

IPRC Welcomes Al Gore

By **Kevin Hamilton**

The IPRC was privileged to host **The Honorable Albert Gore** on the afternoon of April 15. Al Gore has had a remarkably distinguished career in American public life spanning several decades. He has been a US Congressional Representative, a US Senator and was the 45th Vice President of the United States. Gore is a best selling author and a winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, among many other awards. Through his activities in government, and now as a private citizen, Gore has become the world's most famous, and most important, advocate for mankind's concerns about global climate.

Gore was in Honolulu to deliver a public lecture on the evening of April 15 at the University of Hawai'i (UH). I had written to Gore as IPRC Director to invite him to visit us during his time in Honolulu, noting that almost two decades ago Vice President Gore's negotiations with Japan on scientific cooperation in climate research had played a critical role in establishing the IPRC at UH.

Gore graciously accepted the invitation to speak with our scientists. The meeting was deliberately low key and free of news media. Gore met for over an hour in the IPRC conference room with 22 of IPRC's faculty, staff and postdoctoral fellows. Present were also two UH Oceanography faculty members who played key roles in the creation of the IPRC: Professors Emeriti **Lorenz Maggaard** and **Roger Lukas**. **Aska Vanroosebeke** of JAMSTEC's International Affairs Division was also present.

In his opening remarks Gore made clear that he regarded the diplomatic negotiations with Japan that led to the creation of the IPRC as a highlight of his government career, and he expressed his excitement in being able to now visit the mature IPRC. I presented a brief slideshow describing the history of IPRC and highlights of our research accomplishments and contributions to the climate science community. This was followed by a general discussion led off by questions from Gore.

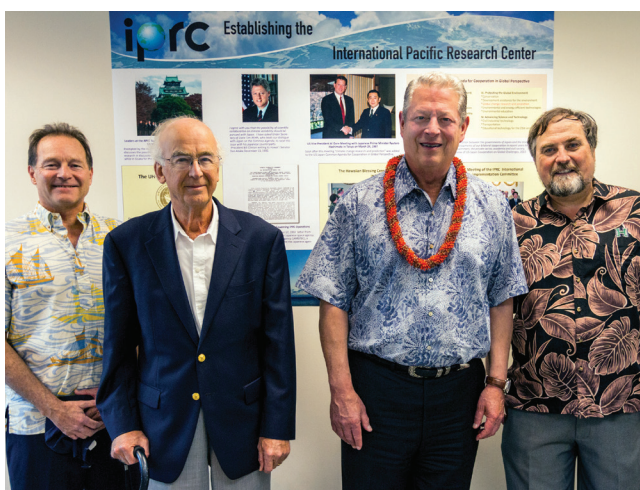
Everyone at the meeting was impressed by Gore's disarming manner and keen interest in climate science. Gore concluded the meeting with a reminder that the work of climate scientists such as those here at IPRC has a great practical importance for dealing with the urgent global climate challenge now facing mankind.

Gore's public lecture in the evening was held in UH's basketball arena and attracted an audience of nearly 7000. Gore took time during his engaging and inspiring talk to express his pleasure in interacting with IPRC scientists earlier in the day. Everyone at IPRC is grateful to Al Gore for his gracious visit and kind words!

IPRC's **Sharon Decarlo**, **Jim Potemra**, **Gisela Speidel**, **Jeanie Ho** and **Aimee Nakajima** deserve special thanks for their help in preparing for the visit and in ensuring a smooth and productive event.



US Vice President Al Gore and Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto meeting in Tokyo March 24, 1997. The Gore-Hashimoto accord was critical to establishing the IPRC as a Japan-US partnership. (AP news photo).



From left, Roger Lukas, Lorenz Maggaard, Al Gore, Kevin Hamilton at the IPRC on April 15, 2014. Photo credit, Colin Macdonald.