

WORLD

# TURNING THE TIDE

A Universal Message To Protect Our Planet's Most Precious Resource.



By **Helga Piaget**   Senior Editor  

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AS I REFLECT on the incredible success of Flowers4art®, held at the Hotel Metropole Monte-Carlo in November, I am filled with immense pride and gratitude for all those who made this event possible. The passion and dedication behind Passion Sea, the Monegasque association I proudly serve as president, were palpable throughout every corner of the exhibition. It was a celebration of creativity, innovation, and the profound beauty of nature—all framed by a pressing need to preserve and protect our planet's most precious resource: water.

Flowers4art® marked the first edition of an event that seamlessly intertwined environmental advocacy with the transformative power of art. The theme was simple yet profound: Water is Life. The exhibition not only showcased a stunning collection of artistic works but also highlighted the poignant voices of young artists from across the globe. The colorful “flags” painted by children from schools around the world were a powerful testament to the universal message we are sharing—the future of our planet is in their hands, and it is their vision of a sustainable world that will shape the future.

Alongside the exhibition, we were proud to present the book *Water is Life: Thoughts of Our Generation*. Now in its fourth edition, the book carries reflections on the fragility of our oceans, our ecosystems, and the urgency with which we must act to protect them. It is a work that transcends the pages of a book, inviting readers to feel the weight of responsibility we all carry in ensuring that future generations inherit a planet capable of sustaining life in all its forms.

One of the highlights of the event was the incredible support we received from Prince Albert II of Monaco, whose presence and involvement made a profound impact. The Prince, a true “Green Prince,” showed unwavering dedication to the cause, demonstrating that Monaco's commitment to sustainability is not just a political objective, but a deeply personal mission. His Highness's patronage of Flowers4art® was not just ceremonial—it was an embodiment of the collective responsibility we share in preserving Monaco's natural heritage.

Over the three days of the event, the exhibition came alive with dynamic discussions, presentations, and collaborations, especially around the idea of naturalizing urban environments. As the most densely populated coastal city in the world, Monaco is at the forefront of a global challenge: how can we balance the rapid pace of urbanization with the critical need to protect our biodiversity?

The projects showcased at Flowers4art® were not mere theoretical concepts; they were real, tangible solutions to address the urbanization that is encroaching on our natural spaces. Renowned experts, such as Patrick Blanc, the visionary biologist and inventor of vertical gardens, were on hand to share their expertise on how nature and modern architecture can coexist symbiotically. Patrick's groundbreaking work with vertical gardens is a powerful example of how we can integrate nature back into our cities, creating green spaces that not only beautify our surroundings but also restore ecological balance.

As we look ahead to 2025, I am excited to continue pushing the envelope with our efforts at Passion Sea. We are already planning for the creation of a new green urban sculpture, one that will embody the spirit of Monaco's National Biodiversity Strategy (SNB) and the goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity for 2030. In this endeavor, we will continue to challenge the status quo of urban development, urging both public and private developers to integrate nature into the very fabric of their projects from the outset.

Monaco's future hinges on its ability to restore its natural environment, to protect the delicate ecosystems that sustain life. Rapid urbanization, with its increasing footprint on the land and sea, poses a grave threat to our biodiversity. However, I am hopeful. Through collaboration, innovation, and a shared commitment to sustainability, we can turn the tide.

I firmly believe that the future of Monaco—and of cities around the world—lies in embracing a model of urban development that does not simply coexist with nature but nurtures it. Green spaces, biodiversity-friendly architecture, and the restoration of natural habitats are not luxuries; they are imperatives. As we move forward, I am committed to working alongside brilliant minds like Patrick Blanc, as well as the Monaco government, and passionate individuals from every corner of the globe to create a Monaco that is as green, resilient, and vibrant as it is modern.

Flowers4art® was just the beginning. It was a call to action, an invitation to dream of a world where nature thrives, even in the heart of our cities. Together, we can build that world. Together, we can ensure that water, and all the life it supports, will remain a source of hope and vitality for generations to come.



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*Helga Piaget, the environment editor and also a senior contributing writer for The Monegasque™, was born in Bavaria, Germany, and studied economics and art history at the University of Munich. In 1991, she married Yves Piaget and was honored to become a Monegasque citizen by the grace of HSH Prince Rainier III. Residing between Monaco and Florida, Helga is passionate about the sea and founded the nonprofit organization PASSION SEA in 2014 to promote ocean preservation through art and education. In 2018, she authored WATER IS LIFE, THOUGHTS OF OUR GENERATION.*

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