



June 10, 2010

Brief: Ocean's Day Event, June 4, 2010

On June 4, 2010 Courtenay Parlee (Coastal CURA Student) and I (Madelaine Patterson, Coastal CURA Coordinator) participated in the Ocean's Day event at the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic.

There were many other organizations at the event, including both provincial and federal government representatives (DFO, NS Fisheries & Aquaculture, Environment Canada, etc...) and smaller organizations such as the Ecology Action Centre and the Sackville Rivers Association. We made connections with many of the organizations there, and met some potential attendees and participants for our upcoming conference next June, People in Places: Engaging Together in Integrated Resource Management.

This main audience at this event is children; we interacted with children in preschools, elementary schools and middle schools. At our booth, we had a clear glass jar of fish candies, and this attracted many children (for obvious reasons – sugar!). In order to receive a candy, they had to answer the following question:

⇒ *If these are all the fish in the ocean (point to jar of fish candies), and there are many people interested in these fish (government, families, fishermen etc), **what would YOU do to make sure that not all of the fish were eaten in one year?***

All ages had quite insightful answers:

Ages 4-7

- Put them back in the lake
- Grow baby fish
- Save the environment
- Catch them and put them back in
- Don't catch too many fish (ie. Like a quota!)
- Don't catch women fish
- Don't fish too many so that everyone can have some for food (ie. Fair distribution!)
- Leave them in the water

Ages 8-15

- Social
 - Talk to the government
 - Start a protest
 - Talk about how to share the fish
 - Post up signs

- Pollution
 - Stop pollution
 - Stop the oil spill
- Stream Restoration
 - Clean up the rivers
 - Put them back in the rivers
- Education
 - Have a lecture about fishing
 - Teach people about how fish are disappearing
- MPAs
 - Put them in a safe place where no one can fish them
 - Give them a habitat to live in
 - Make a safe space so they can breed
- Quotas
 - Catch some and release some
 - Throw the little ones back
 - Try not to catch all the fish
 - Eat half, save half
- Regulations
 - Don't go fishing in the same area
 - Give each group a fair share
 - Put up a limit on how many fish can be caught
 - Put limits on how much each person gets
- Aquaculture
 - Put them in a big tank
- Fishing Practices
 - Don't use nets because they catch other things

Courtenay and I were very impressed by their answers. We could tell that the children in the older group were really thinking about their answers before they told us, while the younger ones said the first thing that came to mind – both sets of answers were quite impressive nonetheless!

Ocean's day was very successful, both in terms of networking and our engagement with children on ocean issues. We look forward to attending this event again next summer!