



***Mundus maris* Awards 2015 - celebrating World Oceans Day**

Mundus maris Awards recognise works of young people from around the world, who have sent in their ideas and stories in three challenges:

- What would you do if you were to decide on how we could care better for the Ocean? Write up a story.
- What is your dream for the Ocean in the future? Write up a story
- What is your dream for the Ocean in the future? Draw a cartoon

In each challenge, three age groups were distinguished: up to 12 years, 13 to 18 years, 19 to 24 years. See more on www.mundusmaris.org

An international Jury assessing the submissions for *Mundus maris* Awards assigned prizes in the name of threatened marine animals to help get us all connected to the Ocean:

Special Bluefin Tuna Prize – 300 Euro

Bluefin are the largest tuna. It can live up to 40 years, attain more than 2 m length and a weight of 600 kg. Bluefin tuna have torpedo-like bodies allowing them to cross the ocean at great speed. They eat fish like herring and mackerel. Most catches of the Atlantic bluefin tuna are taken from the Mediterranean Sea - the most important bluefin tuna fishery in the world. Their high value for sashimi and sushi lovers is their undoing – a single fish was sold for \$1.75 million at the Tokyo fish market. Help the Tuna – otherwise it will disappear.



A school of majestic Atlantic Bluefin Tuna
learn more at www.fishbase.org

Sea Lion Prize – 200 Euro

In the past, sea lions were hunted for their meat, oil, and fur. In the 18th and 19th century sea lion numbers were extensively killed for commercial purposes. The World Conservation Union (IUCN) puts sea lions on the Red List and states that many *Otariids* are currently *vulnerable*. As they were better protected in past decades, they are now at a low-risk level. Steller sea lions are, however, among the most endangered Otariids with a 70 percent population decrease since the 1970's. They are now considered an *endangered* species.



Courtesy Yolanda Ursa

Marine Turtle Prize – 100 Euro

All six species of marine turtles are in the list of threatened species. They have been extensively hunted for their meat and nowadays suffer from drowning in fishing gear, deliberate poaching of their eggs and coastal development destroying their nesting grounds, to name but some major threats. Some starve to death from mistaking plastic for food. They are intelligent animals capable of regularly crossing the ocean between their nesting and feeding places. See more information on www.sealifebase.org and www.mundusmaris.org



Loggerhead Turtle

Shark Prize – 50 Euro

How many sharks are killed by people each year? Scientists estimated that number at 100 million (range between 63 and 273 million)! That makes a shocking 11,417 sharks killed every hour!

They are mostly killed for their fins and shipped to Asian countries, where sharkfin soup is popular. In some countries, people also eat their meat, but often still throw it away. How many humans get killed by sharks per year? In 2011, there were 12 victims. *Help stop shark finning now!*



Sharks are important components of functioning marine ecosystems (Courtesy IUCN)

Samba and Kumba Encouragement Prize

The mascots of *Mundus maris* are Samba (boy) and Kumba (girl).

They love kids and want all babies of marine animals to be protected so that they can grow up to reproduce and form healthy populations. They also want the biggest female fish to be protected as they are the best mothers with the strongest genes for their offspring.

Kumba and Samba have made a few calculations that show that fishing less and targeting mid-size fish that have already spawned would increase populations and catches and also make more money!

Among the biggest threats to ocean life, world fisheries are the most dangerous right now. If humans do not stop burning fossil fuels, global warming and ocean acidification will become even bigger threats. Habitat loss threatens many species. Plastic pollution is already a killer!

