

923 Nuʻuanu Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96817, USA
Tel: 1 (808) 550-8217
Fax: 1 (808) 550-8317
info@aquariumcouncil.org
www.aquariumcouncil.org



International Certification for the Quality
and Sustainability of Marine Aquarium Organisms ...
from Reef to Retail

MAC News

2nd Quarter 2003

Director's Note

Julian Sprung, world renowned author and speaker on aquarium keeping, said it as well as anyone can when he noted: "Concerns about responsible collecting, as well a responsible handling and husbandry are valid and are being addressed, particularly by the Marine Aquarium Council. I think that their work is essential to the future of our hobby because they have the ability to bridge the gaps between the aquarium industry, government and environmental organizations that are all stakeholders in the conservation of coral reef habitats." (*Aquarium Fish* magazine, September 2003)

This issue of the MAC News outlines the range of our recent efforts - spanning from collectors through to hobbyists, and from coastal villages to the US Capitol. Within this broad portfolio, however, our priority focus remains on the collectors and their communities, as described in the updates from numerous marine ornamental supply areas that you will find below. At the other end of the spectrum, the release of the film *Finding Nemo* created an unprecedented opportunity for MAC to raise awareness to the public – and especially to potential new hobbyists inspired by the film – about responsible aquarium keeping and a sustainable marine aquarium trade.

Finding Nemo Campaign Promotes Responsible Aquarium Keeping

Finding Nemo, the Disney-Pixar animated film about loveable clownfish and blue tang, hit the screens in May. MAC was ready with an educational outreach campaign and key partnerships to raise public awareness about the responsible aquarium hobby and trade. We knew that animal-themed movies, such as the *101 Dalmatians*, have a tremendous influence on pet selection, especially among kids. We kicked off the MAC outreach efforts as an invited participant at the Hollywood premiere of the movie. We partnered with Sea Dwelling Creatures to bring a custom-built touch-tank filled with stingrays, clown fish and other sea critters for the occasion. The "Fish Are Friends Touch Tank" gave hundreds of lucky kids a chance to experience the fish behind the movie firsthand.

Alexander Gould [<http://aquariumcouncil.org/images/card.jpg>], the voice of Nemo, became an enthusiastic MAC supporter at the event, where we distributed hundreds of magnetic cards urging individuals to "Be Smart Before You Start" the hobby of marine aquarium keeping. The MAC magnetic card [<http://aquariumcouncil.org/webnews.asp?id=45>] advises potential aquarists to first (1) Learn about marine animals and aquariums; (2) Look for MAC Certified marine animals; (3) Use quality equipment and supplies; (4) Plan for routine maintenance of the aquarium; (5) Be patient because a successful aquarium takes time; and (6) Do their part to conserve coral reefs by purchasing safely harvested animals among other things.

Three press releases and follow-up media contact across the United States on responsible aquarium keeping resulted in wide print and broadcast coverage of the need to "Be Smart Before You Start," the reality of the marine aquarium trade and hobby, and the role of MAC Certification in responsible aquarium keeping.

Indonesia: North Bali Primed to Pursue MAC Certification

The MAC office in Sanur, Bali, is making solid progress under the leadership of MAC Indonesia Coordinator Gayatri Reksodihardjo-Lilley. For example, meetings with collectors and other stakeholders [<http://aquariumcouncil.org/images/balimeeting.jpg>] facilitated by MAC in north Bali catalyzed the high

level of willingness to work together to develop a collection area management plan (CAMP) in this region. The CAMP is one of the requirements needed for a collection area to be certified under the MAC Ecosystem and Fishery Management Standard [<http://aquariumcouncil.org/subpage.asp?section=19>].

Recently, 50 individuals participated in a weeklong training workshop for stakeholders titled “Cyanide-Free Bali” in one of the northern coastal villages. The workshop included dive safety training, the use of dive tables for fishermen who use compressors, net design and use, and some basic reef management principles.

Other recent MAC activities in Indonesia include ...

