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Digital Images Available Upon Request

For Immediate Release

AQUARIUM OF THE PACIFIC LAUNCHES URBAN OCEAN: WORLD PORT & SEALIFE CRUISE FROM MEMORIAL DAY TO LABOR DAY

Explore Southern California's busy coast and ocean to learn about its many human uses and how these activities coexist and sometimes conflict with wildlife

Long Beach, CA, May, 27, 2010 – Greater Los Angeles has one of the most urbanized coasts and ocean in the United States and globally. The nation's two largest container ports account for nearly 40 percent of all U.S. imports and exports. The more than 20 million people who live in Greater Los Angeles and Orange Counties depend on the ocean for commerce, seafood, recreation, wastewater disposal, and transportation. Southern California is also the stopover place and wintering grounds for migratory birds, a seasonal feeding ground for large and diverse assemblages of whales and dolphins, and home to sea lions, seals, and other animals. The public can explore all of this through the Aquarium of the Pacific's new Urban Ocean: World Port & Sealife Cruise debuting on Saturday, May 29 and continuing on summer weekends.

"We all depend on the ocean in so many ways, and we hope this cruise will open the public's eyes to this dynamic, fascinating, busy, and resilient ocean right in their own backyard," said Dr. Jerry R. Schubel, Aquarium of the Pacific President & CEO. The two-hour Urban Ocean excursion takes passengers past cruise ships, the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles, power plants, wildlife such as pelicans, harbor seals, sea lions, and the world's longest breakwater. "Passengers can see firsthand how the various uses of Southern California's coastal ocean are intense and often in conflict with one another," said Schubel, who created the cruise. "It's something unique to Long Beach, Los Angeles, and the Southern California Bight. People will see this segment of the world ocean in a whole new light and will hopefully come away wanting to make a difference."

The coasts and ocean affect people in many ways. In Southern California, the coast provides a place to live, work, and enjoy recreational activities. It provides seafood for a growing population, recreation, a transit way for commerce, and increasingly new sources of energy. The coast and ocean have direct and indirect impacts on the physical, emotional, and personal well-being of people. They also support the economy, providing jobs and sources of income.

Marine animals that call these urban waters home can be adversely affected by human activities. "The coexistence of society with the natural world is being challenged as the population grows and pressures on the ocean increase," said Schubel. The Urban Ocean Cruise also explores how various people and groups are working to make these uses more sustainable and provides passengers with ways to reduce human impacts to help make the urban ocean a healthy one. Southern California is a leader in the search for sustainable strategies in the face of climate change, ocean warming, sea level rise, changes in ocean chemistry, and increases in the frequency and intensity of coastal storms. The Aquarium hopes that California will continue to take a leadership role in environmental issues facing the ocean.

"The goal of the Aquarium of the Pacific's Urban Ocean cruise is to empower guests with the knowledge to understand the diverse and critical uses of the ocean and to get involved in helping to keep a sustainable balance so that all life on our ocean planet can coexist in the future," said Schubel. The Aquarium of the Pacific's new Urban Ocean: World Ports & Sealife Cruise aboard Harbor Breeze Cruises runs Memorial Day weekend, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, May 29-31, 2010 and on weekends through Labor Day. The cost is

\$29.95 (adult 12+) and \$20.00 child (3-11). Tickets may be purchased online at http://www.aquariumofpacific.org/education/programdetails/urban_ocean_cruise/ or by calling 562-590-3100.

The Aquarium of the Pacific, a nonprofit institution, is dedicated to instilling a sense of wonder, respect, and stewardship for the Pacific Ocean, its inhabitants, and ecosystems. Home to over 11,000 animals, the Aquarium features a variety of programs to engage the public in ocean conservation and environmental education. Aquarium of the Pacific is one of the nation's top aquariums and is ranked in the top two Los Angeles cultural attractions. The Aquarium is open daily from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. (Closed Dec. 25 and April 15-17, 2011 for the Grand Prix). Admission is \$23.95 adult (12+), \$20.95 senior (62+), \$11.95 child (3-11), and free to children under 3 and Aquarium members. The Aquarium is located at 100 Aquarium Way, Long Beach, CA 90802. For more information, visit aquariumofpacific.org or call (562) 590-3100.

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