

MARINE AQUARIUM COUNCIL

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

MAC News

3rd Quarter 2001

Welcome

In this issue of MAC News, we are pleased to announce the upcoming launch of the MAC Certification system and to recognize industry operators, public aquarium personnel and private hobbyists who are already committed to its success. You will also be updated on the MAC feasibility studies and test cases and learn about our upcoming marketing campaign.

MAC Certification Launch and Logo Unveiling Set for November

The MAC Certification system will be launched Nov. 27, 2001, during the 2nd International Conference on Marine Ornamentals, Orlando, Fla. The MAC Certification label will also be unveiled at this time. The certification launch means collection areas and industry operators can become MAC Certified, using the MAC Standards and accreditation and certification system that will have been finalized following completion of field tests. Numerous marine aquarium industry operators, especially exporters and importers, have signaled their plans to become certified as soon as possible. For more information, contact David.Vosseler@aquariumcouncil.org.

Industry Statement of Commitment to MAC Certification Now Available

Companies interested in becoming MAC Certified are being asked to send MAC a signed "Statement of Commitment." Companies that sign the statement will be listed on the MAC Web site as having made this commitment. By signing the "Statement of Commitment," companies agree to

- Seek to become certified as soon as possible and inform their suppliers and buyers of this.
- Actively educate their suppliers and buyers about the benefits of following standards for an environmentally sound and sustainable industry and being MAC Certified.
- Promote MAC Certification as evidence of their company's commitment.
- Use their best efforts to seek suppliers and buyers who also follow the MAC Standards.
- Distribute MAC brochures and other materials with shipments to suppliers and buyers.
- Send to MAC, in confidence, a list of their suppliers and buyers to assist industry outreach.
- Provide import/export data, in confidence, to the Global Marine Aquarium Database.

Interested industry operators can download the statement (www.aquariumcouncil.org) and fax a signed copy to MAC at +1 (808) 550-8317.

Industry Responds Favorably to MAC Outreach

U.S. importers, wholesalers and retailers showed overwhelming support for MAC Certification during recent industry outreach efforts. In August, presentations by MAC Executive Director Paul Holthus and others at the Marine Aquarium Conference of North America (MACNA) Conference in Baltimore, Md., were enthusiastically received. In his keynote speech, JEN (Charlie) Veron, author of *Corals of the World*, praised MAC efforts to ensure the marine ornamental trade is sustainable. The MAC booth distributed hundreds of brochures, and the MAC Network grew to nearly 2,700 members. Industry support for MAC continued strong in September during meetings with major marine aquarium importers and wholesalers in the Los Angeles area. Eight agreed to participate in the MAC Certification test cases in October and others committed to becoming MAC Certified as soon as possible. MAC Industry Coordinator David Vosseler spearheaded the East and West Coasts efforts and will target the Chicago area in October in conjunction with the

Backer Trade Show and the Florida area in November in conjunction with the Marine Ornamentals Conference.

In Indonesia, the Association of Coral and Fish Exporters (AKKII) has agreed to

- Actively promote MAC Certification among AKKII members;
- Encourage AKKII members to seek MAC Certified organisms from all of its suppliers and work to ensure that its buyers become MAC Certified; and
- Provide support to all capacity building activities conducted by MAC partner organizations.

Public Aquarium Partnerships Continue to Strengthen

Public aquarium support for MAC Certification is making headway on several fronts.

- The American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), which met this September in Saint Louis, is finalizing its draft acquisition policy, which strongly supports MAC Certification.
- The Ocean Project (TOP) a collaboration of aquariums, zoos, museums and other educational institutions continues to feature MAC in its quarterly newsletters.
- SeaWeb is working with MAC to broker relationships with public aquariums interested in hosting national and regional media events promoting MAC Certification.

Public aquariums are being asked to support MAC Certification through these activities:

- Commit to buying only MAC Certified organisms when available and advertise that commitment to suppliers and the public.
- Advertise support for MAC in aquarium display areas, Web sites, newsletters, public forums, etc., and distribute MAC information on sustainable fisheries.

Hobbyist Outreach Efforts Ramp Up

A presentation for hobbyist clubs and aquarium societies on sustainable aquarium fisheries is being developed to increase consumer awareness of and confidence in MAC Certification. It will initially be delivered by MAC spokespersons and eventually be available on video. MAC is also beefing up its presence on the Internet. Mary Middlebrook, an importer/wholesaler in the Los Angeles area, hosted a chat session that promoted MAC on reefs.org on Sept. 23. The transcript is available at www.reefs.org/library/. Mary also helped to promote MAC during a San Francisco aquarium society meeting in September. Hobbyist clubs, aquarium societies and Internet sites interested in providing MAC information to their members can contact info@aquariumcouncil.org.

Update: Certification Feasibility Studies and Test Cases

The Philippines Feasibility Studies indicate that several reef-to-export chains can participate in the certification test cases at the end of October 2001. Most encouraging is the very high level of achievement of less than 1 percent dead on arrival (DOA) from reef to collector and in many cases 0 percent DOA. MAC's partner in the Philippines feasibility work, International Marinelife Alliance, has trained several collector cooperatives in the independent certification process. Interaction and feedback from the sessions are enabling the training manuals for collectors to be finalized and published prior to the certification test cases. Test case participants will include Philippines reef-to-export chains and U.S. and European import -to-retail chains.

New MAC Staff

Sylvia Spalding and Michelle Lam joined the MAC staff recently. Sylvia heads the MAC communications efforts and is based in Honolulu. Michelle coordinates MAC efforts in the South Pacific and is based in Honiara, Solomon Islands. She replaced Esaroma Ledua, who was based in Fiji and resigned in July.