

Mascarene Archipelago Elasmobranch Observatory First Regional Underwater Photography Contest

Contest rules

1 Object

In April 2021, the Mascarene Archipelago Elasmobranch Observatory (MAEO) was created by ARBRE, in collaboration with the University of Mauritius. It is the first scientific and educational project on elasmobranchs (rays and sharks) on the scale of the Mascarenes.

Based in La Réunion, MAEO has 5 main objectives:

- To characterize the populations of elasmobranchs present in the Mascarene archipelago,
- To study the spatio-temporal dynamics of the species observed on the scale of the Mascarenes,
- To raise public awareness of the richness and conservation needs of marine ecosystems,
- To educate from an early age,
- To participate in the management and conservation of species.

To meet these objectives, MAEO has set up an eco-participatory network to inventory the most observations of elasmobranchs in La Réunion, Mauritius and Rodrigues.

It is in this context that ARBRE NGO is launching the first regional underwater photo contest (western Indian Ocean), on the theme of "Elasmobranchs and large pelagics".

2 Contest participation

The contest is open to all underwater photographers except members of the jury.

Registration for the contest as a competitor implies acceptance of all the provisions of the rules. This registration requires the use of the registration form duly completed and signed. Photocopies are accepted.

3 Jury

The jury is made up of at least three people. The jury's decisions are final. Participation in the competition implies acceptance of the conditions established by the rules.

4 Organizing Committee

The organizing committee cannot be held responsible if, as a result of a force majeure case or for any cause beyond its control, changes of dates occur or even if the competition is modified or cancelled.

5 Rights and uses of photographs

By entering the contest, participants agree that photos submitted in all categories may be used or reproduced for media coverage of this event and for the promotion of the MAEO project in all media, including television, internet, written and other publications.

Competitors also authorize the use of their photos by the organizers and partners during actions to promote environmental awareness, including for the promotion of any subsequent editions of the competition.

Photos will always be used with mention of the name of the author, but without giving rise to a payment of copyright or compensation in any form whatsoever. The use of photos within the

framework described above may be made without additional verbal or written authorization from the photographer.

Under no circumstances will a commercial use of the photos be made by the organizers or the partners. Any person, organization or company interested in the purchase or commercial use of a photo will be put in contact with the author.

6 Eligible Photographs

6.1 Shooting locations

The contest aims to highlight the biodiversity of elasmobranchs within the Mascarene Archipelago and more broadly at the regional level, and to participate in raising awareness around this exceptional fauna. Therefore, the photographs must have been taken at sea in the following countries: La Reunion, Mauritius, Rodrigues, Mayotte, Comoros, Seychelles, Madagascar, South and East Africa (from Somalia to Mozambique). Photos taken in swimming pools, aquariums or artificial ponds are prohibited.

Photos taken in the lagoon or in the shallow bottoms naturally fed by the ocean (natural basins and "pools") are authorized.

6.2 Photos theme

Photos presented will relate to the following theme:

"Elasmobranchs and large pelagics"

As a reminder :

- Elasmobranchs include rays and sharks.
- Large pelagics are fish such as tuna, skipjack, swordfish, barracuda, etc.

6.3 Photos presentation

Each competitor can present up to 5 photos blank of any distinctive mark: signature, copyright, logo, etc.

6.4 Other requirements

Photos submitted must be less than 5 years old before the contest registration deadline i.e. they must have been taken **after 15/10/2017**.

Photos submitted must comply with the requirements of each category.

Photos submitted may have been taken during the day or at night.

Photos submitted must have been taken either underwater or in half-air half-water, if the aquatic part is at least 50%.

Any work judged by the jury as having a tendentious or advertising character cannot be retained.

Participants are required to comply with environmental protection legislation and respect the underwater biodiversity during shooting, wherever they are under water. Any photo suggesting a disturbance of the natural habitat, provocation by touch, feeding or harassment (prohibited by law), will lead to a deliberation to judge of a possible disqualification of the photos or the photographer.

Participants must be able to provide at the request of the jury the native file of their digital photos in RAW, TIFF or JPEG format, in addition to the corresponding JPEG files.

Minor improvements to photos using editing software, such as adjustments to color, brightness and contrast, or the removal of minor defects (particles) are allowed. Photo editing that modifies the main content of the photo, such as moving, deleting objects and/or implanting foreign elements, is not allowed.

Any photo found to have been excessively altered or cropped will be disqualified and the photographer himself may also be disqualified. Organizers and judges have the power to decide whether a photo has been excessively manipulated, based on their judgment. The jury's decision to disqualify a photo or photographer is final and indisputable.

7 Categories

A candidate can only register in one of two categories.

✓ Amateur Category

The "**Amateur**" category is intended for people who practice underwater photography on an occasional basis and who have compact or entry-level equipment.

✓ Expert Category

The "**Expert**" category is aimed at people who practice the activity in a sustained way and have more advanced equipment. Owners of SLR or hybrid cameras are invited to participate in the Expert category, as well as users of compacts who would like it due to the good mastery of their equipment.

Competitors can enter the category of their choice. However, photographers who have been awarded in competitions of national or international scope, or who have had photos published in the press or literature are invited to present themselves in the expert category.

The Jury reserves the right to move candidates from one category to another if it deems an inappropriate registration.

✓ Special prize "Coup de coeur" of the public

A special prize will be submitted to the public vote. The photos will be distributed on ARBRE association's website as well as on various sites of the Science Festival in La Réunion, in order to allow the general public and schoolchildren to participate, and to elect their "Coup de coeur" prize. The vote will be done via an application available from a computer or smartphone, the link of which will be will soon be posted on the ARBRE association's website and FB page.

8 Sending folders

8.1 Contest Registration

Contest registration is done by a form, attached as an appendix. This registration form must be completed by you and sent to the following address to inform us of your participation in the contest:

maeproject.concours@gmail.com

We will send it back to you by return email, completed with your identification number.

8.2 Photos presentation

Photographs must be presented as digital files, **without margin or inscription**, in high definition, with a dimension of 4000 x 3000 pixels maximum, 300 dpi and 10 MB maximum, in **JPEG, RGB** or **Adobe** format. The CMYK will not be processed by the organization committee.

The allowed cropping should not exceed 15% of the original photo and retain the original ratio (2/3, 9/16, etc.).

8.3 Nomination of photos

The files will be named in the following form:

XX-identification number-Z. jpg

XX corresponds to the competitor's category: **CE** for the Expert Category, **CA** for the Amateur Category.

Z is a **number** corresponding to the serial number of the photo. This order will be retained as the order of dissemination.

Examples:

You will receive the registration number 123987.

You compete in the Expert category, your photos will be designated as follows:

CE-123987-01.jpg for the 1st photo,

CE-123987-02.jpg for the 2nd photo, etc.

You compete in the Amateur category, your photos will be designated as follows:

CA-123987-01.jpg for the 1st photo,

CA-123987-02.jpg for the 2nd photo, etc.

8.4 Sending photos

The sending of your photos must **BE ACCOMPANIED** by this **identification form** including your identification number previously issued by the organizing committee.

Submissions must be sent by email or WeTransfer to the following address:

maeproject.concours@gmail.com

The deadline for receipt of applications is **15/10/2022, midnight** (La Reunion time). Only this return (registration form + numbered photos) will confirm your participation in the competition.