



The Center for Oceanic Awareness, Research, and Education

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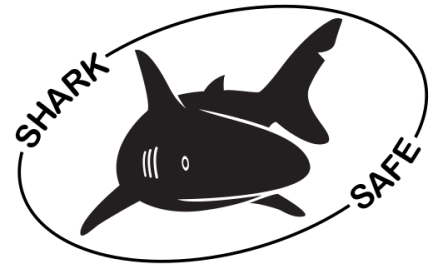
SHARKSAFE.ORG ADDS MULTILINGUAL SUPPORT

Certification Program Uses Chinese and French Versions to Raise Awareness of Shark Conservation.

Oakland, California – 04 November 2009 -- The Center for Oceanic Awareness, Research, and Education, known more commonly by its acronym "COARE", announced today the availability of multilingual resources for its Shark Safe certification program.

The website, www.sharksafe.org, which allows both consumers and businesses to learn more about the Shark Safe certification program, is now available in several languages, including Chinese and French.

Using an easily recognizable logo to distinguish participating establishments, the Shark Safe program offers certification to qualifying restaurants and select businesses that demonstrate a measured commitment to shark conservation. Now available in several languages, the website is expected to reach and influence an even greater audience.



“The need for shark conservation is a global issue, so our efforts need to transcend international borders, cultural differences, and language barriers,” said Christopher Chin, COARE's Executive Director.

“We're particularly proud of and excited about the Chinese version of our website,” said Chin. “The vast majority of sharks that are killed are taken for their fins, which end up in shark fin soup - a delicacy entrenched in Chinese culture and tradition.”

“With an estimated 1.3 billion native speakers, Chinese is, by far, the most widely spoken language on the planet, and we are thrilled to be able to extend our message to such a key audience,” said Pete Wang, one of COARE's volunteer translators.

“We have observed that a number of well-intentioned shark conservation efforts have failed to persuade their intended audience, and sometimes even alienated those they meant to engage, because they failed to account for language and cultural differences,” said Richard Nelson, one of COARE's directors. “Our program takes both language and culture into consideration, and works with communities to decrease the demand for products that are harmful to sharks and the ocean.”

The mission of the Shark Safe certification program is to protect oceanic ecosystems by encouraging practices that do not negatively impact shark populations. “Sharks are one of our oceans’ top predators, keeping the entire ecosystem in check, but shark populations have declined dramatically over the last few decades as a result of human greed and lack of understanding,” said Chin. “If people knew more about these animals, they would want to protect them.”

As a conservation based website, www.sharksafe.org also offers information about the plight of sharks and about the need for their conservation. As further development of the website continues, it will serve as a portal for consumers to locate certified Shark Safe establishments quickly and easily.

COARE began development of its Shark Safe program in early-2007, seeking to protect sharks by raising awareness of threats to shark populations and by reducing the demand for shark products. In July of 2007, Jim Toomey, the artist behind the popular syndicated cartoon Sherman's Lagoon, joined the effort and helped form the Shark Safe logo in use today. “Sharks have resided in a dark corner of our mythology for thousands of years, which is partly the reason why saving this vital animal from extinction will require a special effort,” said Toomey.

About COARE

The Center for Oceanic Awareness, Research, and Education, Inc. (COARE) is a tax-exempt nonprofit organization based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Its purpose is to study our oceans and increase public awareness of the earth's marine environment through educational programs and outreach. COARE seeks to enlighten people, young and old, to the plight of the oceans, to change the way they think and act, and to encourage them to create positive and lasting change. For more information about COARE, visit <http://www.coare.org>.

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Media Contact

Jennifer Bowyer, media@coare.org, +1-510-495-7875

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