

## MEDIA RELEASE

# Marine Life Park Brings Innovative Educational Experiences to Singapore's Students

*Internationally-acclaimed curriculum jointly developed with Sea Research Foundation*

**SINGAPORE, 30 November 2011** – Marine Life Park (MLP), the world's largest oceanarium when it opens next year, will bring the science and mystique of marine life to Singapore's doorstep with innovative first-time experiences for all visitors. Aside from being an exciting family destination, it will also be a unique classroom for the more than 500,000<sup>1</sup>-strong student population in Singapore.

Today, the MLP team and representatives of Sea Research Foundation presented the goals and highlights of the curriculum currently being planned to more than 250 principals and science educators from some 70 schools including pre-school to tertiary levels. The curriculum, envisioned to transform the way students learn about the world of marine life, is being created through a collaborative three-year partnership agreement between Resorts World Sentosa (RWS) and Sea Research Foundation's Mystic Aquarium, which is known for its outstanding educational programming, marine animal research and husbandry expertise.

Educators were also introduced via video to Dr Robert Ballard, oceanographer and National Geographic Explorer-in-Residence based onboard the Nautilus, an out-at-sea vessel from which scientists map and study activity on the sea floor. Dr Ballard is best known for his discovery of the RMS Titanic and who today serves as the chairman and chief scientist for the JASON Project, an internationally-acclaimed, multi-media, science programme spearheaded by Sea Research Foundation in collaboration with the National Geographic Society. The MLP will become the exclusive manager for The JASON Project in Southeast Asia.

Built to enthrall visitors of all ages and from all walks of life, the MLP aims to promote greater awareness and appreciation for the marine environment by offering up-close-and-personal encounters with sea creatures. Underscoring the park's commitment to be a constructive voice for conservation, the MLP is

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<sup>1</sup> Source: <http://www.moe.gov.sg/education/education-statistics-digest/files/esd-2011.pdf> (Ministry of Education's Education Statistics Digest 2011 which recorded the total student population from primary to junior college/centralised institute level to be 510,714 in 2010.)

dedicated to advancing marine and biological study through a three-pronged approach: education, conservation and scientific research.

Mr Peter Doyle, Vice President of Marine Life Park, says: "We are proud to have a partner in Sea Research Foundation and Mystic Aquarium to help us achieve our goals. We have started building a strong curriculum that will promote the appreciation of marine life among students and hopefully, inspire them to take up careers in marine sciences or animal care. As the world's largest oceanarium, we carry the responsibility to reach out to millions of visitors with the message of marine education and conservation, and move them into action."

Dr Stephen M. Coan, Sea Research Foundation President & CEO further explains the MLP curriculum: "These immersive, hands-on school programmes will engage students of all ages and complement classroom learning. Each year, Sea Research Foundation's educational initiatives reach 1.5 million students worldwide and our collaboration with the MLP furthers our international reach. Singapore educators can be confident that these field-tested programmes will inspire and excite their students."

To ignite the students' passion for environmental protection and conservation, the park will offer a wide array of educational programmes such as: student research projects to hone their laboratory skills, internship programmes, teacher work attachments, career shadowing and traveling marine outreach classes to schools across the island.

In addition to their partnership on various educational programmes, the MLP and Sea Research Foundation will also collaborate on various marine biology research programmes. More details will be shared when available.

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### **About Sea Research Foundation**

Sea Research Foundation is based in Mystic, Connecticut, USA and is the parent organization of Mystic Aquarium, Institute for Exploration and The JASON Project. A non-governmental, mission oriented organization, it is focused on marine research, conservation, exploration and education. Sea Research Foundation and National Geographic Society, also a non-governmental mission oriented organization, work jointly in developing and implementing The JASON Project science program throughout the world. For more information, please visit [www.searesearch.org](http://www.searesearch.org).

### **About Mystic Aquarium**

Mystic Aquarium is a division of Sea Research Foundation, Inc., a non-profit 501(c)3 organization, and is counted among the nation's leading aquariums with more than 300 species and an extensive collection of marine mammals, including New England's only beluga whales. Mystic Aquarium has been a pioneer in offering guests a variety of up close encounters with a wide range of marine animals. The mission of Sea Research Foundation is to inspire people to care for and protect our ocean planet through education, research and exploration. Learn more at [www.mysticaquarium.org](http://www.mysticaquarium.org).

### **About The JASON Project**

The JASON Project is an independent 501(c)(3) operated in association with National Geographic Society and managed by Sea Research Foundation. Named for the mythological Greek explorer, JASON is a nationally acclaimed, exploration-based program that links students—inside the classroom and out—to real science and scientists through technology intensive, inquiry-based curricula. Learn more at [www.jason.org](http://www.jason.org).

### **About Resorts World Sentosa**

Resorts World Sentosa (RWS), Singapore's first integrated resort is located on the resort island of Sentosa. Spanning 49 hectares, the resort has welcomed over 15 million visitors since it opened in January 2010. RWS is home to the region's first-and-only Universal Studios theme park, a casino, luxurious accommodation in four unique hotels, the Resorts World Convention Centre, celebrity chef restaurants as well as specialty retail outlets. The resort also offers entertainment ranging from its resident theatrical circus spectacular *Voyage de la Vie*, to public attractions such as the *Crane Dance* and the *Lake of Dreams*. RWS most recently unveiled the first attraction under the second phase of the Resort –its Maritime Experiential Museum and Aquarium. Still to come are the world's largest oceanarium called Marine Life Park, a destination spa and two additional hotels. RWS is wholly owned by Genting Singapore, a company of the Genting Group. For more information, please visit [www.rwsentosa.com](http://www.rwsentosa.com).

### **About Marine Life Park**

The Marine Life Park (MLP) will be the world's largest oceanarium when it opens in 2012. Located in Singapore's first integrated resort, Resorts World Sentosa (RWS), the park will offer activities and experiences for the whole family. Visitors can expect to be amazed with up-close-and-personal encounters with some of the most fascinating creatures of the ocean, including giant rays, crustaceans, seahorses and sharks. With a mission to promote marine education, conservation and research, the MLP will have an internationally-acclaimed curriculum that will be developed jointly with the Sea Research Foundation, incorporating the world renowned JASON Project science programmes for students of all ages. Through RWS, the park has to date participated in conservation causes such as sharks finning education programmes, coral conservation, and anti-poaching initiatives in the Galapagos Islands. It has also set up the Marine Life Park Conservation Fund for marine conservation and research.

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Mystic Aquarium's Shark Encounters exhibit, allows guests to interact with docile white-spotted bamboo sharks. Photo by Dean Digital Imaging. © Mystic Aquarium. All rights reserved.



NOAA scientist Lisa Jones from the Marine Fisheries Laboratory in Pascagoula MS helps JASON Argonauts examine a trawl for fish that will be used determine if oil from the 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico has entered the food chain. Argonauts (L to R) Marcelo Ancira, Kendra Elie and Maggie Botros help sort for different species. © The JASON Project. All rights reserved.



The E/V Nautilus, Dr Robert Ballard's ship of exploration. The ship is operated by Dr Ballard's Ocean Exploration Trust. © Ocean Exploration Trust. All rights reserved.