- Identifying coastal communities that rely on the collection of marine organisms for the aquarium trade and criteria for prioritizing the communities for MAC efforts;
- Assisting collectors to acquire suitable and affordable netting;
- Encouraging exporters to take a more active and positive role in supporting the collectors and in promoting a fairer and more sustainable trade in marine resources, e.g., some exporters have now expressed their interest in providing training in fish handling and packing;
- Strengthening and expanding the MAC partnership with TERANGI, the Indonesia Coral Reef Foundation, one of MAC’s partners in working with collectors and their communities in training and reef management;
- Developing a network of in-country specialists to help with MAC’s efforts in Indonesia, e.g., training, identification of marine organisms and field survey work;
- Working closely with many local and national government agencies to review laws and regulations regarding resource ownership, tenure and fishing rights, and conflicting regulations for the fisheries and tourism sectors and between national wildlife protection laws and international CITES regulations, especially as it relates to the export of propagated, second-generation corals and clams; and
- Compiling names of species in the trade (scientific, English and local) in order to provide a consistent reference list for collectors, the industry and other stakeholders.

“MAC looks forward to developing solid partnerships among the coastal communities, aquarium industry and government and working with individuals and marine conservation organizations locally and internationally so that the prospects of a fair and well-managed trade and coral reef conservation are enhanced in Indonesia,” Lilley notes

Pacific Islands: SMART Project to Bring MAC Certification to 10 Countries

The Sustainable Management of the Aquarium Reef Trade (SMART) Project is a two-year MAC initiative to ensure Pacific communities involved in collecting marine ornamentals are part of a responsible trade that contributes to sustainable livelihoods and MAC Certification. The SMART Project will assist communities in ecosystem management plans, responsible collection of aquarium products and market linkages within the added-value context of MAC Certification. The project will also seek to increase the number of MAC Accredited certifiers in the region. The SMART Project will focus on economically disadvantaged coastal fishing communities in the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The SMART Project is supported by the European Union. Project partners include the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific (FSPI) and Just World Partners (a United Kingdom-based group and FSPI

member). FSPI is a network of non-government organizations throughout the Pacific with metropolitan members in the United States, United Kingdom, Australia and elsewhere.

Philippines: Industry Commitment to Responsible Practices Expands; MAC Training of Camotes Collectors Underway

Going beyond the strong, clear commitment to a sustainable, responsible and cyanide-free trade in their February 2003 statement (reported in the previous *MAC News*), the Philippine Tropical Fish Exporters Association (PTFEA) on June 5 signed a covenant with the Philippines Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) for the mutual goals of protecting the environment and advancing the live tropical fish industry. The public pledges made by PTFEA in the covenant include 1) providing fisher folk with nets and equipment, 2) training fisher folk in proper handling to minimize losses and unnecessary waste, 3) rejecting any fish suspected to be illegally caught, 4) never allowing their collectors to use cyanide or other forms of illegal fishing, and 5) supporting MAC Certification as an effective tool of coral reef conservation and efficient incentive scheme to reward the good, conscientious industry members.

Numerous fishing communities have requested MAC involvement their areas. Among the current efforts, three MAC trainers and a MAC community coordinator are helping collectors and their community in San Francisco province, Camotes Island, to achieve MAC Certification.

Hawaii: MAC Certification Efforts Move Forward

MAC, the Community Conservation Network (CCN) and The Nature Conservancy Hawaii (TNCH) are working on MAC Certification with the State of Hawaii Division of Aquatic Resources (DAR), industry operators and other stakeholders on the Kona Coast, island of Hawaii. Following months of informal networking with stakeholders by these partners, MAC Executive Director Paul Holthus was invited to brief the West Hawaii Fishery Council (WHFC) on MAC Certification during its April meeting. In June, the WHFC invited three marine ornamentals collectors and wholesalers to join the council. This is the first time marine aquarium industry representatives will be council members. It signals the start of a new era of dialogue in an area where there has been much tension over the role of aquarium fish collecting. MAC is working with industry operators in Hawaii to adapt the MAC Implementation Manuals for collection and export facilities to the Hawaii context.

