

NOVEMBER 2012 ISSUE

23rd Annual Environmental Award, Runners-Up



FoProBiM's initiative to clean up beaches in Haiti in action.

By JONATHAN BORGE and BROOK WILKINSON



Jean W. Wiener, Haiti



It's easy for environmental issues to get overlooked in a place with as many socioeconomic struggles as Haiti; even before the 2010 earthquake ravaged the country, it was already the poorest in the Western Hemisphere. Badly managed agricultural and fisheries production has taken a toll on the land and sea, with little effort made by the government to turn the tide. The surrounding waters are severely overfished, and 80 percent of the nearby reefs are estimated to be damaged. In 1992, Port-au-Prince-born Jean W. Wiener, then just 28 years old, founded the *Fondation pour la Protection de la Biodiversité Marine (FoProBiM)*, which he's been leading ever since.

Among the organization's many initiatives, FoProBiM has planted 200,000 mangrove trees (this increases fish populations, prevents shoreline erosion, protects the island from storm surges, and sequesters greenhouse gases); added an additional 150,000 trees elsewhere in the country (including fast-growing species that can replace mangroves as fuel wood); and launched programs to teach 4,000 schoolchildren about the environment through classroom activities and summer camps. FoProBiM also hires local laborers to build and staff nurseries, and provides seed funding for Haitians wanting to establish their own plant nurseries or beehives. But what may be Wiener's greatest accomplishment is yet to come: Haiti's new government is considering legislation—drafted by Wiener—to establish the country's first marine protected area.



Haitian girl scouts help with beach cleaning and mangrove replanting.

The Judges

The following individuals helped select this year's winner and runners-up

- Frances Beinecke**, president, Natural Resources Defense Council
- John Paul DeJoria**, co-founder, chairman, and CEO, John Paul Mitchell Systems
- Larry Fahn**, former executive director, As You Sow Foundation; board member and past president, Sierra Club
- Dr. Alasdair Harris**, founder and executive director, Blue Ventures Conservation, Madagascar; winner, *Condé Nast Traveler's* 2009 Environmental Award
- Thomas E. Lovejoy**, professor, George Mason University; biodiversity chair, H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics, and the Environment
- Bill McKibben**, founder, 350.org; author, *The End of Nature*; scholar-in-residence, Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont
- Marilyn Perry**, chairman emerita, World Monuments Fund
- Carter Roberts**, president and CEO, World Wildlife Fund
- Mark R. Tercek**, president and CEO, The Nature Conservancy

Photographs : Courtesy of Jean W. Wiener/FoProBiM