

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 11, 2012



VANCOUVER AQUARIUM MARINE SCIENCE CENTRE TO HOST THE WORLD'S AQUARIUMS IN VANCOUVER

Vancouver, B.C. – The Vancouver Aquarium Marine Science Centre has been unanimously selected to host the ninth International Aquarium Congress in 2016. The Congress is the most important and recognized international event within the aquarium and marine science industry, and is expected to bring approximately 1,500 leading practitioners and scientists from nearly 45 countries to the city of Vancouver in 2016.

For 55 years, through its long-standing commitment to conservation, education, research, interpretation and aquatic display, the Vancouver Aquarium has been a leader in connecting people to our natural world. Well anchored in its community of peer networks, the organization is a leader in the worldwide network of aquariums and marine science centres, and is internationally recognized for its high standards in animal care, conservation and research contributions.

“It is truly an honour to have been selected to host the 2016 International Aquarium Congress,” says Dr. John Nightingale, president and CEO of the Vancouver Aquarium. “As a founding Congress member, the Vancouver Aquarium values and embodies the importance of knowledge-sharing and cultivating significant relationships with our peer institutions. We have already started planning for an unparalleled learning experience to ignite collaborative and meaningful discussions that will contribute to conserving the world’s aquatic environments and our natural world.”

The Vancouver Aquarium is a member of several international networks, including the Alliance of Marine Mammal Parks and Aquariums, Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums and Association of Zoos and Aquariums, among others. It regularly partners with organizations from around the world and contributes to the international body of marine life science on a multitude of topics, such as its groundbreaking research on killer whales. The Aquarium is called upon by its international peers for counsel and collaboration on local conservation efforts and participates in international rescue efforts during aquatic environmental crises, such as oil spills, that impact aquatic animals and the health of local ecosystems.

“The Vancouver Aquarium turns 60 years old in 2016 and it will be the perfect time for us to share our expertise, learning and world-class facilities,” adds Dr. Nightingale. “This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to collaborate and share best practices, and we look forward to welcoming the world’s most respected contributors of the marine science industry to the Vancouver Aquarium and our spectacular city of Vancouver.”

Taking place every four years, the Congress has been held around the world, including Europe, the Americas and Asia since its inception in 1960. The Congress provides the scientific community with the latest on marine life research, extending the opportunity to discuss global and local issues and sharing successful initiatives. In 2012, the Congress will be held in Cape Town, South Africa. The torch will then be passed to the Vancouver Aquarium which—with the help of its 400+ staff and over 1,000 volunteers— will plan for an incredible experience at the 2016 Congress.

In addition to the Aquarium, the Congress' steering committee saw in Vancouver a diverse and multicultural setting, providing an ideal backdrop for international exchange and intercultural dialogue. With its state-of-the-art convention centre, world-class hotels, sought-after culinary scene and diversity of aquatic life, Vancouver's candidature was the perfect selection to host this conference in 2016.

According to Richard Yore, Tourism Vancouver's director of Meeting and Convention Sales: "Tourism Vancouver is very proud to have supported the Vancouver Aquarium in bringing the 2016 International Aquarium Congress to Vancouver through our *Be A Host* bid assistance program. We are confident that delegates will find our beautiful city an inspiring location for this important event.

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, education, research and direct action. Learn more at www.vanaqua.org.

Tourism Vancouver

Tourism Vancouver's focus is on building exceptional customer relationships with meeting planners, travel influencers, travel media and independent tourists. The Meeting and Convention Sales team actively promotes Vancouver worldwide as a premiere event destination and services hundreds of meetings each year. Tourism Vancouver's "service edge" strives to deliver the best combination of customer sales, service and destination value anywhere in the world.

-30-

Media Contact:

Roxanne St-Pierre

604.659.3752 | publicrelations@vanaqua.org