Field Surveys: Reef Monitoring Protocol for the Aquarium Trade Now Available

Reef Check unveiled the initial working version of the Marine Aquarium Trade Coral Reef Monitoring Protocol (MAQTRAC) at the 2nd International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposium (ITMEMS), March 24-27 in Manila. Reef Check's reef monitoring specialists and other scientists designed the protocol on behalf of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network (GCRMN), the international network of scientists who develop reef assessment methods.

The purpose of MAQTRAC is to monitor coral reefs and populations of organisms harvested for the aquarium trade. It includes 1) carrying out baseline assessments and regular monitoring of coral reefs where harvesting is planned or ongoing and at locations that are seeking MAC Certification or have been MAC Certified, 2) determining the effects on reef health of collection of fish, plants, invertebrates and live rock from coral reefs by MAC Certified collectors working in a MAC Certified collection area, and 3) comparing the health of the reefs where collection occurs with that at reefs where no known harvesting is occurring.

MAQTRAC is the culmination of a two-year development and testing period. Design involved two international peer-review workshops (Indonesia, April 2001, and Hawaii, August 2001), extensive literature reviews and discussions with stakeholders. MAQTRAC was field tested in the Philippines, Indonesia, Fiji, Hawaii and the Maldives from June 2001 through December 2002. The resource assessments carried out in the first two MAC Certified collection areas in the Philippines were part of MAQTRAC development phase.

During the week following ITMEMS, several participants attended MAQTRAC training sessions in Cebu.

MAQTRAC will now be submitted to the MAC Board of Directors for formal review and, if approved, will become an addendum to the MAC Standards. The MAC Board may also authorize training in MAQTRAC as an "Approved Training Course," as per Annex 2 of the MAC Standards. In the interim, MAQTRAC training is proceeding in several areas.

The Ecosystem and Fishery Management Standard [<http://aquariumcouncil.org/subpage.asp?section=19>] requires that a Collection Area Management Plan (CAMP) be developed. A CAMP must include, among other things, a "basic description of the aquatic ecosystem," "details of any critical environments" and "arrangements and responsibilities for regular monitoring." MAQTRAC provides a standardized, scientifically robust and practical method for meeting these requirements. With the authorization of the MAC Board, MAQTRAC would become an approved method for gathering this information.

For more on MAQTRAC, contact Reef Check at Rcheck@UCLA.edu.

Cyanide Detection Test Plan Completed; Lab Work to Begin

Implementation of a workable and reliable cyanide detection test (CDT) system is a very high priority for MAC, and an Action Plan for achieving this goal was developed in the first part of 2003. The CDT Action Plan follows months of consultations with government agencies and universities in several countries, involves several partners and is moving forward as the capacity of the partners allows. A Letter of Intent was signed with the Philippines Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) to undertake testing of potential methods, and laboratory work is scheduled to commence in July 2003.

"MAC is grateful for the full cooperation and participation of BFAR including use of their test laboratory and staff and of Merck Philippines for their loan of staff, test equipment and reagents for this first phase of the project," notes MAC Certification Systems Director Peter Scott.

Certified Importers and Retailers In North America Form Working Group

Building on the success of the Philippines' MAC Certified Collectors and Exporters Group (MAC-CCEG) in bringing different parts of the chain of custody together to work together (see previous *MAC News*), the MAC Certified industry members in North America are forming an informal consultative group. This group will seek to support the development of MAC Certification, develop synergies and mutual support among certified industry members, and promote benefits of MAC Certification for the industry and marine aquarium organisms. For more information, contact david.vosseler@aquariumcouncil.org.

Michigan Legislature Presents Special Tribute to MAC Certified Retailer and Importer

The State of Michigan's 91st Legislature presented Preuss Animal House and A&M Aquatics with Special Tributes, commending and congratulating them on being the world's first MAC Certified retailer and importer. The tributes described these marine care facilities as the "most progressive and environmentally thoughtful and animal friendly." Rick Preuss and Steve Oberg accepted the Special Tribute for Preuss Animal House [<http://aquariumcouncil.org/images/award.jpg>].

