

CENTRO DE CONSERVACION CETACEA



Annual Report 2009



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On november 09, 2009, **Centro de Conservación Cetacea** (CCC) celebrated its ninth anniversary. Since its creation, CCC has consolidated as the most important non governmental organization dedicated to research and conservation of whales and dolphins in Chile. And we have done it thanks to the cooperative work conducted along with civil organizations (national and international), governmental institutions with competence in marine issues and coastal communities along the country.

This is why we would like to express our appreciation to the official support of the **General Directorate of Maritime Territory and Marine Merchant** (DIRECTEMAR) of the Chilean Navy, the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, the **Ministry of Education** and **National Commission of Environment of Chile** to the diverse projects conducted by CCC.

We also express our appreciation to the organizations that have sponsored our work during this last year: **Global Ocean**, **Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation**, **Marisla Foundation**, the **International Whaling Commission**, InnovaChile of **CORFO** and **Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund**.

Additionally we would like to thank the valuable collaboration of companies such as **SAS Chile**, **Haka Honu** sportwear and **Levi's Chile**, as well as all the **people** that have supported our work.

The support of governmental entities and local communities has been very valuable to move towards the implementation of **marine conservation** measures during these years.

Thanks to the cooperative work in 2009 we were able to continue advancing together in the effective conservation of whales and dolphins.

I would like to highlight the strengthening of **responsible and community based whale watching**, the adoption and implementation by the Municipality of Ancud (Great Island of Chiloe) of the **first regulation in Chile to conduct marine based penguin watching** en the Natural Monument of Punihuil Islands and the development of a **legal framework to whale watching** activities in the country that has been coordinated by the Under Secretariat of Fisheries.



Barbara Galletti, president of Centro de Conservación Cetacea

Doubtlessly it has been a positive year but there is still a lot of work ahead.

Cetacean populations face **new and increasing threats** that need to be address united as a society so that shortsighted economic interests do not threaten the future of whales and in definite, the future of the planet we depend as human species.

Alfaguara Project

Since 2004, **Centro de Conservación Cetacea** (CCC) has successfully conducted the **Alfaguara Project**, an initiative that effectively combines long-term **scientific research** programs, **community development** and **environmental education** with the aim to develop **innovative marine conservation proposals** that can be replicated in other coastal communities of the country.



*Blue whale or “alfaguara” (Balaenoptera musculus) tail.
Northwestern Isla de Chiloé, southern Chile.*

The **Alfaguara Project** seeks to guarantee the effective protection of the most important feeding ground for blue whales, or *alfaguaras*, known in the southern hemisphere. Also the project is oriented to facilitate the sustainable development of coastal communities, through responsible marine fauna watching and the effective conservation of the marine and coastal ecosystems of southern Chile.

Through the years, the **Alfaguara Project** has significantly contributed to the knowledge of a diversity of marine species, including blue, humpback and sei whales, orcas, marine otters, Magellan and Humboldt penguins, among others.

It has also consolidated at a national, regional and international level as an effective initiative to increase awareness about the importance of protecting marine species and their environment for the social, economic and environmental benefit of coastal communities and the country.

The **Alfaguara Project** has also been fundamental for the adoption of the first local and national regulations for responsible marine fauna watching.



*Pair of “alfaguaras”
navigating waters of
northwestern Chiloé Island,
southern Chile.*

Scientific Research Program



Monitoring of whales from a coastal platform located at more than 70m of height.

The scientific research program of the **Alfaguara Project** is oriented to monitor the conservation status of the blue whale (*Balaenoptera musculus*) population present in Isla de Chiloé (Los Lagos Region, southern Chile), with the purpose of propose **effective conservation measures** for this **Endangered** species.

Between **February and April 2009**, we conducted the sixth season of the scientific research program of the **Alfaguara Project**, with the collaboration of international and regional specialists. Dr. Carole Carlson (Center for Coastal Studies, USA), Dr. Robert L. Brownell Jr. (National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, USA), and Dr. Mariano Sironi (Whale Conservation Institute, Argentina) supported the work conducted by CCC researchers.

The **marine inspections** were mainly oriented to conduct individual photo-identification of whales found in the area and for the first time, biopsy samples to conduct genetic analysis. Also, biological samples of feces and zooplankton were collected and environmental parameters as well as behavior data was recorded.

