

## **World Oceans Day + Aquariums = Unique Opportunity to Rally the World to Restore Our Ocean**

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1. The Ocean Project
2. World Oceans Day
3. Youth for the Ocean

World Oceans Day (WOD) provides a unique opportunity to convey humanity's dependence on a healthy ocean for our survival and raise the ocean's – and aquariums' – profile among the public. For 16 years, The Ocean Project has been working year-round with its network of 2,000 partner aquariums and other organizations across all sectors to develop WOD as a global rallying point for raising awareness and promoting empowering ways to help with solutions to the many issues, from climate change to plastic pollution.

In 2002, there were a handful of WOD events in a few countries. Hundreds of aquariums and zoos now regularly participate. Following a petition campaign led by The Ocean Project and World Ocean Network, starting in 2009, the United Nations officially recognizes 8 June as WOD. Since 2015, the WOD Youth Advisory Council (YAC) – with 20 young people from 17 diverse countries – has helped grow WOD in innovative ways. We will share results from WOD 2018 – the biggest ever, with over 1,500 events in 125 countries registered on [www.WorldOceansDay.org](http://www.WorldOceansDay.org) and social media reach of over 4 billion impressions – and discuss plans for 2019 and beyond will be discussed.

Specifically, The Ocean Project will be proposing a new collaboration with the world's leading aquariums to leverage WOD as a platform to unite and synergize the aquarium community, and work closely with the YAC and other leading youth to protect and restore our ocean. By doing so – and based on our research and results from several conservation campaigns with aquariums and zoos that we will share – we believe aquariums will be better recognized as trusted community and national leaders for aquatic and ocean conservation, increase their relevancy among youth, and increase their number of visitors, both onsite and online.