Public Aquariums Find Innovative Ways to Promote MAC Certification

The South Carolina Aquarium used Earth Day as an opportunity to launch a five-month educational campaign about reefs, entitled *Gardens of the Ocean*. MAC Americas and Pacific Director David Vosseler was a guest speaker during the event's April 15th press conference. MAC provided the Aquarium with copies of its newly developed brochure for hobbyists [<http://aquariumcouncil.org/docs/library/1/BrochureScreen.pdf>] for the event and for the Aquarium's reef awareness campaign.

Jenkinson's Aquarium in New Jersey also used Earth Day as an opportunity to promote MAC. The Aquarium distributed copies of the MAC hobbyist brochure at their April 19th celebration and during their Ocean Day event on June 8.

New York Aquarium handed out the MAC magnetic card on responsible aquarium keeping at its Ocean Day celebration. MAC and the NY Aquarium are now busily co-organizing a Marine Aquarium Hobbyist Day, slated for Sept. 13. This event will include guest speakers, exhibits and free admission to the Aquarium for hobbyists with an event coupon to be made available in *Tropical Fish Hobbyist* and *Freshwater and Marine Aquarium* magazines and other select venues. This event focusing on responsible aquarium keeping will build on a similar event co-hosted by MAC and the Aquarium of the Pacific at Long Beach early this year.

MAC has been working with the London Aquarium and Horniman Museum Aquarium in the United Kingdom to demonstrate the hard work that it undertakes in bringing a group of collectors forward for certification. MAC has provided typical collection equipment and video footage to the London Aquarium, which is in the process of setting up a permanent exhibition about marine ornamental collection and MAC Certification. The Horniman museum hopes to establish a Philippines section featuring MAC Certified organisms later this year.

Doug Warmolts, MAC Board member and representative for the American Zoos and Aquariums Association, gave a MAC update at the Regional Aquatics Workshop, June 3-7. He reports that the update was well received. "The aquarium community wants to support MAC by buying certified organisms," he noted.

Public aquariums interested in promoting MAC can contact MAC Communications Director Sylvia Spalding at sylvia.spalding@aquariumcouncil.org. Aquariums interested in MAC Certified organisms can contact MAC Americas and Pacific Director David Vosseler at david.vosseler@aquariumcouncil.org.

MAC at International and National Events

2nd International Tropical Marine Ecosystems Management Symposium (ITMEMS), Manila, March 24-27

The Action Statement emanating from this important gathering, which occurs every four years, calls for the promotion of "effective international certification, labeling and awards for good practice partnerships in coral reef conservation and fisheries." MAC co-organized and co-chaired the symposium session on Public-Private Partnerships in tropical marine management.

International Marine Aquarium Conference (IMAC), Chicago, April 2-4

MAC Certified retailers Rick Preuss and Steve Oberg (Preuss Animal House), Mike Sergey (Living Sea Aquarium) and Mark Swank-Schreffler (Aquascapes/The Reef Shop) shared the podium with MAC's David Vosseler to give a short talk and to answer questions about what it means to be MAC Certified. This session followed a well-illustrated presentation by John Brandt of the Marine Aquarium Societies of North America of his recent trip to MAC Certified collection areas and facilities in the Philippines and his experience in getting to know the collectors and exporters and their support for MAC Certification. Vosseler provided an update on MAC developments to set the stage for the presentations by the certified retailers.

Capitol Hill Oceans Week, Washington, DC, June 11-12

Capitol Hill Oceans Week is in its second year as a two-day seminar for US Congressional delegations and others on important and emerging ocean issues and the US role in these issues. MAC was honored to be invited this year to participate in the panel on "Marine Area Management: Success Stories." The panel followed a keynote address by well-known ocean advocate Dr. Sylvia Earle and was introduced and closed by Congressman Sam Farr of California, co-chair of the House Oceans Caucus. Also speaking on

the panel was Dr. Jane Lubchenco, leading authority on the science of marine conservation, who has just completed a book on the science of marine protected areas with a group of other senior marine scientists. The MAC presentation focused on the emerging success of establishing reef management areas and conservation zones that will be sustainable through MAC Certification and the incentives and support of the responsible marine aquarium industry and market.

