



2010 Monaco Blue Initiative

March 31st - April 1st



FONDATION
PRINCE ALBERT II DE MONACO



Institut océanographique
Fondation Albert 1^{er}, prince de Monaco
Paris • Monaco



NGOs, scientific institutions and many countries are increasingly concerned with the environmental situation affecting the seas and oceans. What are the driving factors to incite civil society and political figures to support sustainable development and protection of the Planet? The lack of fruitful exchange between

the different communities (science, society and industry) is part of this problem.

The Monaco Blue Initiative launched by the Oceanographic Institute and the Prince Albert II Monaco Foundation at the request and under the leadership of HSH Prince Albert II aims to achieve greater efficiency in this field as an Action Club, associating a think tank and concrete initiatives.

It is considered to be a focus point, a place for dialogue and exchange and most importantly, a driving force for launching actions and providing support in defence of the seas and oceans.

30 of the most important key stakeholders on marine-related issues will attend this one-day working session in Monaco. The Monaco Blue Initiative will allow discussion between all ocean communities, including international leaders from business, science, government, civil society.

The Monaco Blue Initiative will nurture innovative solutions to advance ocean sustainability worldwide. Our guiding principles include:

- 1. Putting oceans on the world agenda**
- 2. Working together to ensure improvement of the maritime environment**
- 3. Promoting better regional and global maritime governance**
- 4. Identifying and fostering emerging maritime leaders and initiatives**
- 5. Highlighting advances in marine sciences**
- 6. Encouraging responsible maritime ventures**



WHAT IS THE MONACO BLUE INITIATIVE'S FOCUS?

OPEN SESSION

The man and the Ocean, a fragile balance

The oceans as a source of life, a source of biodiversity... It is in the ocean environment that life first appeared and that species diversified. With the International Year of Biodiversity, it is obvious that there has been great erosion of the diversity of living species on Earth. Today, maintaining a sustainable balance between Man and the Ocean has become a major challenge for the future.

The world population and the need for food are increasing while the potential for exploiting halieutic resources is diminishing. In addition to pressure on the marine environment by human populations, there are the effects of the current twofold impact of global warming and acidification of the oceans, due to increased carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Such constant pressure and the accumulation of these impacts affect natural equilibria. They raise questions about major economic interests and may represent a growing threat to food safety, especially in regions dependant on protein from the sea. Today, nearly 60% of the world population lives in coastal areas and is therefore directly concerned.

Nonetheless, the Ocean's resources offer tremendous potential for food and science... its immense wealth can provide the elements vital for the health and the future of humankind. But it can play this role only if humans are capable of protecting its diversity, despite the constraints of exploitation linked to demography and human populations' needs. We know that the potential productivity of ecosystems depends on the wealth of biodiversity. This makes it indispensable today to improve our management of the oceans' resources by preserving their ecosystems, stocks and biodiversity.

The stakes for maintaining this fragile equilibrium between Man and the Ocean are not yet fully perceived. One of the goals of the Monaco Blue Initiative is to make them known to decision makers and propose concrete outcomes.



SESSION 1

The ocean depths, a new biodiversity to be protected

We know more about the moon than about the ocean depths. The deep sea is the lowest layer in the ocean, below 1000 m depth or more. Little or no light reaches this level of the ocean, and most of its organisms rely for subsistence on falling organic matter produced in the photic zone.

Until the late 1970s little was known about the possibility of life on the deep ocean floor. Consequently, scientists assumed that life would be sparse at such depths. All that changed with the discovery of thriving colonies of shrimp and other organisms around hydrothermal vents.

Today, new exploration techniques lead us to realize that these ecosystems are home to a considerable - though still very poorly known - biodiversity on our planet.

We know that the mineral and biological resources in the ocean depths offer a potential wealth that could in some ways satisfy our society's needs and contribute to progress, especially in the area of biotechnologies and medicine. We also know that hypersensitive deep-sea species and ecosystems are extremely vulnerable in the face of intensive exploitation.

The ocean depths cannot withstand such pressure. What are optimum alternative solutions existing for control and management? What new sustainable transition and reconversion techniques can be implemented to curb the impact on deep-sea species and ecosystems?

SESSION 2

The great marine species, the marine ecosystem keystone

The exponential growth of human populations in recent decades has led to overexploitation of marine living resources to meet growing demand for food. The use of modern techniques to facilitate fishing, transport and storage has accelerated this trend. Manmade pollutions and waste have a direct effect on the condition of marine populations and species. They include great marine species, at the top of the food chain, which are particularly vulnerable.

An example of these great species is the bluefin tuna (*Thunnus thynnus*). Thanks to the commitment of HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco for its protection, bluefin tuna, a victim of the growing popularity of sushi and sashimi, has become emblematic of these top-level marine predators that have become human prey.

Populations of large sharks are also overexploited to satisfy the rising demand for shark fins as well as flesh used in particular for "Fish & Chips". Some species are already protected, but others may disappear if nothing is done.

Other "lords of the ocean", marine mammals suffer every day from the consequences of the impact of human activity. Noise pollution and heavy metal represent major hazards for this great marine animals.

It must be remembered that great species have a crucial role in their ecosystems since they contribute to regulating and stabilizing the populations of the prey on which they feed. Cascading trophic effects have been observed with the elimination of top-level predators, triggering indirect effects throughout the ecosystem.

The issues concerning great marine species and overexploitation of resources pose the problem of mobilizing all players worldwide. From now on, in the framework of international cooperation, we must define new measures for protection, sustainable conservation, regulation and management adapted to the current situation.



2010 EVENT SCHEDULE

MARCH 31ST

7:30 p.m.

Welcome of the participants by HSH Prince Albert II and presentation of the organization of the Monaco Blue Initiative and the main themes treated at this first gathering.

8:30 p.m.

Monaco Blue Initiative reception and welcome dinner in the presence of HSH Prince Albert II.

APRIL 1ST

9:00 a.m.

Opening session: The man and the ocean: a fragile balance.

10: 15 a.m.

Session 1: The ocean depths: a new biodiversity to be protected.

11:30 a.m. Coffee break

11:45 a.m.

Session 2: Great marine species: the marine ecosystem keystone

13:00 p.m. Lunch break

2:30 p.m. Opening to public

News flash: What you need to know about oceans?

3:00 p.m.

Craig Venter, keynote speaker: Cutting-edge science and entrepreneurship

3:30 p.m. Closing plenary session

4:30 p.m. Individual press interviews and coffee break