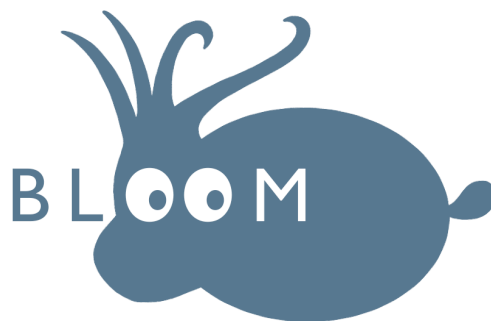


BLOOM NEWS

BLOOM ASSOCIATION
March 2009





Dear friends, supporters, and ocean lovers...

It's been a long time since we've been in touch, and so much has happened! This letter is as long as we've been active, but we promise to keep future editions shorter!

BITS and BOBS

- BLOOM has grown! We will soon be opening an office in Hong Kong headed by Andrew Rickards. This will be the base for our Asian projects.
- BLOOM has a new website in English, Chinese and French! Visit us at www.bloomassociation.org
- We are also honoured to announce that BLOOM is now a member of the Shark Alliance, Europe's shark conservation task force. Shark Alliance has almost 70 members, making it the largest and only non-profit coalition dedicated to restoring and conserving shark populations. As the Shark Alliance focuses solely on shark conservation, it has greater power to influence decision-makers. www.sharkalliance.org
- BLOOM is delighted to welcome Valérie Mercier and Mylène Lebois into the BLOOM team. You can check their profile on the Website.
- Since March 2009, HUBWOO, a multinational e-procurement firm is very generously providing us with office space.

OUR PROJECTS

We've got exciting, ambitious projects on the horizon, centred on four axes:

- Education
- Conservation
- Lobbying
- Independent research.

Educational news

We are co-producing a puppet show and musical for children with another non profit organization called 'Et demain'. It's an underwater intrigue which takes children (and their parents!) on a journey to identify the serial killer of marine animals, especially sharks, deepwater fish and corals. Along the way, they will learn more about the vulnerability of marine ecosystems and the problems they face, but they will leave the show with a set of solutions that they can start applying right away to become the actors of change!

Lobbying news

BLOOM has been working very closely with other NGOs for the past year or more to lobby the French government and ensure that marine environment concerns are heard. It seems that this work has paid off on a number of issues and that a global improvement of French officials' position can be felt in international negotiations such as the IUU vote in Europe. Of course, the French position during the last ICCAT meeting shows that there is still room for improvement! But without the mobilization of NGOs, it could probably be a lot worse.

Recently, the French Ministry of the Environment has launched a vast multi-stake holder consultation process with the objective to renew, and hopefully reform, French marine policy. This consultation, called the "Grenelle de la Mer" (in reference to the negotiations held to solve the historical social movement, the second French "revolution" of May 1968) may in part answer our repeated request to the government to hold such process with regards to fisheries only. BLOOM has been involved in this process since its start and plays a central role in it with its sister and larger organizations. For this consultation and other marine-related lobbying, we work hand in hand with the WWF, Greenpeace, the IUCN, the Shark Alliance and a French NGO called 'Fondation Nicolas Hulot'.

Conservation news

SHARKS

BLOOM has decided to move in where there were weak or no ambitious conservation plans for urgent problems, which certainly is the case for sharks. While a lot of people love sharks and talk about them or even try to help on a volunteer-base, there is no ambitious coordinated strategy to get rid of the “shark problem”. BLOOM now has one.

What is the shark problem? Simple: we fish sharks when we shouldn't!

Sharks on the whole are too vulnerable to withstand the pressure of modern fisheries. So while very worthy work is being done by the Shark Alliance in Europe to change policies in place and control the overexploitation of certain key species (porbeagle, dogfish), nothing and no one addresses the market and consumer side of things. Although for as long as there will be ignorant unconscious consumers demanding shark meat and/or fins, there will be an incentive to unsustainably exploit sharks.

But we also know that public awareness campaigns do not suffice to address such ingrained and widespread habits, so BLOOM has drafted a long-term SHARK STRATEGY which will require all of our skills: communication, education, lobbying and research. We will launch our shark program from our Hong Kong office.

We are also honoured to announce that we are in the process of working up a collaboration with the WWF Hong Kong branch to join forces for shark conservation.

HIGH SEAS PROTECTION

As of March 2009, BLOOM, in the person of Claire Nouvian, has joined the communication team of the WCPA (World Commission on Protected Areas) High Seas Marine Protected Area Task Force, lead by Kristina Gjerde.