Upcoming Events

July 11-13, 2003: Superzoo 2003, Anaheim, California, USA

July 20-24, 2003: National Marine Educators Conference, Wilmington, North Carolina, USA.
<http://www.vims.edu/nmea/nmea2003/>

Sept. 5-7, 2003: Marine Aquarium Conference of North America, Louisville, Kentucky, USA.
http://www.lmas.org/M15/macna_xv.htm

Sept. 13, 2003: Marine Aquarium Hobbyist Day, New York Aquarium, Brooklyn, New York, USA.

Oct. 10-12, 2003: 37th Annual Pet Industry Christmas Trade Show, Chicago, Illinois, USA

Oct. 30-Nov. 2, 2003: Aquarama 2003 Conference. Singapore. <http://www.aquarama.com.sg/>

Nov. 20-23, 2003: China International Recreational Fisheries and Aquarium Congress and Exhibitions, Shenzhen Sea World, China.

March 1-5, 2004: Marine Ornamentals '04/Aquaculture 2004, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA.
<http://www.hawaiiacquaculture.org/marineornamentals04.html>

Dec. 5-10, 2004: 6th International Aquarium Congress, Monterey, California, USA.
<http://www.iac2004.org/default.htm>

MAC in the News

"Technology Rules," by Stephanie Starr. Aquarium Fish Magazine. September 2003. pp 47-53.

"Naturally: Marine aquariums require patience, knowledge of how ecosystems work," by Kim Underwood. Winston-Salem Journal. June 28, 2003.
http://www.journalnow.com/servlet/Satellite?pagename=WSJ%2FMSGArticle%2FWFSJ_BasicArticle&c=MGArticle&cid=1031769893535&path=!living&s=1037645509005

"Sadly, all drains do not lead to the ocean; 'Nemo' prompts some kids to free their fish by flushing," by Kathleen Flynn and Allison T. Hoffman. The Record (Bergen County, NJ). June 27, 2003; p A19.

"Busy Fourth on highways ... pricey tobacco ... more." Scripps Howard News Service. June 27, 2003.

"Finding Nemo' presses hot buttons for ecologists," by Alexander Lane. Houston Chronicle. June 26, 2003. <http://www.chron.com/cs/CDA/story.hts/headline/entertainment/1965395>

"Fish Flushers Learn Life Does Not Imitate 'Nemo'," by Kathleen Flynn and Allison T. Hoffman. The Los Angeles Times. June 26, 2003. <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-nemo26jun26.1.4434543.story?coll-la->

"Finding 'Nemo' easier than caring for clownfish," by Will Evans. The Sacramento Bee. June 25, 2003. p E-1.

"Nemo's nemesis; Methods of capturing tropical fish under scrutiny," by Alexander Lane. The San Diego Union-Tribune. June 25, 2003. p A1.

