

This month:

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Hello fellow ocean lovers!

⊙ World Oceans Day

We hope that you enjoyed a variety of Ocean related celebrations this month. In our fifth year of events honoring World Oceans Day, we celebrated as partners in events in San Francisco as well as in Monterey.

Like last year, the Monterey Bay Aquarium held a special weekend-long celebration and they invited us to participate.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all those who joined our mailing list for the first time after meeting us at the Aquarium. Many special thanks to our stellar volunteers Brenna, Jilian, Roxanne, and Tom who helped staff the table there, helping us bring our message to the thousands of people who attended the Aquarium that weekend. They also gathered nearly 150 newly signed postcards from California residents declaring support for AB 376, the proposed statewide ban on shark fins.



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COARE volunteers Brenna and Jilian at the Monterey Bay Aquarium

⊙ Shark Fin Bans

Last month we mentioned that the battle over the proposed shark fin ban in California was heating up. On 14 June, our Executive Director went to Sacramento to speak in favor of AB 376 at the Senate Committee for Natural Resources and Water. Testimony was given for and against the measure, and the committee decided to defer the vote for another two weeks.

The opposition to AB 376 (i.e., shark fin traders) hired two powerful lobbying firms to help defeat AB 376. With the help of these professional lobbyists, the opposition has begun an effective campaign of mistruths and deceptive messaging, all designed to detract from the matter at hand — that our sharks are in terrible danger, and that by banning the trade of shark fins, we can easily do something to help.

The opposition has even gone as far as to claim that shark populations are not in trouble and that sharks are not endangered. They have also testified that shark fins sales and the act of finning are not responsible for the bulk of shark fishing.

Unfortunately, they're doing a good job of misleading some of the Senators, and the fact that there was so much debate and confusion in Committee evidences that fact.

On 28 June, the Senate Committee reconvened and took up AB 376 once again. It was a dramatic meeting, and the shark fin bill was the subject of multiple roll call votes as well as procedural debate. In the end, the Committee voted (7-0) to pass the Bill on to the next stage: the Senate Appropriations Committee.

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🕒 Fin Bans

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The date for that next hearing is set for Monday, 11 July 2011, and we'd like to call upon our California residents (and NGO representatives with California constituents) to contact the members of the Senate Appropriations Committee urging them to pass this bill:
<http://www.coare.org/act/ab376/#sencomm>

🕒 MLPA

The California Fish and Game Commission voted 4-1 in favor of an implementation date of 01 October 2011 for the South Coast MPAs approved last December. For those who haven't followed our MLPA reports from the past, California's 1100 miles of coastline were divided into five separate study regions to make the implementation of the Marine Life Protection Act more manageable.



The South Coast portion ranges from Point Conception to the California/Mexico border, while the northernmost region is measured from the California/Oregon border to Alder Creek near Point Arena.



The North Coast region was the area most recently undertaken, and work continues as the current plan undergoes environmental analysis.

🕒 Forage Species

Yes, the ocean depends upon apex predators and the top of the food web, but it also depends on the bottom and the building blocks of the food web. Forage species such as krill, anchovies, mackerel, and squid are keystone species that support the entire oceanic food web. Assemblymember Jared Huffman (co-author of AB 376), introduced AB 1299 earlier this year to establish the Forage Species Conservation and Management Act of 2011.

AB 1299 has followed a similar path to AB 376, and also passed the Senate Natural Resources Committee this past Tuesday (28 June). With a vote of 5-3 the Bill moves to Appropriations.

🕒 WOD

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The following weekend, we celebrated at the gathering hosted by Sea Stewards at the Sports Basement in San Francisco's Presidio. Special thanks to our longtime and dedicated volunteers Diane, Roxanne, and Tom for helping staff our table and sharing our message with all the eventgoers.