

MERLIN ENTERTAINMENTS AND SEA LIFE TRUST PROVIDE FUNDING BOOST TO SAFEGUARD THE WORLD'S OCEANS

- Merlin Entertainments and the SEA LIFE TRUST announce additional funding boost for 16 new global conservation projects, spanning four continents and six countries.
- New projects will make a significant difference to marine and freshwater ecosystems, benefiting species and habitats across the globe.
- Following the success of the seven projects funded in 2022, this further funding represents Merlin's ongoing commitment to conserving the world's waters and ecosystems for the future.

Merlin Entertainments today announces that 16 SEA LIFE projects have received further funding to address a range of conservation issues, spanning Asia, Australia, the U.S. and Europe. These projects include the Florida Reef Tract Rescue Project, community-based ecosystem restoration and an addition to the global STaR (Stegostoma Tigrinum Augmentation and Recovery) programme, for the preservation of Zebra sharks.

Projects were selected by Merlin's Global Conservation Board, a dedicated body committed to saving endangered species, protecting local oceans and freshwater environments, and supporting positive change worldwide. With the overarching goal of protecting the world's waters and ecosystems for future generations, the Global Conservation Board is focusing its efforts on supporting projects that demonstrate measurable impact and sustainable outcomes. This funding will complement existing conservation budgets to further support these important projects.

- Working alongside the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, **SEA LIFE San Antonio** and **SEA LIFE Charlotte-Concord** are playing an integral role in a significant coral rescue program, to safeguard Florida's coral reefs from stony coral tissue disease. The initiative involves the relocation and protection of at-risk corals in bio-secure facilities, as well as various supporting conservation education initiatives. These two new facilities will join forces with three other SEA LIFE aquariums across the U.S., who are currently contributing to the preservation and restoration of Florida's coral ecosystems.
- **SEA LIFE Bangkok Ocean World** is expanding its mission to restore and replenish ecosystems, adding to its work on coral reefs that have been damaged or depleted, it will develop a seagrass rewilding project. By engaging with the local community in the Andaman region, the project aims to create sustainable partnerships that benefit the marine environment and empower and involve residents in the conservation efforts, to ensure the health and resilience of the region's coastal ecosystems for years to come.
- **SEA LIFE California** is supporting the vulnerable Zebra shark recovery program, linked with the global STaR programme, dedicated to the preservation of sharks in the Raja Ampat Islands in Indonesia. Collaborating with facilities across North America, SEA LIFE NA is also championing the work with ReShark and S.A.F.E (Saving Animals from Extinction) programs, to safeguard the future of Zebra sharks through dedicated conservation and breeding efforts through both natural breeding and artificial insemination programs.

Chris Brown, Chair of Merlin's Conservation Board and Head of Conservation, Science and Education for SEA LIFE:

"We take immense pride in championing transformative conservation initiatives that have a tangible impact on aquatic wildlife and their habitats. Our teams are engaged in groundbreaking projects across the globe – from spearheading the Florida Reef Tract

Rescue Project to community-based ecosystem restoration. Our commitment is unwavering, aiming to safeguard and revitalise the underwater world for the benefit of generations to come."

Graham McGrath, Managing Director of SEA LIFE TRUST, added:

"At the core of the SEA LIFE TRUST lies a profound commitment to marine conservation. Transformative projects and programs which support the protection of the world's oceans are central to this commitment. It is an honour to stand alongside Merlin's passionate global teams, driving change through a range of inspiring conservation initiatives. The collaborative efforts of SEA LIFE TRUST, alongside SEA LIFE and Merlin, are making substantial and positive contributions to our planet's aquatic habitats."

For further information, please visit: <https://www.merlinentertainments.biz/responsible-business/animal-care-and-conservation/>

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Notes to Editors

About Merlin Entertainments

Merlin Entertainments is a world leader in branded entertainment destinations, offering a diverse portfolio of resort theme parks, city-centre gateway attractions and LEGOLAND Resorts which span across the UK, US, Western Europe, China and Asia Pacific. Dedicated to creating experiences that inspire joy and connection, Merlin welcomes more than 62 million guests annually to its growing estate, with over 140 sites across 23 countries. An expert in bringing world-famous entertainment brands to life, Merlin works with partners including the LEGO® Group, Sony Pictures Entertainment, Peppa Pig, DreamWorks and Ferrari to create destinations where guests can immerse themselves in a wide array of brand-driven worlds, rides and uplifting learning experiences.

See www.merlinentertainments.biz for more information.

About SEA LIFE and the SEA LIFE TRUST

SEA LIFE is the world's largest family of aquariums, proudly delivering amazing discoveries around the world. From breathtaking underwater tunnels to incredible up-close encounters, guests can dive into the ocean world without getting wet. Welcoming more than 20 million guests each year to 50 aquariums and six sanctuaries, SEA LIFE cares for over 180,000 creatures living in incredible themed habitats.

SEA LIFE has a vision of oceans that are healthy, protected, and full of diverse, wonderful animals and works together with its partner charity, the SEA LIFE TRUST. Their joint focus is to protect these oceans and the amazing marine life within them.

The SEA LIFE TRUST owns and operates marine wildlife sanctuaries (including the world's first Beluga Whale Sanctuary in Iceland), runs inspiring conservation campaigns and funds projects and education programmes that champion the need to protect our oceans.

Through its global BREED, RESCUE, PROTECT programme and dedicated Conservation, Welfare and Education team, SEA LIFE's team of expert marine biologists pioneer global breeding projects which may one day provide a lifeline to the ocean's

endangered species, as well as nursing sick creatures back to health and returning them to the wild. If they can't survive in the wild, they are given a safe home for life.

For more information on the work SEA LIFE and the SEA LIFE TRUST does in protecting our oceans, visit www.visitsealife.com and www.sealifetrust.org.
