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THE OCEAN PROJECT LAUNCHES “WEAR BLUE AND TELL TWO” CAMPAIGN

Call to Action to Raise Conservation Awareness and Inspire Action on June 8th, the First-Ever World Oceans Day

PROVIDENCE, RI, JUNE 3, 2009 – The first-ever World Oceans Day on June 8th begins with a call to action in response to critical news about Americans’ level of knowledge and commitment to the health of the ocean. **Wear Blue and Tell Two** an international campaign that encourages people to wear a blue item of clothing on June 8th and tell people two things they may not know about the ocean and two ways they can take action to improve and safeguard the health of our ocean.

On this World Oceans Day, June 8th, aquariums, zoos, museums, and other conservation organizations around the world will reach out to visitors with fun facts and practical tips to move the needle on these survey results. Here are two “tell two” examples:

- Choose healthy and sustainable seafood: Each of us can use our power as a consumer to help conserve the ocean by choosing fish that are abundant in supply, and fished or farmed without harm to the ocean. Pick up or download a Monterey Bay Aquarium Seafood Watch pocket guide.
- Calculate your carbon footprint: Use one of many online “carbon calculators” to measure your household’s carbon pollution load and then work on ways each week to reduce it by biking and walking more instead of driving, turning off lights when you leave a room, and using fans more often, instead of A/C this summer.

Wear Blue and Tell Two was inspired by results from *America, the Ocean, and Climate Change: New Research Insights for Conservation, Awareness, and Action*, the largest-ever environmental study. A collaborative effort between The Ocean Project, the National Aquarium, and Monterey Bay Aquarium, the study points to the pressing need to accelerate knowledge and commitment to ocean health. Data illustrate that Americans’ knowledge about the ocean remains minimal, and concern about environmental issues affecting the ocean is low compared to such issues as the economy and national security. While the survey also finds that climate change is the environmental issue of most concern, people remain unaware of the connections between personal action, climate change, and ocean health.

Despite limited knowledge about the ocean, when asked, Americans say they support protecting the health of the ocean and the environment. In a significant shift from views expressed in a 1999 survey also commissioned by The Ocean Project, Americans now believe that their individual actions can have a positive effect on protecting the environment and improving the health of the ocean. They are ready to act but are not sure what to do. Likewise, the public expects aquariums, zoos, and museums to communicate solutions to environmental and ocean issues while advancing conservation.

“*America, the Ocean, and Climate Change* shows that Americans possess significantly greater knowledge about casino gambling and video games than we do about our ocean, even as we might be planning for that trip to the beach. Clearly, we need to see a greater emphasis on environmental and ocean

literacy,” said Bill Mott, director of The Ocean Project. Added Mott, “The good news is that once informed about the problems, we also see in the survey results confirmation that we are a ‘can do’ country, with people wanting to help, wanting to be part of the solution, and aquariums, zoos, and museums are in an excellent position to help everyone to do just that.”

The survey also found that young people aged 12-17 care more about the ocean, know more about ocean issues, and are more willing to act on the ocean’s behalf than adults. According to *America, the Ocean, and Climate Change*, teens and tweens influence the opinions of adults, who tend to view their children as better informed on conservation issues. Additionally, the study found that Americans in households where English is not the primary language express increased levels of concern about ocean issues and are more willing to modify their behavior than Americans in households where English is the primary language.

The executive summary of *America, the Ocean, and Climate Change* and copies of the report are available at www.TheOceanProject.org or by emailing Bill Mott: bmott@theoceanproject.org.

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