Of a total of **eleven marine surveys** carried out on board the research vessel "Alfaguara", more than **120 blue whales** were recorded, as well as sei whales (*Balaenoptera borealis*), Peale's dolphins (*Lagernorhynchus australis*) and the first records of fin whales (*Balaenoptera physalus*) and orcas (*Orcinus orca*) were obtained.

Thirteen biopsy samples of skin and blubber were obtained from blue whales and one of sei whales for future genetic analysis.



Labeling and storage of biopsy samples taken during the 2009 research season of the Alfaguara Project.



Aerial surveys were conducted thanks to the continuous support of the Chilean Navy

Feeding and defecation

behavior were also recorded, further documenting the importance of northwestern Chiloé Island as a **feeding ground** for blue and other great whale species.

Thanks to the support of the **Chilean Navy**, in April 2009 an aerial survey was conducted, covering more than **1,500 km** (from 36S to 44S). During the survey, at least **34 groups** of great

whales were identified, mainly blue whales, as well as three groups of dolphins.

The results of the aerial surveys conducted between 2007 and 2009 with standard methods of line transects were analyzed in order to produce the **first abundance estimate of blue whales in southern Chile**. The results revealed that about **100 animals are found in the feeding area** of southern Chile, which represents a **high percentage of a small population**. Therefore, any lethal or negative anthropogenic impact on blue whales and their environment should be avoided.

From a conservation perspective, these results raise the **concerns about the number of large marine vessels** and the **high concentration of blue whales**, particularly in northern Los Lagos region, as well as the presence of **skin lesions** on individual whales of this population.

Centro de Conservación Cetacea proposed conservation measures to the Chilean Navy to **reduce this anthropogenic threat** to the blue whale population that are under evaluation.



*Sei whale (*B. borealis*) found dead on the bow of a tourist cruise ship in Puerto Montt, southern Chile.*

Land Base Study in Punihuil

In 2009, the **first land base study of coastal species of Punihuil** was finalized. In 2007, the proposal for territorial planning conducted under the framework of the **Alfaguara Project** highlighted the **need to include information about the diversity of vertebrate terrestrial species and their distribution** in the coastal ecosystems of Punihuil.



*Sea lions (*Otaria flavescens*) are usually seen in rocky formations near Punihuil Islands Natural Monument*

With the aim to **monitor the long-term impact** of the increasing number of **tourists** that visit Punihuil and to **propose conservation measures** that complement the territorial planning proposal, a **land base study of species** was assigned to the veterinarians Dr. Cristian Perez (MSc University of Chile) and Dr. Gabriel Lobos (PhD University of Chile).

The work included the monitoring and comparison of the **presence of species in spring and summer** and their distribution and diversity in Punihuil beach.

The first inspection was conducted in **January 2008** and the second in **September 2009**, where information about the presence of reptiles, amphibians, mammals and birds was collected. **Spring** was the season that presented the **highest number** of species. The diversity of the vertebrate fauna was associated to each environment identified in Punihuil. Conservation status was assigned to each species according to national and international categorizations and the sensibility of each environment was determined for each ecosystem.

The **most sensitive area corresponded to Punihuil Islands** followed by the areas with presence of forests. These results highlight the **need to protect the Natural Monument of Punihuil Islands** and promote **reforestation of destroyed coastal areas** since forests were identified as **reservoirs of biodiversity** and are currently highly fragmented.



*Magellan penguins (*Spheniscus magellanicus*) visit the Natural Monument to breed.*

Second Blue Whale Week



The director of the Regional Museum of Ancud, Marijke Van Meurs, with CCC representatives

The **Blue Whale Week** conducted under the **Alfaguara Project** by **Centro de Conservacion Cetacea** seeks to promote the active and informed participation of the public in environmental issues, through the promotion of responsible behaviors towards marine ecosystems and the sustainable development of coastal communities.

In February 2009 we conducted the **Second Blue Whale Week** (IIBWW) with the aim to continue strengthening the valorization of our natural and cultural patrimony as well as to celebrate the annual return of blue whales to their feeding area in southern Chile.

