A five year Sandtiger (*Carcharias taurus*) release and satellite tagging program
Presented by Michael Farquhar (Two Oceans Aquarium)
Conservation of Wild Populations – Chapter 2

WAZA Vision - 2005

“Zoos and aquariums will make further contributions to conservation in the wild by providing knowledge, skills and resources through initiatives in zoo breeding, translocations and re-introduction, wildlife health, research, training, education and by funding field activities. Zoos and aquariums will be an important force for worldwide conservation by their employment or support of field workers active in the conservation of wild animals and their habitat.”

The World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy, 2005

Aquarium Response - 2009

“All public aquariums, national and regional associations and partners should collaborate to play a meaningful role in field conservation efforts, adapting their strategic priorities, financial budget, human resources and stakeholder relationships to suit.”

So, are we really fulfilling these objectives?

IAC 2012 – In-situ Conservation session

Total of 129 abstracts received for 8 categories:
Education, New Aquariums, Husbandry Advances, Business Management, Technical, In-Situ Conservation, Visitor Experience and Studies, and Communication

Husbandry Advances – 26 abstracts for 12 presentations
In-situ Conservation – 24 abstracts for 7 presentations
Diversity of Aquarium Community Conservation initiatives:

Invertebrates (2): stag-horn coral, diving beetle
Fish (5): sharks, seahorses, cichlids, freshwater sawfish, Japanese freshwater fishes
Amphibians (2): northern leopard frog, Oregon spotted frog, foot-flagging frog
Reptiles (7): turtles (5), northern river terrapin, African dwarf crocodile
Birds (2): African black-footed penguin
Mammals (1): Cape fur seal
General (5): aquatic pet trade (3), sustainable seafood choices, grass-roots marine conservation programme
TOA’s first shark release
Why release Raggies from TOA?

• Globally vulnerable species
• Locally abundant
• Long-lived
• Not breeding at TOA – poor success elsewhere
• Opportunity to highlight the plight of sharks locally & globally
• Ambassador species in and out of TOA
What were the main objectives?

- Create awareness about the plight of sharks
- Change peoples’ perceptions of sharks
- Begin a meaningful conservation research project
  - IUCN re-introduction guidelines
- Determine success of TOA sandtiger release
- Compare their behaviour to wild caught sharks
- Investigate migration patterns and habitat use of aquarium-released and wild sandtigers
The Journey – Two Oceans to Struisbaai
Western Cape
Tags – ultrasonic, spaghetti, & PAT satellite
Journey – Struisbaai to Saxon reef
The press
Wild shark capture
Summary of releases to date

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<th>Shark</th>
<th>TL(cm)</th>
<th>Weight (kg)</th>
<th>Release date</th>
<th>Prog. date</th>
<th>Pop-up date</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Distance (km)</th>
<th>Time (days)</th>
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MAXINE (aquarium release)
Cape hake – *Merluccius capensis*
Tamera - swimming depth, temperature and light levels 2007
Tamera Day 1- 28 March 2007
Tamera - April 2-7
Tamera April 26 - May 01
Tamera - swimming depth, temperature and light levels 2007
Lesley - FW
Saxon Reef - 15/3/2006
Coffee Bay - 15/7/2006
Struisbaai - 28/2/2009
Where to from here?