- "Making waves: 'Finding Nemo' brings a serious ecological issue to the surface," by Alexander Lane. Star-Ledger (Newark, NJ). June 24, 2003. <http://www.nj.com/search/index.ssf?/base/living-1/105643553324330.xml?starledger?life>
- "This Small Fry Is Hot Property," by Jay Boyar. The Orlando Sentinel. June 19, 2003. p E-1.
- "Clownfish farms create thousands of Nemos away from coral reefs," by Jill Barton. Associated Press. June 19, 2003.
- "MAC and Gould Are Raising Public Awareness about MAC Certified Marine-life." Dive News. June 16, 2003. <http://www.divenews.com>
- "AnimalTalk." WCTC 1450AM (New Brunswick, NJ). June 8, 2003.
- "Nemo Speaks," by Kathy Cano Muillo. The Arizona Republic. June 5, 2003. pp 5, 7.
- Holthus, P and SA Fosså Certyfikacja rzetelnego i etycznie akceptowalnego handlu zwierzetami do akwariów morskich. Nasze Akwarium, Poland, 2003(45):25-28. [In Polish]
- "Philippine Sources of Tropical Marine Ornamental Fish Commit Increase Supply of Environmentally Certified Organisms." Freshwater and Marine Aquarium. June 2003. pp 2-6.
- "*Finding Nemo* Spotlights Dark Side of Pet-Fish Trade," by John Roach. National Geographic News. May 30, 2003. http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/05/0530_030530_nemo1.html
- "Nemo May Hook Public on Plight of Marine Life." Animated Movie News. May 30, 2003.
- Morning Show. KRON 4, San Francisco. May 30, 2003.
- "At Nine Years Old, 'Finding Nemo' Actor Has Found His Cause - Coral Reef Conservation and a Responsible Fish Trade." Boston.com. May 30, 2003.
- Gary Cogill's Big Movie Show. Texas Cable News. May 29-31 and June 1, 2003.
- "New Disney movie has pet fish industry nervous." Ledger-Independent (Maysville, Kentucky). May 27, 2003.
- "Influence of new Disney movie has pet-fish industry worried." Santa Maria Times. May 26, 2003.
- "'Nemo' May Hook Public on Plight of Marine Life," by Jerry Hirsch. The Los Angeles Times. May 25, 2003.
- "Notizie di acquariologia internazionale," a cura di John Dawes. HZ. April 2003. [In Italian]
- "Coral Reefs: Task Force Calls for Improved Water Quality," by Allison A. Freeman. Greenwire. March 4, 2003.
- "Nueva Iniciativa en la Certificación de MAC," la página de John Dawes. Animalia. March 2003. pp 18-19. [In Spanish]
- "Marine Aquarium Council Update." Fish 'n' Chips. February/March 2003. <http://petsforum.com/fishnchips/2003/fnc0303.html>
- "MAQTRAC Updates." The Transect Line. February 2003. <http://www.reefcheck.org/newsletter6/newsletter6.htm#Other%20News>
- "Marine Aquarium Trade Coral Reef Monitoring Protocol Workshop." The Transect Line. February 2003. http://www.reefcheck.org/workshops/cebu/cebu_march03.htm

"Global Initiative Seeks to Stop Degradation of Coral Reefs; ICRI placed plight of world's reefs on international agenda." Federal Information and News Dispatch. Feb. 4, 2003.

"MAC Update." Marine Scene. Spring 2003. p 4. <http://www.masna.org/ms/Spring2003.pdf>

"Marine Aquarium Hobbyist Day Highlights Responsible Aquarium Keeping," by Sylvia Spalding. SeaScope. 20(1):1, 4.

"Corals of Indonesia," by Don S. Johnson. Conservation in Marine Fish and Reef 2003 Annual. Pp 106-113.

105 Careers for Animal Lovers, by Paula Fitzsimmons. Madison, Wisconsin: PJ Publications. 2002.

"MAC Certification Program Update," by David Vosseler. AMDA. Fall 2002. <http://www.amdareef.com>.

"MAC Board Meeting Report: 12 December 2002," by Randy Goodlett. AMDA. Fall 2002. <http://www.amdareef.com>.

"My Experience with MAC Certification," by Mark Swank-Schreffler. AMDA. Fall 2002.

"Sleight-of-Hand Threatens Reef Health," by Jean-Michel Cousteau. Skin Diver. November 2002. pp 22, 24.

"2 businesses pass aquarium council's review," by Susan Stock. Lansing State Journal. Oct. 10, 2002. p 7C.

"Safe collection methods bubbling up for fish tanks," by Denise Flaim. Chicago Tribune. Aug. 25, 2002.

"Groups angle to make fish procurement more ethical," by Denise Flaim. Contra Costa Times (California). July 27, 2002. p H4.