a rare opportunity for the development of world-class sustainable tourism. Very aware of this, the Canary administrations are making considerable efforts to implement sustainability policies based on developing local and regional conservation projects, and promoting the use of alternative and renewable sources of energy.

However, on March 16<sup>th</sup> 2012, the Spanish Government Council of Ministers approved a Royal Decree authorizing oil prospection off Lanzarote and Fuerteventura coasts. In addition to leaks and spills, which are common issues in the offshore activity, the acoustic pollution caused by geological prospection and underwater construction of oilrigs can have disastrous effects on marine mammals, and is likely to cause the loss of this precious asset to the Canary Islands.

I humbly ask you M. Rajoy Brey, to do all that is in your power to safeguard the natural heritage of the Canary Islands for future generations, by rejecting the development of the offshore oil industry in these waters and favouring the development of renewable energies. You have an opportunity to set an example of sustainability for the world, and you will find that those who currently oppose the project will be the first to celebrate and support a government-led initiative in the right direction.

Thank you ever so much for your thoughtful consideration,

Pierre Yves Cousteau  
President of Cousteau Divers