

The Antinea Foundation
in partnership with
the International Union for Conservation of Nature

presents

CHANGING OCEANS

A unique 10 years expedition around the globe
to assess the state of the seas
onboard *Fleur de Passion*

Press release – Embargo on October 8th at 11h00 GMT

Barcelona / Geneva, October 9, 2008. What is the real state of our oceans? Are they holding up in the face of over-fishing, climate change, pollution and all the other modern environmental ills or are we losing the battle to keep these vital bodies of water providing us with food, climate regulation and incredible sources of biodiversity?

To answer these questions, the Antinea Foundation, in partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), is launching a 10 years, worldwide expedition to take stock of where we are, how things have changed and what we can do regarding the health of our oceans. The *Changing Oceans* expedition will visit over 100 sites that are exceptional for the richness of their biodiversity. Included in those will be marine World Heritage sites and other globally significant marine protected areas. Small and large organisations will be given access to use the ship for research purposes during its voyage

“Because of their vast size, we have a tendency to take our oceans for granted,” said Ronald Menzel, Executive Director of the Antinea Foundation, “and yet we also know the world’s marine environments are under enormous stress from many sources including overfishing, climate change and environmental pollution. Our objective is to increase and share our knowledge of the oceans, raise awareness and examine solutions to keep our oceans, and the communities that depend on them, healthy.”

The expedition will follow the routes of past expeditions, and compare modern surveys with ancient logbooks in order to measure the changes that occurred in the past decades. IUCN, through its Marine programme, will collaborate with Antinea to retrace the most significant expeditions, to develop the tools needed

to measure and understand the trends in ocean conservation. IUCN will also assist Antinea looking for restoration opportunities.

“While we can anticipate the reality that *Fleur de Passion* will encounter will be bleak, using past expeditions’ observations will help us measure the pace of degradation and, hopefully in some cases, recovery” said Carl Gustav Lundin, Head of the Marine Programme at IUCN.

In visiting World Heritage sites, Antinea plans to help IUCN in its work in monitoring natural World Heritage sites for UNESCO. Here again, the goal is to increase the knowledge on conservation trends in exceptional marine protected areas.

“We welcome the opportunity of collaborating with the Antinea Foundation to look at the state of natural World Heritage sites,” said Tim Badman, the World Heritage specialist in IUCN Protected Areas programme. “Raising awareness and sharing best practices with the local populations on how to preserve those sites will also be an invaluable contribution on the part of Antinea.”

Besides protected areas, the Antinea expedition will also give to all the Fondation’s partners the opportunity to use *Fleur de Passion* as a logistic platform for their own research projects. For instance, the program “20’000 Sounds under the Seas”, run by the French engineer and biologist Michel André, director of the Laboratory of Applied Bio-Acoustic (LAB) from the University Polytechnic of Catalunya (UPC), will gather valuable data to map sound pollution in the oceans, a little known phenomenon though having an alarming impact, in particular on marine mammals.

At each stopover of *Fleur de Passion*, an “Antinea Village” will be set up and display for the public a wide range of innovative communication activities including the multimedia show “Ocean Experience”, the photo exhibit “Oceans, source of life”, the Dome of the Oceans or the underwater duplex.

One of the key objectives of the Antinea Foundation is to use modern communication tools to raise awareness, locally and globally, about the need to cherish and protect our oceans. To this end, various partnerships are also being put in place to insure a wide distribution of the communications tools and products-

Finally, the *Changing Oceans* expedition will add to its uniqueness by involving people in its activities. Individuals will be given the chance to come on board *Fleur de Passion* in order to share the experience of such a journey. For a couple of days, a few weeks or even several months, ecovolunteers, trainees or school children will discover the oceans and share their knowledge with crew members and scientists in a multidisciplinary atmosphere.

“By giving the chance to come onboard *Fleur de Passion* and play a role in the expedition, The Antinea Foundation intends to renew the link between mankind and our nourishing earth, says Samuel Gardaz, Deputy Director of the Foundation. In a context of growing urbanization of our societies and lives, joining such an expedition offers a unique opportunity to reconsider our relationship with the world and the environment.”

The expedition will start its journey in spring 2009. Until 2010, *Fleur de Passion* will sail the Mediterranean Sea before crossing the Atlantic then make her way to the Pacific Ocean.

About the Antinea Foundation

The Antinea Foundation is a Swiss based non-profit organisation created in 2005 from a desire to play an innovative role in tackling environment issues related to oceans.

Within just a few years, Antinea has reached international renown for her integrated approach, that places mankind and his future at the centre of its actions, and involves bringing a wide array of scientific, socio-educational and media projects onboard its expedition ship.

The Foundation has created synergies among ocean relevant organisations the world over, proposing a new, collective approach to environment problems which would otherwise be too great to deal with.

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CHANGING OCEANS, an expedition

In partnership with + logo IUCN

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About Fleur de Passion

1941 : Built in Bremen, northern Germany. The future *FLEUR DE PASSION* is a motor boat of the German Navy, designed in such a way that she can be converted into a sailing boat in the event of an oil shortage. With her steel structure and wooden hull, she is largely used for mining and demining, support of U-Boats and clandestine activities, passing as a fishing boat.

1945 : Having survived World War II, she is handed over to the French Navy, which she serves for some 30 years.

1976 : The boat is dismantled and sold to a French sailor, who transforms her into a sailing boat and names her *FLEUR DE PASSION*, inspired by *The Boat That Wouldn't Float*, a novel by Canadian author Farley Mowat. Over the next 20 years, she sails the Mediterranean and crosses the Atlantic as a platform for scientific and socio-educational programmes.

2002 : In serious disrepair, for lack of financial resources, *FLEUR DE PASSION* is sold to the Geneva-based Association Pacifique, a non-profit organisation that undertakes her complete renovation.

2003 : Renovation gets underway in Marseille.

2006 : *FLEUR DE PASSION* becomes the flagship of the Antinea Foundation.

2008: *FLEUR DE PASSION* gets the Swiss flag. After six years of impressive renovation work, a new spring awaits. Now, Ambassador of the oceans, whose mission is to raise public awareness, she is the logistic platform of the 10-year expedition Antinea is launching around the globe to monitor the state of the oceans.

Facts & figures

Flag: swiss

Port of call: Basel

Total length: 33 meters

Beam : 6,5 meters

Draft : 2,80 meters

Hull : wood, with steel structure

Rigging : ketch fore-and-aft

Total sail surface area : 400m²

Total weight : 100 tons

Capacity: 22 people, including 8 crew members