

## Conserving Our Ocean Planet

In December 1990, the Aquarium opened the Marine Mammal Pavilion on the pier adjacent to the main building. Today, the Lyn P. Meyerhoff Auditorium is home to ten beloved Atlantic bottlenose dolphins that are a favorite among visitors. The 1300-seat amphitheater showcases the majesty of dolphins through daily shows that combine fun, family entertainment with conservation education.

Today, dolphins remain the most popular attraction at the National Aquarium. Very few aquariums have dolphins in their collection – you would need to travel to Chicago, Indianapolis, Florida or Texas to see them anywhere else.

Dolphins present a natural opportunity for the National Aquarium to teach the public how to protect our oceans. Our Ocean Planet was born from a basic concept:

*Dolphins have captured our imagination and lure us to their ocean world. They move with grace and agility through their watery world, offering us a glimpse into their lives. We long to interact with them from the shore, entering their world. But our behaviors affect them in many ways—some good, some bad. Let's learn how we can share this big blue ocean together.*

### Did you know?

Over 70% of the world's surface is covered by our oceans, reaching depths of several miles.

Even still, more than 95% of the underwater world remains unexplored. We know the most about coastal waters, where people swim, boat, and fish.

Currents flow around the world regardless of national borders: in fact, the Baltimore Inner Harbor is connected, without anything separating it, to ALL the oceans on earth. So the water in the Inner Harbor today could be on the shores of Africa in a year!

Just like these currents, trash can travel hundreds of miles and find its way to the ocean. Dolphins cannot clean the oceans of trash and debris; humans must get involved in solving this global problem.

### So what can you do to help?

- Dispose of your trash properly so it doesn't get into waterways leading to the ocean. Also recycle whatever you can.
- Plant native trees and shrubs because they use less fertilizer. Too much fertilizer can run off into waterways, which is bad for the Ocean.
- Don't pour anything down storm drains because they lead to the Bay which connects to the Ocean.
- Tell your elected officials to vote for local and national laws that protect water quality and healthy ocean habitats.