

**DECEMBER 18, 2009**

## **VANCOUVER AQUARIUM RECOGNIZES EXCELLENCE IN AQUATIC SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION**

**Vancouver, BC** – The Vancouver Aquarium yesterday hosted the 15th annual Murray A. Newman awards for excellence in aquatic science and conservation, and congratulates the recipients Dr. John Ford and the Honourable John A. Fraser O.C.

Dr. John Ford was awarded for achievement in Aquatic Research. Ford joined Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) in 2001 as Cetacean Research Program Head at the Pacific Biological Station, Nanaimo. Prior to DFO, John was senior marine mammal scientist and Director of Research and Conservation at the Vancouver Aquarium. He is also Adjunct Professor in the Department of Zoology, University of British Columbia.

Dr. Ford's 1984 PhD was a ground-breaking study of the use of pod-specific dialects by resident killer whales. Ford has also focused research on the conservation status of cetaceans listed under Canada's Species-at-Risk Act and involves assessments of population abundance and distribution, critical habitats and foraging ecology of west coast whales. A recent achievement was the discovery that resident killer whale survival is tightly linked to Chinook salmon abundance.

The Honourable John A. Fraser O.C. was awarded for achievement in Aquatic Conservation. Fraser served Canada's Parliament as Minister for the Environment and Minister of Fisheries. In 1994, Fraser became head of the Fraser River Sockeye Public Review Board. He was later appointed Chair of the Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council in 1998 and remains a Council member. John Fraser is also a Queen's Counsel, an officer of the Order of Canada and a member of the Order of British Columbia and he holds the Canadian Forces Decoration. In 2004, Mr. Fraser was appointed chair of British Columbia's Pacific Salmon Forum.

### **ABOUT THE MURRAY A. NEWMAN AWARDS**

The Murray A. Newman Awards were established as a tribute to Dr. Murray Newman, the founding director of the Vancouver Aquarium. When Dr. Newman retired in 1993, many of his friends and colleagues got together to recognize his contribution to public awareness and understanding of the aquatic world.

### **ABOUT THE VANCOUVER AQUARIUM**

The Vancouver Aquarium is a global leader in connecting people to our natural world, and a self-supporting, non-profit association dedicated to effecting the conservation of aquatic life through display and interpretation, conservation practices, education, research, and direct action. Learn more at <http://vanaqua.org>

#### **Media Contact:**

Public Relations Coordinator  
publicrelations@vanaqua.org  
604.659.3752