Artistic, cultural and educational activities were conducted with the aim to reach these objectives. The IIBWW was conducted in the **Regional Museum of Ancud** and counted with the support of the **Bicentenary Commission**, **Country Image Project**, the **National Tourist Service** of Los Lagos region, the **Municipality of Ancud**, the **Cultural Corporation of Ancud**, **Sea Star Radio**, **Ecoceanos Center**, **Cilantro Teatro** Company, **Haka Honu** sportswear, the fusion jazz group **Trifulka** and the famous Chilean singer **Keko Yunge**.



Opening Ceremony of the Second Blue Whale Week at the Regional Museum of Ancud

During the opening ceremony at the Museum, CCC donated an **informative panel** about blue whales, specifically about the male blue whale that stranded dead in 2005. The skeleton was rescued by the Museum, local communities, CCC and volunteers in 2007 and is currently **one of the six blue whale skeletons publicly exhibited worldwide**.

The **IIBWW** included a photographic exhibit entitled **“Protecting the smallest to Preserve the Biggest”** produced by CCC that was located in the central hall of the Museum. It was composed by images and information about whales, marine birds and their dependency on krill, a small crustacean similar to a



More than 600 children from Ancud and other communities of Chiloe participated in the play.

shrimp that is the base of the marine food web. More than **two thousand visitors and residents** of Ancud were able to see the free exhibit.

The **IIBWW** considered also an **environmental educational program** oriented to schoolchildren that included the presentation of the theatrical play "*In the Search for Krill*" of the company Cilantro Teatro.

About **100 children** were able to see the play. Afterwards they also has the opportunity to learn to make **whale and krill origami figures** while learning about the importance of protecting marine life. The local success of the play was rapidly spread in the

island, generating the interest of other communities that requested its presentation. In **June 2009**, the play was replicated throughout Chiloe Island and more than **500 children were able to see it.**

In order to increase awareness in young and adult people, CCC made a presentation about the results of the scientific research program of the **Alfaguara Project** in the Museum, with the aim to inform about the presence of blue whales, their conservation status, threats and recommendations for their protection in Chile and the world.



Barbara Galletti, president of CCC makes a presentation about the scientific results of the Alfaguara Project.

Additionally, the **IIBWW** included an International **Seminar on Responsible Whale Watching**, described later in this report.

The closure of the **IIBWW** was celebrated with the music concert "*Sing for the Whales, Sing for Life*" with the local fusion jazz group **Trifulka** and national singer **Keko Yunge**.

People from all ages attended the concert and enjoyed good music and the promotion of marine conservation issues.



National singer Keko Yunge and members of the jazz group Trifulka at the end of the concert "Sing for Whales, Sing for Life".



Images from the First International Workshop on Responsible Whale Watching conducted during the Second Blue Whale Week of the Alfaguara Project of Centro de Conservacion Cetacea

International Seminar on Responsible Whale Watching

As part of the political work conducted by **Centro de Conservacion Cetacea** to move towards the consolidation of a national marine conservation policy, the Second Blue Whale Week conducted an **International Seminar on Responsible Whale Watching** in Isla de Chiloé.

The workshop was conducted with the sponsorship of **InnovaChile de CORFO** (Chile's Economic Development Agency) and counted with the presence of governmental representatives of the **Chilean Navy**, **National Tourism Service**, the **Under Secretariat of Fisheries**, the **National Corporation of Forestry** and the **Ministry of Environment**.

The seminar also included the participation of international experts including Dr. Carole Carlson from USA, Dr. Mariano Sironi from **Instituto de Conservacion de Ballenas** of Argentina, Mr. Rodrigo Garcia from **Organizacion para la Conservacion de los Cetáceos** of Uruguay and Mr. José Truda Palazzo, former **alternate commissioner of the Government of Brazil** at the **International Whaling Commission**.

More than **50 people**, including national and local authorities, coastal communities, tourist operators, and fishing organizations from seven cities of Los Lagos region, as well as national non-governmental organizations attended the seminar.

The seminar goals were to **promote the implementation of the Whale Sanctuary** (Law 20.293) and review international experiences on whale watching to promote **high quality marine ecotourism standards** and guarantee the sustainable development of local coastal communities.

As a result, a **working group to develop national regulations for whale watching** was created by the Under Secretariat of Fisheries in March 2009.

