

Johnson walks the talk in tours, shows, CDs

By: [Catherine E. Toth](#)

Growing up with a dad who fixed just about everything, Jack Johnson has a strong resolve to minimize waste in the world. Not to mention he loves the natural environment, a place where he finds inspiration and serenity.

"It's such a profound experience to be in nature, whether you're in the ocean or hiking," Johnson said. "We have to do something to keep things beautiful."

And he's never just talked the talk.



Take, for example, his recent world tour. Not only does his tour bus and all production vehicles run on bio-diesel, but Johnson promotes recycling and carbon offset credits at every venue. And his soon-to-be-released recent album, "To The Sea," was recorded in Hawai'i using 100 percent solar energy and printed entirely on post-consumer waste recycled paper, with a percentage of proceeds benefiting the 1% for the Planet alliance.

The same goes for Kokua Festival, which aims to be a zero-waste, carbon-neutral event. As in years before, there will be recycling bins everywhere, water stations for people to fill up their own reusable bottles, bike valet and shuttle service to cut down high-impact transportation use and food stations that serve locally grown and organic foods.

"Jack Johnson has done an impressive job aligning his music with his values, from using solar energy to record his last album to offsetting emissions from touring to minimizing waste at events," said Jeff Mikulina, executive director of Blue Planet Foundation, a Hawai'i-based nonprofit aimed at ending the use of carbon-based fuels. "The hope is that the high profile makes the idea more contagious. Participants at Kokua Festival should view the efforts not as a novelty, but as the new norm."

Johnson's latest — and fifth studio — album, "To The Sea," hits stores in June. The first single, "You and Your Heart," is out this month, and the world tour starts next month.

"Because we're touring again and I've had an electric guitar in my hands more, that changed the sound a bit on the new record," he said.

He's not concerned that fans of his acoustic style won't like this new album. It's still Jack Johnson — just plugged in.

"You can't ever figure out what people like about your music," he said. "The most important thing is that you keep making stuff you would listen to and that keeps you excited."

The name "To The Sea" comes from his belief that the ocean represents the subconscious. Every time someone crosses a river or goes to the ocean, he's approaching his subconscious, he said.

"In my life, the ocean is that body of water to which I go on a daily basis," he said. "It's both my father leading me to the ocean, which he did, and myself as a father leading my kids to the sea. It's about leading someone to that point and giving him that chance to jump in."

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