

MONACO: A SMALL NATION WITH A BIG ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE

MONACO -- In 1873, long before environmental and ecological issues became world headlines, Monaco's Prince Albert I known as "the Navigator" sailed the world's oceans, studying their inhabitants and pondering ways to preserve their beauty and vitality. A visionary scientist, His discoveries helped build the foundation of modern ocean studies and led to the creation in 1910 of the famed Museum of Oceanography in Monaco. The facility, later renamed the National Oceanographic Institute, is still considered one of the world's premier ecological research facilities, and was for many years headed by the late Jacques Cousteau.

For a nation roughly the size of New York City's Central Park, Monaco has heaped enormous benefits on the world's natural environment. Under the patronage of these great environmental stewards, Monaco has established a long-standing reputation for rising to the defense of the natural world. The late H.S.H. Prince Rainier III, great grandson of Prince Albert 1, and H.S.H. Prince Albert II have both built upon their ancestor's fine legacy.

Under His 56-year reign, Prince Rainier's Monaco became the most environmentally sensitive country in Europe, if not the world. Recognizing its total dependence on a fragile natural environment, the Principality was one of the first nations to use reforestation to preserve its mountainous landscape.

In 1976, the Principality brought together the countries of France and Italy at the Ramage Convention to establish an agreement to protect the water that much of the Mediterranean region is dependent upon. The treaty set regulations on sewage treatment and instituted valuable research on the effects of rivers on marine pollution. In 2000, Monaco initiated another accord with France and Italy for the protection of marine mammals – this agreement created a sanctuary for the reproduction of whales and dolphins in the Mediterranean.

The Principality established a water treatment system for the entire country that ensures all water discharged into the Mediterranean was potable. More recently, Monaco designed and implemented systems to convert garbage into fuel, which are used to produce energy for municipal needs, such as lighting in the Fontvieille district.

It has also reduced automobile exhaust pollution by initiating special traffic lanes for public transportation, thus minimizing traffic jams and created a system of public elevators to bring residents and visitors from sea level to mountainous elevations without the use of automobiles. More than 5,000,000

passengers use the 15 elevators each year. Many government agencies within the Principality, including the postal and telecommunications departments and the parks commission, have begun using electric vehicles for transportation.

All postal carriers use electric cars, which can travel for three days without recharging. To encourage use of these cars, recharging stations are free for public use. Other environmental efforts on the part of Monaco included the use of the Principality as the site for the marine laboratory of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In 1990 Prince Rainier created the European Oceanographic Observatory to identify ecological problems and develop practical resolutions. He presided over the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean, a group founded by His grandfather. Monaco initiated PELAGOS, an international association of scientific, business and government entities devoted to developing Mediterranean economies in environmentally sensitive ways.

In April 2006, in a fitting 100-year anniversary tribute to His great-great-grandfather, Prince Albert followed in His namesake's footsteps and led an expedition to the North Pole from the Russian base of Barneo; the seven -person research team used dog sleds to cover the 80 mile journey. The expedition drew attention to the ecological and climactic changes over the past century as well as on the effects of industrial pollution on Arctic flora, fauna and geography.

In June 2006, Prince Albert announced the creation of the Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation that will focus on climate change, biodiversity and access to drinking water, as part of His personal commitment for the protection of the environment and for sustainable development. In launching the Foundation, the Prince referred to Monaco's long tradition of protection of the oceans and warned of the negative impact of global warming, including rising temperatures and ocean levels, as well air and water pollution, fast-decreasing biodiversity and lack of clean water for billions of people worldwide.

The Foundation will be a permanent source of innovative actions for environmental protection and sustainable development and will act to accelerate action by mobilizing people and resources on an international scale.

Contact: Victoria de Falco/Michelle Colligan
Redpoint Marketing PR, Inc.

Elle Berdy
Consulate General of Monaco

212-229-0119

defalco@redpointpr.com

consulate.com

212-286 0500

E.Berdy@monaco-