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PRESS RELEASE

FRANCE TO HOST THE WORLD MARINE AND MARITIME FORUM: BIOMARINE 2008

Lyon, 30 May--BioMarine 2008 will be the major maritime event of the French Presidency of the European Union, "*The European maritime initiative in the world.*"

"The 21st century will be a maritime one. A global event such as BioMarine encompassing the entire maritime community represents an exceptional opportunity to highlight the importance and the value of the ocean for a sustainable future" according to Xavier de la Gorce, French Secrétaire Général de la Mer. Toulon and Marseille will host the event from 20-24 October 2008.

Specific themes of BioMarine 2008 include Maritime Geopolitics, including Mediterranean; thawing oceans, law and the Arctic; security, and pollution; sustainable development in the Mediterranean. We will discuss climate change and future scenarios; the hunt for marine energies and alternatives to oil and ocean exploration.

Over 2000 European and international leaders from business, science, government, civil society and the media will participate.

Co-Chairing BioMarine 2008 are Pierre Erwes, President and Founder of BioMarine, Amir Dossal, Executive Director of the UN Office for Partnerships and Tony Haymet, Director of Scripps Institution of Oceanography. BioMarine is made possible by the generous financial support and strong commitment of the major institutional partners that host the forum on their territory: the Provence Alpes Côte d'Azur Region, the General Councils of the Bouches-du-Rhone and the Var, the Urban Communities of Marseille and Toulon, and the City of Marseille.

The Prime Minister of France, François Fillon, has confirmed his participation at BioMarine, along with several members of his Government. Jean-Pierre Jouyet, French Secretary of State for European Affairs, highlighted the importance of the ocean and an integrated European maritime policy on the occasion of the European Maritime Day in Brussels on 19 May 2008, referring to the BioMarine forum and inviting the audience to attend. BioMarine has the support of the European Union and we expect to welcome José Manuel Barroso at BioMarine, as well as several other European Commissioners. Ministers from EU countries as Germany and Portugal are expected, as well as from Norway.

For Xavier de la Gorce, "In France, there is a strong need to change the perception of the ocean and recognize the need for a maritime policy, and its importance in all domains—this will be hugely important in the 21st century, in such areas as maritime transport, a real question of globalization, the disappearance of certain species, the environment and a hypersensitivity to pollution. There is a densification of population on all coastal areas, a kind of 'call of the sea' as people become more mobile. There is richness and a biodiversity of the sea, to feed people, but also for resources and energy. Does the ocean hold the answers to the most pressing mankind questions of hunger and energy?"

For more information, please see our website at www.biomarine.org, or contact Barbara Erskine for press queries and accreditation, at Barbara@barbaraerskine.com or telephone (4179) 202 4528.