

Anaheim, March 5, 2015

ANTARCTIC WILDLIFE RESEARCH FUND TO STRENGTHEN RESEARCH

The recently launched [Antarctic Wildlife Research Fund](#) (AWR), will be formally introduced to the United States during the Sustainability Seminar Natural Products ExpoWest on Friday, March 6 at 4 pm. "The creation of the Antarctic Wildlife Research Fund is crucial to expanding our knowledge of krill populations in the Southern Ocean," says AWR Chair Mark Epstein, speaking at the seminar.

"Through the work of the AWR, we aim to ensure adequate protections and management are put in place, and a healthy ecosystem maintained for krill and for the Antarctic species which depend on it", Mark Epstein continues.

AWR is the result of a landmark collaboration between scientists, businesses and several of the world's leading environmental groups to raise significant funds specifically for research into krill and its role in the Antarctic ecosystem. The AWR aims to strengthen the scientific basis for the management of the Southern Ocean and the Antarctic Region.

Most Southern Ocean marine species - such as whales, seals and penguins – are dependent on krill, a small shrimp-like organism that occupies a keystone position in the Antarctic food web. Donations to the Antarctic Wildlife Research Fund will come from both companies and public contributions.

FIRST US COMPANY TO SUPPORT AWR

Dr. Mercola founded Mercola.com in 1997 to provide the most cutting edge health information and resources to the public. Mercola.com is now the world's most visited natural health website, with over 12 million unique monthly visitors. Through AWR, Mercola.com visitors will get the possibility to engage directly to make a difference for the Antarctic ecosystem and wildlife.

Steve Rye, CEO of Mercola Health Resources says "We are proud to support this essential research to ensure the conservation of the Antarctic."

The first contribution to the AWR was made by Aker BioMarine with a commitment of \$500,000 USD. Several of Aker BioMarine's partners are also now supporting the Fund, contributing with donations and fundraising for research on the Antarctic ecosystem. In addition to Mercola.com, these include BioMar, Blackmores, Ridley and Swisse.

AWR's founding members are:

- Worldwide Fund for Nature Norway (WWF-Norway)
- Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC)
- Aker BioMarine Antarctic

Each year, scientists from all over the world will be invited to submit their research proposals to the [Science Advisory Group of the AWR](#). This group, made up of leading international Antarctic scientists from eight countries, will be responsible for evaluating and prioritizing these research proposals.

Karoline Andaur of WWF-Norway, said the fund presented an important opportunity to better understand the impacts of krill fishing on the fragile Antarctic marine environment:

"Krill is the lifeblood of the Southern Ocean and supports important Antarctic wildlife such as whales, seals and penguins. It is crucial therefore that krill fishing be done in a responsible and sustainable

way. The establishment of the Antarctic Wildlife Research Fund is an opportunity to continue monitoring the impacts of krill fishing and to conduct further ecological research on this important species.”

Sigve Nordrum Sustainability Director, Aker Biomarine: “The Antarctic Wildlife Research Fund is an integral part of how we at Aker Biomarine fulfill our commitment to bring responsibly-fished krill to consumers worldwide. Harvested in pristine Antarctic waters, krill is nature’s purest source of Omega-3 and awareness of the health benefits is rapidly increasing. The growing popularity of the products requires that scientists, NGOs and producers team up to ensure that fisheries are sustainable and that Antarctic wildlife continues to thrive.”

For more info:

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As part of her position as Sustainability Manager at Aker BioMarine, Marte Haabeth Grindaker serves as Secretary and press contact to the Antarctic Wildlife Research Fund. She can be reached at +47 92 02 07 52 and info@antarcticfund.org.

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ABOUT THE ANTARCTIC WILDLIFE RESEARCH FUND

AWR is a first-of-its-kind partnership between industry, academia and non-government organizations (NGOs), which funds research projects in Antarctica.

The AWR works with both companies and individuals to raise donations for research on the Antarctic ecosystem and wildlife. Only through better understanding of the role of Antarctic krill in the Southern Ocean can we comprehensively protect the animals that depend on it for survival and ensure precautionary management of the fishery.

The Antarctic Wildlife Research Fund was established in January 2015 by representatives for The Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC), WWF-Norway and Aker BioMarine. Leading scientists in the field of Antarctic research make up the Science Advisory Group of the AWR.

ANTARCTIC WILDLIFE RESEARCH FUND – BOARD MEMBERS:

Mark Epstein, *Executive Director, ASOC – The Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition*
Karoline Andaur, *Head of the Marine Program, WWF-Norway*
Matts Johansen, *Chief Operating Officer, Aker BioMarine*
Sigve Nordrum, *Vice President Sustainability, Aker BioMarine*

LEADING SCIENTISTS IN THE FIELD OF ANTARCTIC RESEARCH MAKE UP THE SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD OF THE AWR:

Dr Phil Trathan, *Chair, British Antarctic Survey, Cambridge, UK*
Dr Polly Penhale, *National Science Foundations, US*
Dr Javier Arata, *Instituto Antártico, Chile, CCAMLR*

Dr Gennadi Milinevsky, *National University of Kiev, Ukraine*

Dr Taro Ichii, *National Research Institute of Far Sea Fisheries, Japan*

Dr Andrew Lowther, *Norwegian Polar Institute, Norway*

Dr Slava Bizikov, *Russian Federal Research Institute of Fisheries, Russia*

Dr So Kawaguchi, *Australian Antarctic Division, Tasmania, Australia*

Scientific Advisor to the AWR is **Dr. Rodolfo Werner**, who is a Senior Advisor to The Pew Charitable Trusts and ASOC – The Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition