

# MARINE AQUARIUM COUNCIL

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

## MAC NEWS 4th Quarter 2000

### Welcome

**2001 will be the year of international certification and labeling for marine ornamentals!**

MAC made considerable progress in 2000 and we are on track to meet our goal of launching the certification system in 2001. To see more details on the MAC progress, see our Annual Report for 2000, which will soon be available on the MAC website at <http://www.aquariumcouncil.org/>

### Draft MAC Standards Available Soon for Public Review

By the end of 2000, **the international MAC Standards Advisory Group (SAG) had grown to over 80 members** - bringing together representatives of industry, conservation, government agencies, and academic community to review and comment on the draft standards. The SAG **membership is equally balanced among the Asia/Pacific region, Europe and North America**. The list of SAG members will soon be posted on the MAC website.

The MAC Certification Coordinator, David Vosseler, and Accreditation Coordinator, Peter Scott, have been keeping very busy evaluating the feedback from SAG members and weaving this into the working draft of the standards. **The Draft MAC Standards will be posted on the MAC website for public for review and comment by the end of January 2001, along with the instructions and timetable for public input.**

## Global Marine Aquarium Database Going Strong

The partnership between MAC and the World Conservation Monitoring Center (WCMC) to create **the world's central facility for assembling and analyzing data on the international trade in marine aquarium organisms is building rapidly and we have renamed this as the Global Marine Aquarium Database (GMAD) to more readily convey its primary function.** The GMAD name will replace the initial Marine Ornamentals Information System (MOIS) title.

Many of **the world's largest exporters and importers have already provided their data** for entering into the system – but we need a more complete dataset to provide consistent, comprehensive, quality information. **The preliminary compilations are already shedding light on the mis-information that clouds the discussion on sustainability and the marine aquarium trade and an initial “State of the Global Marine Aquarium Trade” will be produced** as soon as possible this year.

**We strongly encourage those who have not yet provided their data, which is kept confidential to contact WCMC** through Dr Ed Green, Head, Marine Program: Ed.Green@unep-wcmc.org (WCMC is now part of the UN Environment Program). Information on GMAD and information for industry members will also be posted on the MAC website in January.

## 5<sup>th</sup> International Aquarium Congress and MAC

**MAC generated plenty of interest at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Aquarium Congress** (Monaco, November, 2000), which is the only ongoing gathering for public aquariums from around the world. In addition to the plenary presentation on MAC by the MAC Director, **the development of certification by MAC was highlighted and supported in numerous plenary presentations**, including:

- **by the Chair of the Committee on Conservation** of the 5<sup>th</sup> International Aquarium Congress (Ms Julie Packard, Executive Director, Monterey Bay Aquarium);
- **by the CITES Secretary General** (Mr Willem Wijnstekers), who stated that CITES support for MAC and certification development; and

- **by the AZA representatives** to the Congress (Dr Dennis Thoney, New York Aquarium/Wildlife Conservation Society; Dr Doug Warmolts, Columbus Zoo), who announced that MAC Certification will be part of the proposed new AZA acquisition policy.

## **MAC Progress in Europe**

In late 2000, **the MAC European Liaison Director (Svein Fossa) and the MAC Director met with representatives of the prominent trade and aquarist associations in Germany**, as well as with several major importers in Germany and the Netherlands and other key individuals. In particular, we had very productive meetings with both:

- ZZF: Zentralverband Zoologischer Fachbetriebe Deutschlands e.V., the German pet trade association, and

- VDA: Verband Deutscher Vereine für Aquarien - und Terrarienkunde e.V., the German aquarist association.

The **MAC Director also met with major importers from the Netherlands and France** at the 5<sup>th</sup> International Aquarium Congress. In addition, the newly formed Scandinavian Pet Trade Association has also expressed interest and support for MAC. **All of the importers met from Germany, France and the Netherlands were very interested in participating in certification development and MAC** and many have already sent their data to the Global Marine Aquarium Database (GMAD), as an indication of their commitment to MAC.

Overall, **MAC will continue to build and expand our interaction with stakeholders in Europe to ensure they have the opportunity to be fully engaged in certification development.** This will include outreach to consumers, retailers, importers, trade association representatives and product manufacturers in Europe - in addition to our ongoing and growing interaction with European-based environment organizations, government agencies, and international organization. We plan to make the MAC brochure available in German and possibly additional European languages as soon as possible.

## **MAC in the Media**

**Numerous articles featuring MAC and certification appeared in the media in late 2000**, especially as a result of the press interest in MAC at the 9<sup>th</sup> International Coral Reef Symposium (Bali, October) and many of these are available on the MAC website. Some of the articles include:

- "Aquarium Group Fights 'Cyanide Fishing'", Nature, Volume 408, November 2, 2000;
- "Reef Relief" New Scientist, November 4, 2000;
- "Asians using cyanide to catch tropical salt-water pet fish," Associated Press, November, 2000;
- "Fish collectors can help protect coral reefs," Philippines Daily Inquirer, November 21, 2000;
- "Certification system aimed at discouraging cyanide to catch fish, " The State Newspaper, October 26, 2000

## **MAC Board Developments**

The MAC Board of Directors held a conference call meeting in December that brought together the majority of the Board members from around the world. Key outputs included:

- **The Board approved MAC's progress and priority to get certification launched.**
- **Marshall Meyers was elected to continue as Chair of the MAC Board.**
- **Mr Rex Horoi was voted in as the newest member of the MAC Board, representing Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI).** FSPI is an environment and community development organization based in Vanuatu, with offices/affiliates in 9 Pacific Island countries. Mr. Horoi was formerly the Solomon Islands Ambassador to the UN and US.

## **For More Information**

Visit the MAC website: [www.aquariumcouncil.org](http://www.aquariumcouncil.org) or e-mail MAC at: [info@aquariumcouncil.org](mailto:info@aquariumcouncil.org)

