



PRESS RELEASE

Raising awareness for and learning about an endangered species

In 2009, every week is shark week with Sam's Tours in Palau

Munich, January 17, 2009 - Dive center and eco-adventure tour company Sam's Tours from Palau launches an all-year round shark week program to raise awareness for the decline of sharks in the world's oceans. Sam's Tours aims to use the year-round presence of sharks in the Micronesian archipelago to teach divers and environmentalists about the endangered species and to raise awareness for the underwater world.

Divers in Palau encounter sharks literally on any dive. Sam's Tours accounts for this fact with the launch of the year-round shark weeks. So far, Palau's Blue Corner is one of the best-known shark destinations in the Pacific region. Unfortunately, prejudices about the danger of the animals are still present not only within divers' minds. At the same time, concerns about the world wide decrease of the species continue to grow. Sam's Tours' mission is to raise interest of divers and ecologically minded people for this matter.

Explains Dermot Keane, Managing Director of Sam's Tours: „The decimation of sharks has only been on the radar of divers and environmentalists for a short attention span. Palau's past president Remengesau helped to cast the spotlight on this endangered species. The time has come to establish a long-term shark program on the island.“

As part of the Shark weeks program, guests can book a „S.A.V.E our Sharks Hotel & Dive package“. The S.A.V.E (Shark Awareness Visitor Education) program enables interaction with sharks in their natural environment, without the need of baiting sharks or watching them by means of cage diving. It also includes a „S.A.V.E our Sharks“ awareness briefing and a „S.A.V.E our Sharks“ certificate of completion. The awareness briefing will provide a sound understanding of the importance of sharks for the underwater eco-system, why sharks congregate at places like Blue



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Corner, how they hunt and feed, and why they are important to the food chain and to Palau.

“S.A.V.E. our Sharks” hotel and dive packages include a five to nine hotel stay, roundtrip ticket from Manila to Koror, and between six and fourteen dives. The team of Sam’s Tours will brief guests about sharks and the marine environment and the divers receive a certificate of completion. They will also be able to participate at both Sam’s Tours contests “Shark Shot of the Week” and “Shark Shot of the Year”. Prices range from 1.357 US-Dollar to 2.205 US-Dollar per person.

According to a survey by Dalhousie University in Halifax, an average of 80 % of all deep-sea sharks have disappeared forever over the last six years. This is not only a dramatic exploitation of the population but also a form of tampering with the largest ecosystem of the world.

Actress Daryl Hannah, who recently visited Palau and explored the underwater world with Sam’s Tours comments: „The decline in shark population here in Palau and worldwide is heartbreaking and shocking...it must be stopped!“

For more information, please visit the new website www.sharkweeks.com

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About Sam’s Tours

Sam’s Tours is an independent PADI Five Star National Geographic Dive Center and eco-adventure tour company based in Malakal Harbor, Koror, Palau. Offers include scuba dive trips, snorkel trips, rock island tours, land tours, kayak trips and sailing charters.

The well-equipped dive center offers the complete range of scuba experiences from introductory Scuba programs through PADI Instructor certification and includes a digital photography and videography shop, technical diving services like rebreather support, authorized Scubapro and Aqua Lung sales & service. Sam’s Tours offers complimentary Nitrox up to 36% with proof of certification. Sam’s Tours is a leader in efforts to protect the archipelago’s natural resources and the only Palau dive center to receive the Palau Conservation Society „Corporate Partner in Conservation 10 Year Award“. Sam’s Tours is also a corporate sponsor of the Palau Shark Sanctuary Fund.