

## **A New Giant Aquarium for a Theme of the 21st Century**

©Stephane J. Henard<sup>1</sup>, Philippe Vallette<sup>1</sup>

1. Nausicaa Centre National de la Mer, Boulogne sur Mer, France

In May 2018 the French National Sea Centre did open to the public a new massive expansion. The central piece of this new building is a 10 Million litres tank which recreates the ecosystem of the high seas.

Such structure is an architectural, aquatic and technical challenge; hammerhead sharks, manta rays and shoals of sardine are displayed together. Several windows including an 18 meters long tunnel and a 20 metres long by 5 metres high flat panel give very different views of the tank.

The theme of this new exhibit is management of the high seas, one of the major issues of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The tank resembles the emblematic island of Malpelo off the coast of Colombia.

The high sea seems like a vast desert, but is crossed by highly migratory species and inhabited by creatures which travel enormous distances to feed or reproduce. Small fish which provide very large quantities of food for larger marine creatures are clustered at depths of between 200 metres and 1,000 metres. The high sea, which covers more than half of our planet's surface, offers huge scope for exploration and science. It also hugely expands the possibilities for the human race. In this 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is necessary to manage resources in the High Sea, which covers half of the Planet's area. If the resources in the Sea become an alternative to those on the Land, we need to ensure that they are used in a sustainable way while also seeking to eliminate the sources of conflict that this may cause by making it fair. Discussion have just started at the United Nations, on methods of governance of the high seas.