

MARINE AQUARIUM COUNCIL

Certifying Quality and Sustainability in the Collection, Culture and Commerce of Marine Ornamentals

MAC NEWS 2nd Quarter 2000

MAC EXPANDS TO NEW OFFICE

Welcome to this mid-2000 issue of MAC News. **Recent months have seen a major expansion of MAC's capacity** to respond to the growing demand for marine ornamentals certification. To keep up with this, **we have moved to new office space and now share a building with The Nature Conservancy.**

Please note the new MAC contact details:

Marine Aquarium Council

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There is no change to the MAC e-mail and website addresses.

MAC Brochure Available

An informative and colorful MAC brochure is now available. The pamphlet has been widely distributed to organizations around the world and at major events, such as at Interzoo (see below) and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Contact MAC for copies.

Building MAC Capacity for Certification

MAC has significantly increased its core expertise in standards development, certification system design, and accreditation by engaging Mr David Vosseler as Certification Coordinator and Mr Peter Scott as Accreditation Coordinator. We will also soon have MAC Coordinators on board in Fiji, for the Pacific Islands region, and in the Philippines.

MAC has also established strategic partnerships with key organizations as a cost-effective and collaborative approach to capacity building. In the last issue of MAC News we noted the World Conservation Monitoring Center partnership to develop the Marine Ornamentals Information System. (Funding: Packard Foundation).

MAC now also has long-term partnerships with:

- **Environmental Media Services: For media communications and awareness raising.** (Funding: MacArthur Foundation)
- **SeaWeb: For public aquarium communications, awareness raising and displays** in the US, Europe and Japan. (Funding: MacArthur Foundation)
- **Reef Check/Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network: For developing methods to assess and monitor marine ornamentals collecting.** (Funding: Initial work underway with existing sources. Longer term funding needed.)

MAC Strengthens Interaction with International Organizations

CITES:

- **The MAC Director briefed CITES Secretary General, Mr Willem Wijnstekers, on marine ornamentals certification, which Mr Wijnstekers agreed is complimentary to the goals and approach of CITES.**
- At the April CITES Conference of Parties (Nairobi), numerous MAC Board members contributed to the meeting's work on the coral trade issues, as well as to the CITES

Workshop on Coral Reefs.

The World Trade Organization (WTO):

- The MAC Director also met with WTO Trade and Environment officials. **According to WTO information, MAC is in effect an international "standards" body on the basis of our efforts to develop non-discriminatory, voluntary criteria through a transparent and inclusive process.**

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):

- **A MAC seminar at FAO headquarters in Rome generated considerable interest in marine ornamentals certification among FAO Fisheries Program staff.**
- MAC is mentioned by FAO in: "Responsible Ornamental Fisheries", FAO Aquatic Newsletter April 2000 No 24, pp 10-14
- According to a related FAO article, "Ornamental fish trade experts at FAO and other international organizations point out that **by increasing income and curbing environmental degradation, the industry contributes significantly to local food security.**" "Many ornamental fish and invertebrates have a high market value and should not be neglected when considering ways of creating sustainable livelihoods in rural and coastal communities." See: "Ornamental aquatic life: what's FAO got to do with it?" 2 September 1999 <http://www.fao.org/NEWS/1999/990901-e.htm>

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Conference of Parties (Nairobi):

- MAC Board members provided information on marine ornamentals certification to CBD participants.

MAC Progress in Indonesia

Continuing our special efforts in Indonesia, the MAC Director made a presentation to the Indonesia National Conference on Coastal Zone Management and met with numerous stakeholders in Jakarta and Bali, including:

- **Government:** MAC had a formal meeting with Director General Rokhmin of the **Ministry of Sea Exploration and Fisheries** and several meetings with team members of the Coral Reef Rehabilitation and Management Program (**COREMAP**).
- **Industry:** the Indonesia Coral, Shell and Ornamental Fish Association - **AKKII** - **convened a members meeting with the MAC Director, and most of the fish exporters on Bali also later met with MAC.**
- **Non-Government Organizations:** The MAC Director had discussions with some members of **Jaring PELA** (Jaringan Pesisir dan Lautan/Indonesian Marine and Coastal Network NGOs) and held meetings with **WWF Indonesia, TNC Indonesia**, and with **the Directors of Kehati (the Indonesia Biodiversity Foundation) and the Indonesia Ecolabeling Institute (LEI).**

MAC Progress in Europe

MAC also continues to make special efforts to interact with European stakeholders. In May, MAC attended Interzoo, the world's largest industry show for the animal trade (Nuremberg). The MAC Director and Board President held meetings with major exporters, importers, retailers, trade associations, hobbyist associations and trade media from Europe and around the world. MAC also made a presentation to the International Pet Advisory Council meeting at Interzoo.

These efforts have already resulted in a MAC interview in the leading German aquarist magazine. Later discussions with UK stakeholders, such as the government overseas aid department, expanded the strong interest in MAC there. To improve and expand MAC efforts in Europe, **we have recently engaged Mr Svein Fossa as the MAC Liaison Director for Europe.**

Update: Proposed Trade Legislation by US Coral Reef Task Force (USCRTF)

MAC is continuing in our good-faith efforts to constructively engage the USCRTF Trade sub-group to achieve our shared goal of a sustainable and responsible marine ornamentals trade.

On May 1 the sub-group provided MAC a copy of draft legislation. Some of the MAC proposals included in our earlier response to their legislative concept had been incorporated in the draft legislation, e.g. establishing a multi-stakeholder advisory group to advise the government on criteria for sustainability. However, there were still several key aspects of the proposed legislation that were incompatible with achieving sustainability through certification.

MAC, WWF and PIJAC met with the sub-group on 2 May to discuss our concerns. Following this, **we provided revised text for legislation that achieves the sub-group's stated aims of "rewarding and encouraging responsible use...", but in a way that would be supported by both the industry and the conservation community.** MAC held a further conference call with the sub-group in mid-June on the issues we feel need to be addressed and we await their feedback.

For More Information

If you know someone that should be part of the MAC Network, please encourage them to visit the MAC website and submit the simple form at: www.aquariumcouncil.org or have them contact:
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