



for a living planet®



Press Release

Not for distribution before 00:01GMT on 11 July 2004

Underwater World Singapore and WWF Making a Splash for Marine Conservation in Singapore

Singapore – Underwater World Singapore (UWS) and WWF today launched an exhibit to raise awareness on the threats to South East Asia's coral reefs and the importance of marine parks and public aquaria as a means of protecting them.

More than a quarter of all the world's coral reefs have already been virtually destroyed, and 50-70% of coral reefs are threatened by human activities. Illegal methods such as bombs and poisons as a means of stunning and collecting fish have reduced many healthy reefs to rubble and it can take 50 years or more for these coral reefs to recover. The coral reefs supply food and livelihoods for tens of millions of people and this productivity is compromised by the use of illegal fishing methods which destroy our precious marine resources.

“With more than a 1.4 million visitors to Underwater World Singapore a year, this joint initiative is an important step towards raising awareness on an important issue,” said Paul Steele, Chief Operating Officer of WWF International.

The new exhibit supported by UWS and WWF features marine protected areas and their role in restoring fish stocks and safe-guarding critical ecosystems. Marine parks and public aquaria like Underwater World Singapore, are also an important tool for educating visitors and introducing them to the beauty and complexity of the tropical marine environment.

“Underwater World Singapore is committed to marine conservation and environmental awareness, through its public education, breeding, rescue and rehabilitation and research initiatives. The joint collaboration with WWF further reinforces our firm belief in corporate social responsibility towards, amongst others, our environmental conservation efforts,” said Chng Hwee Hong, Deputy Chairman of Underwater World Singapore.

The Asia-Pacific region hosts the most biologically diverse coastal and marine ecosystems in the world. The global centre of marine biodiversity and a fifth of the world's total coral reef area are in the Sulu-Sulawesi Seas of Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. Asia-Pacific itself is home to roughly two-thirds of the world's coral reef ecosystems and mangroves. Much of WWF's marine work in the region focuses on protected area establishment and management, and sustainable fisheries.



for a living planet®



For more information, please contact:

Bruce Mackay
Curatorial Director
Underwater World Singapore Pte Ltd
Tel: (65) 62750030 Fax: (65) 62750036
Email: brucemackay@uws.hawpar.com

Jezamine Lee
Corporate Communications Manager
Haw Par Corporation Limited
Tel: (65) 64900209 Fax: (65) 63369232
Email: jezlee@hawpar.com

Ghislaine Llewellyn
Ecosafe Consultants
Tel: (65) 6327 8243 Fax: (65) 63278245
Email: gllewellyn@tingey.com