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**Kia'i Kanaloa statement regarding the care and disposition of honu**

***3rd Annual Sea Turtle Workshop  
October 6, 2023***

*Lana i ke kai, lana i ka honua, lana i ka houpo a Kanaloa.  
'O Haumea kino pāha 'oha 'o, 'o Haumea kino papawalu.*

We recognize honu as a form of the deity Kanaloa. Kānaka Hawai'i are genealogically linked to Kanaloa forms such as the honu, and therefore, we have an ancestral duty as their descendants to care and advocate for them. Given this status, specific kānāwai (edicts) dictate how we engage with honu physically and spiritually.

Indeed, honu were a part of the Hawaiian diet and practice. Still, in the traditional practice of eating honu, much of the honu (i.e., the carapace, the flipper claws, etc.) was repurposed into things like fishing tools.

These edicts manifest into behaviors and actions that place the honu in the center of a sphere of respect and function to the greater expanse of Kanaloa. There is no justification for honu to be stockpiled in freezers, which may be the current practice, or dumped in landfills, as we saw in 2016.

At sea burial is both a respectful and functional means of disposition as it returns the honu to the pō and allows the honu to feed the greater Kanaloa. A process should be developed to enable Hawaiian cultural practitioners to receive deceased honu for traditional artisan processing and disposition back to the kai.

We advise developing authentic relationships with Hawaiian cultural practitioners and organizations such as ours who carry the kuleana of caring for our Kanaloa forms. Through these kinds of co-stewardship relationships, you, your departments, and your agencies can begin to rebuild trust with communities and build your own kahua (foundation) in understanding what it means to care for our Kanaloa forms here in Hawai'i.

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***Ola i ke au a Kanaloa!***

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