She will help establish an ambitious and visible communication strategy, alongside Sylvia Earle and Lisa Speer, to galvanize support for marine protected areas in the vast ocean realm beyond individual nation's jurisdiction –the High Seas. Together, the Task Force seeks to advance the scientific basis for identifying areas in need of protection, build experience and good practices through pilot MPA projects, and improve the laws and policies that can control human uses and abuses.

The High Seas Marine Protected Areas Task Force was officially established in 2003 as part of the WCPA (World Commission on Protected Areas) global strategy to implement marine protected areas (“MPAs”) in significant and biologically diverse areas of the oceans. This new role for Claire is thoroughly consistent with her knowledge and love of the deep sea and her goodwill position within the IUCN (the International Union for the Conservation of Nature) as “Ocean Ambassador”. In 2003, the IUCN held its Vth World Parks Congress where marine experts formulated a 10-Year MPA Strategy on the high seas (areas beyond national jurisdiction). The High Seas MPA Task Force now contains over 20 individual experts from a variety of government agencies, conservation organizations, scientific institutions, universities, and media.

Independent Research News

We are kick-starting our independent research program on sharks from the market and consumers' side as well as from a public health perspective.

We are launching:

- A global shark overview. The aim is to compile all existing scientific data on sharks from everything but a biological point of view (fin consumption, shark fisheries and trade etc). This document will identify the knowns and unknowns of the shark problem. A “light” version will be available for downloads in English and Chinese on BLOOM's Website.

- A vast cultural survey to identify who consumes shark fins in Asia, at what frequency, in which context, for what reasons.

This will be done in collaboration with the Hong Kong University Social Sciences Department. We are thereby trying to identify our best entry points to reach the public and our most effective target populations. This work is the preliminary ground to build a later campaign leading to change. The markets, which will be looked at are Hong Kong and China.

- A trade analysis to understand the evolution of markets and the role of Hong Kong and China in that puzzle.

- A toxicology overview to compile all available information on toxic components in predatory fish and their impact on human health.



We are in the process of allying our forces to those of the Hong Kong branch of the WWF to produce this data jointly.
This independent research can be realized thanks to the crucial and generous support of ADM Capital Foundation in Hong Kong.

EVENT CALENDAR

APRIL 09

The exhibition *THE DEEP* goes to Taiwan!

The exhibition *The Deep* will be touring Taiwan, opening at the Taiwan Museum in Taipei on April 14th and running until July 22nd, followed by The Natural History Museum in Taichung from August 4th to October 2009 and finally The National Museum of Marine Biology and Aquarium, Ping Tong (near Kaoh Siung) from December 2009 to March 2010. The exhibition has been extended, and now includes a zone that focuses on marine conservation, specifically on deep-sea bottom trawling, global overfishing and shark declines. But we also draft solutions for visitors too!

And the exhibition welcomes a new specimen from Japan: an amazing GOBLIN SHARK

There is also a new addition to the exhibition's extraordinary collection of specimens: a goblin shark has been donated by the Tokyo Sea Life Park. The exhibition's taxidermist, Allan Gottini, will be on hand in Taiwan to prepare this extremely rare specimen for display.

The book *THE DEEP* is released in Chinese (complex characters) 深海奇珍 on April 15

The publisher Business Weekly Publishing is one of the largest publishing groups of Taiwan. Long life to the Chinese version!

JUNE 09

BLOOM's first fund-raising dinner

On June 8th 2009, BLOOM Association will be holding its first fundraising dinner in Hong Kong to help save the oceans. June 8th is World Ocean Day and this year, it is officially recognized as such by the United Nations for the first time. There will be events across the world to honour World Ocean Day – BLOOM's fundraising dinner is a part of a bigger picture of global mobilization. June 8th is about so much more than raising funds, though. It's about raising fun, awareness and raising a BLOOM family, too!

Our dinner will be held at the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club in Causeway Bay. The event is placed under the patronage of the French Consulate in Hong Kong and the Hong Kong Canadian Chamber of Commerce.

For more information about the dinner, contact the project coordinator Isabel Jarrett (isabeljarrett@bloomassociation.org) who will be based in Hong Kong for this occasion from April 15th to June 18th.

.....

Thanks for taking the time to read BLOOM's news. We want to thank you all for your continued support. We hope to make 2009 an even more successful year for BLOOM and we couldn't do it without your help.

Best wishes,

The BLOOM team