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We're Saving the Mermaids @ sirenian.org

OUR GOALS:

RESEARCH, EDUCATION, and CONSERVATION
through Inter-cultural Collaboration

RESEARCH GOAL: To foster, promote, and support scientific research related to manatees & dugongs with a focus on populations in developing nations where resources are limited.

EDUCATION GOAL: To facilitate exchange of information among scientists, students, regulatory agencies, NGOs, and concerned citizens. To promote effective communication about science & conservation to diverse audiences.

CONSERVATION GOAL: To support conservation efforts by local people in developing nations; to provide scientific data to local decision makers concerned with manatee & dugong conservation.

BIG SLOPPY MANATEE KISSES TO OUR PATRONS

Howard & Michele Hall, Dr. and Mrs. William E. Evans, Jack Burtt, Sue Otto, Thomas W. Evans, Dr. Jane M. Packard, The Martin Packard Family, Kieran Carew, Mr. and Mrs. James H. Self, Heather Van Wagner, Hayley VanderStel, Brian Casey, Susan and Rodney Wagner, Mike Winkler, Patricia Witt, Karen Downen, Clifton Jones, Mary Turlington, Cheryl Lechtanski, David Pouliot, Dolphin Wild Eco-Adventures, Doug Perrine, Scott Carle, John Patrick Sullivan, Tim Hayes, and Maija Gadiant-Heberlein

Thanks for you continued support!

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Saving the Mermaids

Dive into Earth Day with our Ambassadors

Each of us can play an important role in conserving and protecting our local water supply. Join Maya, Conch, Elandra, Bahari, and Yara in protecting our Mother Earth's water by doing your part right here at home!



YARA, Amazonian Mermaid Ambassador
Photo (c) Doug Perrine, Seapics.com

Water for Life

Yara, our Amazonian Mermaid Ambassador, says,
"What we do to our water, we do to ourselves!"

Yara reminds us that fresh water is essential for all life. About 70% of the Earth's surface is covered with water; however, most is stored in our vast and salty oceans. Only about 1% is fresh water, which is necessary for the survival of all life on Earth. This fresh water cycles through the aquatic system as evaporation from the oceans, humidity, clouds, rain, snow, creeks, rivers, lakes, and ground water.

Yara represents the smallest of all sirenians, her species can only live in freshwater and is endemic to the Amazon basin & watershed in South America. Her name comes from a Brazilian Indian word meaning "Lady of the Water". Her kind is almost extinct due to commercial hunting, which didn't end until the mid 1900s.



BAHARI, West African Merman Ambassador
Photo (c) Doug Perrine, Seapics.com

Bahari, our West African Merman Ambassador, reminds us that there are over six billion people in the world and at least one billion DO NOT have access to safe drinking water. At the current rate of population growth and habitat degradation, more than 3.5 billion people will experience water shortages by 2025. Nineteen countries in the world are already labeled

as "water stressed." Bahari represents West African manatees, which inhabit the coastal zone and rivers from Mauritania to Angola in West Africa, where most "water stressed" countries are located. West African manatees are threatened with extinction due to illegal hunting, extreme poverty, and destruction of habitat as more and more dams are built on rivers for hydroelectric power..

Conch, our Florida Merman Ambassador, reminds us that the human population is growing exponentially, while many other

species, like manatees & dugongs, are threatened with extinction. Humans are increasingly putting water — Mother Earth's essential resource — in serious danger. We poison our ground water with toxic chemicals. We burn fossil fuels that cause acid rain.

We dam our rivers, interrupting water flow and destroying delicate

ecosystems. We clear filtering vegetation and pave massive land areas, increasing flooding and soil erosion. The Florida manatees must compete with humans in one of the fastest growing and over consumptive human populations in the world. As a result, **increased nutrient runoff causes toxic red-tides in Florida, events which have killed hundreds of Florida manatees. Worst of all, here in the USA where we are the richest nation in the world & have access to the most water on Earth, we are wasting vast amounts of it.**



CONCH, Florida Merman Ambassador
Photo (c) Doug Perrine, Seapics.com

ELANDRA SAYS: *Our planet's system for purification of water, like all its other systems, is delicate and balanced. We can protect it by preventing water pollution and by using only what we need. Here are just a few things to get you started...*



ELANDRA, Dugong Mermaid Ambassador
Photo (c) Doug Perrine, Seapics.com

- Discard used motor oil and other toxic wastes at an appropriate waste or recycling center
- Never leave the water running while you brush your teeth, wash your hands, wash the dishes, or clean up after a project
- Use non-hazardous cleaning products, such as baking soda, vinegar, citrus cleaner, and elbow grease
- Recycle aluminum, paper, plastics; take only 1 or 2 napkins when you eat out; never use disposable plates and cups at home
- Take "Navy" showers instead of baths; wet yourself down & turn off the water; soap up and shampoo your hair while the shower is off, then turn the shower back on to rinse
- Always use a dishpan to wash and rinse kitchen dishes; use the rinse water to water your garden
- Only run the dishwasher when it's full; only run the washing machine for full loads of laundry; unless your clothes are really dirty, wear them twice before you wash them
- Plant trees, shrubs, and grasses that are adapted to the local climate so that they don't need extra water, fertilizers, and pesticides
- Wash your car at a car wash that recycles water; if you wash at home, use a bucket instead of the hose
- Divert rainwater from concrete and asphalt areas onto grassy areas instead of into storm drains; this reduces the need for

watering and filters contaminants before they reach our streams

- Use sand rather than salt on ice-covered sidewalks in the winter
- Fix faucets and toilets that leak, drip, or run; adjust toilet tank for minimum fill



MAYA, Antillean Mermaid Ambassador
Photo (c) Doug Perrine, Seapics.com

MAYA SAYS: ALWAYS VOTE, and seriously think about our Mother Earth before you cast