

MARINE AQUARIUM COUNCIL

*Certification for Quality and Sustainability
in the Collection, Culture and Commerce of Marine Ornamentals*

MAC NEWS 2nd Quarter 2001

Welcome

We are especially pleased to bring you this MAC News to announce that the MAC "Core Standards" and "Best Practice Guidance" are finalized. This issue will also update you on the progress towards launching the complete MAC Certification system later this year.

MAC "CORE STANDARDS" and "BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE" Now Available !

The MAC "Core Standards" and "Best Practice Guidance" have been completed and are available on the MAC website <www.aquariumcouncil.org> in the section on "MAC Standards".

These documents establish the basic criteria and supporting advice on environmental certification for the marine ornamentals trade in the areas of:

- Ecosystem and Fisheries Management (EFM)
- Collection, Fishing and Holding (CFH)
- Handling, Husbandry and Transport (HHT)

The "Core Standards" and "Best Practice Guidance" incorporate public feedback and the results of numerous rounds of review by the international, multi-stakeholder MAC Standards Advisory Group (SAG). We are grateful for the time and effort that so many concerned individuals have put into the development of the MAC Standards and guidance documents. A synthesis of the comments from the public and SAG will be available soon on the MAC website. Some of the suggestions that were unable to be taken on board in the Core Standards are more appropriate to, and will be incorporated in, the "Full Standards".

Field Partnership Well Underway in the Philippines; More Possible in Other Areas

Good progress is being made in the Feasibility Study to ensure a critical mass of collection areas and collectors in the Philippines have the potential to comply with MAC Core Standards. At the collectors and collection sites participating in the study, the MAC-IMA Partnership Project is assessing the collectors' ability to meet MAC Standards, developing a training program to ensure collectors have the knowledge and skills they need and trying out the Standards.

Collectors are pleased with the many aspects of the emerging certification system, such as the "supply to order" process and collection logbooks. **All participants are especially happy with the high quality fish and low mortality rates that the Feasibility Study is already delivering.** MAC will be developing more partnership projects with additional organizations to facilitate certification testing and training in other areas that supply marine ornamentals.

Palawan Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD) supports MAC Certification

The PCSD and MAC have agreed on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), pledging to collaborate to achieve a sustainable ornamental fish industry in Palawan Province of the Philippines. PCSD is mandated by law to ensure the sustainable development of Palawan and has developed an accreditation program for those involved the live fish trade. The MOU will ensure a linkage between MAC Certification and PCSD licensing of those involved in the marine ornamental trade.

MAC Certification Test Cases Coming Soon: Participants Wanted

Test Cases - conducting trial runs of the entire certification system from reef to retail - are the next major step in bringing certification to reality. These will focus on operations in the supply areas where the marine aquarium industry has been most interested and able to interact with MAC, e.g. the Philippines, Fiji, and Hawaii. **Many exporters in these areas, and wholesalers importing from these areas, have already expressed interest in helping test the certification system.**

MAC would particularly welcome participation in the testing from companies involved in the transshipment and retail of marine ornamentals from these areas. Other supply areas may be added to the Test Cases based on the strength of commitment from industry operators in areas and the capacity of MAC to respond. **Numerous independent certification companies have applied to become accredited by MAC and are listed on the MAC website,** where an application form and guidelines for certifier accreditation can be found.

Marine aquarium industry companies and certification companies interested in participating in the Test Cases should contact Peter Scott, the MAC Accreditation Coordinator, at: <peter.scott@aquariumcouncil.org>

MAC Standards and Monitoring: Key Input to International Workshop on the Coral Trade

In Jakarta in April, the US Government and Indonesia organized an **international workshop on the trade in coral and live rock to develop recommendations for the management, best harvest practices, and monitoring of these resources.** Representatives of industry, government agencies and non-government organizations from most coral exporting countries participated in the workshop. **The draft MAC Standards and draft MAC Monitoring protocols were a major component of the deliberations on collection, management and monitoring and were refined and strengthened through the workshop review and comment.**

Global Marine Aquarium Database (GMAD) Update

The partnership between MAC and the UNEP - World Conservation Monitoring Center (WCMC) to create **GMAD - the world's database on the international trade in marine aquarium organisms - is growing steadily and now includes data from: Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Indonesia, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Netherlands, Palau, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, UK, and USA.**

We strongly encourage those who have not yet provided their data, which is kept confidential, to contact Dr Ed Green: <Ed.Green@unep-wcmc.org>. Companies that provide data to GMAD are listed and linked on the MAC website. MAC encourages these companies to put a link from their website to MAC and make the following claim on their site: "This company supports the Marine Aquarium Council by providing data to the Global Marine Aquarium Database (GMAD) of the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre"

MAC in the Media

Substantial articles on the marine aquarium trade and MAC certification, have appeared in:

- **Pets International**, June 2001, "The Marine Aquarium Council: Certification for Quality and Sustainability in Marine Ornamentals".
- **Scientific American**, July 2001, "Fishy Business".
- **San Jose Mercury News**, 22 May 2001, "Saving Reefs: A collective approach".
- **VetCentric** (on-line magazine), 24 June 2001, "The Seahorse Situation".
- **"Marine Ornamentals and Conservation"**, in **"Korallenriff - Aquarium: Volume 1"** by Svein A. Fossa and Alf Jacob Nielson - revised and republished in 2001 (in German).

MAC and certification have also been mentioned by:

- **The Wall Street Journal**, 29 May 2001, "Guppies for yuppies".
- **Reuters**, 14 June 2001, "Exotic Fish Trade Grapples with Image, Breeding".
- **The Honolulu Advertiser**, 4 June 2001, "Reef-fish collectors treat prey with care".
- **Audubon Magazine** (on line magazine), Question and Answer section.

Most of these articles will be posted on the MAC website as soon as possible.

For More Information on MAC or for Copies of the MAC Brochure

Visit the MAC website: <http://www.aquariumcouncil.org/> or contact us at:
info@aquariumcouncil.org