

4 October 2006

## The Blue Flag Programme 2006/2007

The International Blue Flag Jury had its second annual meeting on 26 September to decide on the Blue Flag candidates from the Southern Hemisphere and the Caribbean for the 2006/2007 season. The International Jury decided to award the Blue Flag to 44 beaches and 7 marinas in Bahamas, Dominican Republic, French Departments and Territories, Jamaica, New Zealand, Puerto Rico and South Africa. The International Jury furthermore gave the Blue Flag Certificate to one beach in Chile and to 10 beaches from Brazil as a step toward achieving full Blue Flag status. More detailed information about the 2006 awards for the Southern Hemisphere and the Caribbean will be published on the Blue Flag website [www.blueflag.org](http://www.blueflag.org) from 1 November.

The Blue Flag marina candidates were evaluated to ensure compliance with the criteria concerning their environmental management system or environmental logbook, the presence of a map indicating all required facilities, the promotion of the Individual Blue Flag for boat owners and a closed water system for boat repair areas, if present. The beach candidates were evaluated to ensure the presence of a map indicating all required facilities and compliance with the water quality sampling frequency criterion.

2006 is the first year that the beach candidates from all participating countries around the World are following one set of international criteria. A new beach application questionnaire has been developed for this and it was assured during the evaluation that it was used in all countries.

Also evaluated this year were the composition of the national juries, the outcome of control visits in 2005/2006, the planning of control visits for 2006/2007 and the training of national controllers.

At the next International Jury meeting in April 2007, the outcome of the evaluation of Blue Flag candidate beaches and marinas from Europe, Morocco and Canada will be presented. The Blue Flag programme is looking forward to working with new countries that have shown interest in the programme.

The International Jury is composed of representatives from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), International Lifesaving Association (ILS), the World Conservation Union (IUCN), an international Environmental Education expert, the International Council of Marine Industry Associations (ICOMIA) and the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).

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*FEE - Foundation for Environmental Education is a network of 44 national non-governmental and non-profit organisations promoting environmental education. Each national member organisation is responsible for undertaking the FEE programmes (Blue Flag, Eco-Schools, Young Reporters for the Environment, Learning about Forests and Green Key) on the national level. More information about FEE and the FEE programmes can be found at [www.fee-international.org](http://www.fee-international.org).*