

Aquamazônia in its inaugural year will for the first time ever bring together the international ornamental fish and accessory industry in the heart of Amazon; the origin of wild caught Amazon fishes that have such a prominent place in aquariums worldwide. The theme of Aquamazônia is for the advance of the industry towards a green, environmentally and socioeconomically responsible business.

AMAZON AND ORNAMENTAL FISHERIES

The Amazon River basin drains an area of 7.5 million km² and includes within its catchment: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, French Guyana, Guyana, Suriname, Peru and Venezuela. It is the largest river in the world and drains 20% of all the world's freshwater into the ocean. Its tributaries have their origin in the high Andes, Guyana, and Brazilian highlands; endowing the river water with its white, green, clear, and black colors. The largest tributary is the Rio Negro; other major tributaries include Rio Branco, Japura, Madeira, Purus, Tapajós, Tocantins, Trombetas, Xingu etc. These river systems are the home to over 3,000 species of fishes; many of which have ornamental value for home aquarium and public aquarium exhibition.

Amazon countries contribute about 10% of the freshwater ornamental fish trade; Brazil, Colombia and Peru are the major exporters. The wild caught Amazon ornamental fisheries are strongly tied to livelihood of rural people and the well being of the rainforest ecosystem. Fish collectors live in remote villages; ornamental fishes have provided a livelihood for tens of thousands of these rural people, or *caboclos*, for over 50 years. Ornamental fish as a non-timber forest product have greatly benefited the Rio Negro basin; the fish trade has kept deforestation, wildlife poaching, and socio-economic strife to a minimum. Governments and the industry should realize that to maintain a viable wild caught ornamental fishery requires a very small investment that can bring a great reward: the conservation of Amazon rainforest. Therefore, "Buy a Fish, Save a Tree" is our cry to the industry.

Exhibition and Conference

Aquamazônia 2010 is projected to host hundreds of exhibitors that want to make business connections with fish suppliers of the Amazon region and open markets for new products. We will have technical and trade conferences to promote regional cooperation and dialogue among stake holders and decision makers. There will be fish farm visits and field trips to the ornamental fish capital, Barcelos, Rio Negro. The field trip will include visiting collecting sites, meeting the fisher folk, and observing the chain of custody of Amazon fishes from collectors, intermediate buyers, holding facilities, and finally to transports. In Barcelos, we will join the annual Ornamental Fish Festival and beach parties (29-31 January 2010).

Please contact Orcal Planet (e-mail: aquamazonia@orcalplanet.com.br).

Tentative Programs

1. Opening Ceremony & Welcome Reception: 24 Jan (8:00 pm)
2. Exhibition: 25-27 Jan (10:00 am to 6:00 pm)
3. Fish Farm visits: 27 Jan (9:00 am)
4. Field trips to Barcelos: Ornamental Fish Festival & Ecotour

Organized by Amazon Conservation Ecotour (<http://www.acecotour.com>)

- Plan A: Boat Excursion, 27 Jan-6 Feb 2010
- Plan B: Charter Flight, 28-31 Jan 2010

Organizers:

Projeto Piaba (Coordination)

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Supported by: (to be added)

- Universidade Federal do Amazonas
- Turkeys Aquarium, Manaus - AM
- Prefeitura de Municipal de Barcelos – AM
- Secretaria Executiva de Pesca e Aqüicultura - AM
- Secretaria Especial de Aqüicultura e Pesca - Brasil
- Ornamental Fish International (OFI)
- Ornamental Aquatic Trade Association, UK (OATA)
- PetScandinavia