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Top marine expert calls for tighter Middle East maritime eco-control

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A leading international marine expert has called for tighter controls and regulation of the Middle East's maritime environment.

Professor Chris Hopkins, Founder of Sweden's AquaMarine Advisers, advocates the adoption of "locally relevant, area-based management of marine ecosystems by setting goals and limits for environmental and ecological quality in the Middle East."

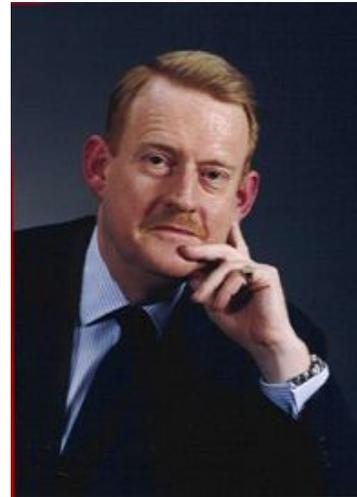
Prof. Hopkins, who is also Chairman of the SeaCult Knowledge Committee, says strategies for the sustainable use of the ocean must be put in place.

"We must comprehensively develop our capacity to create...long-term multi-disciplinary solutions involving sustainable use of the sea, while also resolving the interests of a wide range of industries and stakeholders," he said.

Prof. Hopkins was speaking in advance of his scheduled address at Waterfront 2005 Dubai – the ground-breaking conference and exhibition on the future of the Middle East's coastline development being held in Dubai this May. He is to address the audience of waterfront investors, real estate developers, planners, architects, designers and academics, on 'Development of Environmental Policy: Mitigating the Effects of Marine Constructions using Areal Management and Prudent Utilisation of Artificial Reefs in the conference session on Quality and Sustainability: The Importance of Getting it Right.

Prof. Hopkins has warned of the risks of ignoring the sustainability issue.

"We and future generations must be able to enjoy and benefit from biologically diverse and dynamic oceans and seas that are safe, clean, healthy and productive. Unfortunately coastal and offshore areas in the Middle East have already suffered the effects of pollution, over-exploitation of living resources and habitat degradation, so there is a very real need to ensure developments are made while cultivating and



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conserving the marine environment, its biodiversity, and ecosystems," he said.

Waterfront 2005 Dubai is one of the first regional forums for open debate on the phenomenal growth of waterfront development in the Middle East.

Regional and global case studies will ensure Middle East developers adopt best practices, in a region that provides the world's biggest concentration of investment in sea fronts and new marinas.

Prof. Hopkins will also be looking to Waterfront 2005 Dubai to recruit regional members for the SeaCult Knowledge Committee, established to meet the global challenges of cultivating the ocean and the sea bed.

"Delegates will learn the key to getting the balance right between the integration of leisure, retail, commercial, residential and environmental objectives in one development," said Chris Hayman, Managing Director of Seatrade, organisers of Waterfront 2005 Dubai.

Prof. Hopkins is among one of the most powerful speaker line-ups seen at a conference in the Middle East. At the two-day event, he will be joined by other speakers including Luis Ajamil, President, Bermello, Ajamil & Partners Inc. USA; Dr. Waleed Hamza, Chairman of the Biology Department at the UAE University's Faculty of Science and Mark Lindo, Engineering Manager of Rotterdam's dredging and marine engineering contractor Van Oord.

Waterfront 2005 Dubai, which will be held at the Al Bustan Rotana Hotel, Dubai from May 9-10, is being held with the full support of Dubai Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Dubai Ports Authority and Dubai Maritime City.

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