

## Applicants looking for support for their Antarctic research

The Antarctic Wildlife Research Fund (AWR) has invited applications from scientific researchers who can aid in determining the impact of the krill fishing industry on the Antarctic marine ecosystem. The first call for proposals closed June 16, 2015.

– It is amazing to see that we can actually start funding research. The proposals we have received show that there is both interest and a great need for more knowledge on the unique nature and wildlife in the Antarctic, says Karoline Andaur, member of the AWR board and Head of the Marine Program at WWF-Norway.

– This first round of grants marks an important moment and the culmination of an enormous amount of effort by scientists, by industry and by NGOs to create a new funding stream for scientific endeavors in the Antarctic. Only by working together will we be able to ensure that the Antarctic marine ecosystem receives the necessary protection which so many people feel is so vitally important, adds Phil Trathan, Chair of the AWR Science Advisory Group.

The fund has received applications from renown institutions from different continents, on different species and their dependency on a changing eco-system. The research will serve to ensure ecosystem protection, while improving the management basis for the fishery.

– It is important that the research that AWR contributes to, is made available and used in the management of the natural resources found in the Antarctic. The more research we have, the better our foundation to understand, for example, how much krill and fish can be fished, Andaur continues.

Now, the Fund's Science Advisory Group will evaluate and prioritize scientific research proposals submitted to the Antarctic Wildlife Research Fund. The Science Advisory Group will base its evaluation upon a number of criteria when selecting and prioritizing proposals for funding.

– The Scientific Advisory Group of AWR will assess each proposal based on its scientific excellence, how it matches with the specific criteria outlined in this current call, its effectiveness in terms of financial cost and the track record of the investigators proposing the research. Using these key criteria, we will be able to ensure that the funds available are used in the most effective manner, comments Dr. Andrew Lowther, member of the Science Advisory Group and scientist at the Norwegian Polar Institute.

Launched in February 2015, AWR is a first-of-its-kind partnership between industry, academia and non-government organizations (NGOs), to facilitate and promote research on

the Antarctic ecosystem. BioMar Group, Blackmores, Mercola, Ridley Corporation and Swisse are supporting the fund financially.

AWR believes that only through better understanding of the role of Antarctic krill in the Southern Ocean will it be possible to comprehensively protect the animals that depend on it for survival and ensure precautionary management of the fishery.

AWR's founding partners include representatives of the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC), WWF-Norway and Aker BioMarine.

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### *LEADING SCIENTISTS IN THE FIELD OF ANTARCTIC RESEARCH MAKE UP THE SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD OF THE ANTARCTIC WILDLIFE RESEARCH FUND:*

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- Dr. Gennadi Milinevsky, National University of Kiev, Ukraine
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Dr. Rodolfo Werner, Senior Advisor to Pew Charitable Trusts and ASOC, is the scientific advisor to the AWR and serves as a liaison between the AWR Board and the Science Advisory Group.

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