Think Big, Think Ocean Video Contest Now Open

Press Release: January 2016

Have you got a creative, innovative idea for how to increase people’s awareness and appreciation of the ocean? If so, you should enter the Sea Change project’s Think Big, Think Ocean video contest.

Sea Change is an EU funded project which aims to bring about a fundamental change in the way European citizens view their relationship with the sea, by developing “Ocean Literacy” (an understanding of the ocean’s influence on us and our influence on the ocean) in Europe to foster responsible behaviour towards the seas and ocean and their resources.

To increase Ocean Literacy in Europe, the Sea Change project is looking for innovative concepts for events, campaigns or any other activities that could help to increase people’s awareness and appreciation of the ocean. To enter, simply make a video to illustrate your creative, innovative idea and submit it online at www.seachangeproject.eu/thinkocean. Your idea will be in with a chance of becoming a reality and you could also win one of seven unique experiences, including ‘behind the scenes’ days at aquaria and science centres across Europe, or an exciting chance to experience a day in the life of a marine scientist. The closing date for entries is 20 March 2016. The winning entries will be chosen based on public vote as well as the innovation, feasibility and potential impact of the idea.

Dr Jan Seys, head of communication at the Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) and lead organiser of the competition, said: “In order to make a leap forward in terms of increasing the public’s ocean awareness, we need input from citizens, young and old. Only with their innovative ideas on how to shape the world in a more ocean friendly way, we will be able to bridge the gap between what people know and appreciate about the ocean and what experts think they should know and feel responsible for.”

Inspiration for ideas can be found everywhere. The ocean and seas play an important role in our everyday life. Every second breath you take connects you with the ocean because half of the world’s oxygen comes from the sea. The sea connects people, goods and ideas around the world. It is a place for relaxation, recreation and employment. The ocean also regulates our climate by transferring heat across the globe. It is a source of freshwater, food and medicine. The Sea Change project will release one short video every week for the next five weeks through social media to provide further inspiration.

For more information on the Think Big, Think Ocean video contest, see #ThinkOcean, follow the project on Twitter (https://twitter.com/SeaChange_EU), like the project on Facebook (www.facebook.com/SeaChangeProjectEU/) or see: www.seachangeproject.eu/thinkocean.

For queries related to the Think Big, Think Ocean contest, please contact:

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Notes for Editors
The **Sea Change** project is funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement n° 652644. The Marine Biological Association, UK (MBA) is coordinating the project. AquaTT is the project dissemination partner.

Dr. Jan Seys is the head of the Communication department of VLIZ. He is a marine biologist by training, having worked in marine and estuarine research in Belgium & the Netherlands (10 years) and as a managing director (two years) of a bilateral Kenya-Belgium cooperation in marine sciences. Since 2006 he is the chair of the European Marine Board Communications Panel, and member of the News & Information group of the Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO).

The Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) is a centre for marine and coastal research. It promotes and supports the international image of Flemish marine scientific research and international marine education. In its capacity as a coordination and information platform, VLIZ supports some thousand marine scientists in Flanders by disseminating their knowledge to policymakers, educators, the general public and scientists.


**For press queries, please contact the project Communications Officer:**

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