Centro de Conservacion Cetacea is a member of this group and has actively participated in the regulation process since its establishment. The outcome of its work will be the adoption and implementation of a **legal framework that will guarantee the responsible development of whale watching in the country**.

Reaching Marine Conservation Policies

The staff of CCC held several meetings with national and local authorities, as well as tourist operators, with the aim to promote the **conservation of marine biodiversity**, improve the **quality of life of coastal communities** of northwestern Isla de Chiloe, **diversify tourist attractions** and impulse the adoption of **marine conservation policies** in Chile.

Probably the main local achievement reached in 2009 is the adoption of the **first regulation for marine based penguin watching operations around the Natural Monument of Puniuil Islands**. The regulation, adopted by the **Municipality of Ancud** through a local decree, limits the number of tourist marine vessels as well as the number of daily visits around the islands. The **measures adopted are based in the recommendations included in the first recreational carrying capacity study conducted by CCC in 2006/2007** under the **Alfaguara Project**.

This is the **first time in Chile that a tourist initiative is regulated in base of carrying capacity criteria** and represents an effective management model that should be replicated in other coastal communities that conduct marine fauna watching operations. This example also demonstrates that conservation measures can be adopted and implemented at national and local level, without the need to unnecessarily wait for the creation of marine protected areas, especially in Chile, where there is currently **no legal framework for their effective implementation**.

Additionally, special provisions for **blue whale watching** – that were recommended by CCC in 2007 and supported by the Scientific Committee of the **International Whaling Commission** and implemented by the **Chilean Navy** – were included in the **text of the national regulation for whale watching operations in Chile** that was developed by the working group of the Under Secretariat of Fisheries in 2009.

CCC staff also advised the **Direction of Road of the Public Work Ministry** in the construction of fauna sighting platforms and information panels that will be installed in the **first scenic route** that will be constructed in Chile and that will unite Ancud with natural tourist destinations of northwestern Isla de Chiloe.

Additionally, we are currently working with the Chilean Navy to develop and implement **measures to reduce maritime vessel speed limits** in the **blue whale feeding ground** of northwestern Isla de Chiloe. According to our studies, this region of Los Lagos, has the **highest sighting rate of this Endangered species** and one of the **highest number of large maritime vessels**.

Finally, in November 2009 CCC conducted a meeting with local authorities and coastal community representatives of Puniuil, to present the **results about a study to determine the minimum distance approach of penguin watching maritime vessels around the Natural Monument of Puniuil Islands**, that was conducted by the veterinarian Maria Jose Oetiker in 2008. The minimum distance was calculated at 40 meters.

Southern Right Whale Project



The distribution of informative material regarding the critical conservation status of the southern right whale in Chile is fundamental to raise awareness about the importance of their protection

Thanks to the development since 2003 of the **Southern Right Whale Project (SRWP)** of CCC we have been able to increase the number of sighting records of the population of *Eubalaena australis* present in Chile.

We have also **increase awareness** about the delicate conservation status of this population, classified as **Critically Endangered** by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) thanks to the data collected by CCC and the **Chilean Navy**.

This classification allowed in 2008 to grant **maximum protection to the species in Chilean waters** that guarantees that any individual sighted in Chilean waters can not be approached or disturbed.

Regrettably, foreign whalers drastically exploited southern right whales in Chile as early as 1790 and by 1850 the population of the South East Pacific **does not evidence any signs of recovery**.

The scientific results of the **SRWP**, presented during the process of classification to the cetacean specialist group of the IUCN, show that this population could have **less than 50 mature individuals**.

The **SRWP** objective is to generate the necessary conditions for the **protection and long-term recovery of what could probably be the most endangered whale population in the planet**.

The cooperative work of the **Marine Mammal Sighting Network** of CCC (MMSN) and the surveys conducted in several coastal communities of southern Chile between may and june 2009, have been **key elements** to record southern right whales along the Chilean coast.



Peale's dolphins (Lagenorhynchus australis), interior waters of Aysen region.

In 2009, we were able to document **three sighting records of southern right whales** in Chile, including the first record of the species collected during the month of April in Chilean waters.

Special measures for the sighting of southern right whales – that were recommended by CCC in 2006 to the **Permanent Commission of the South East Pacific** (CPPS) and implemented in 2008 by the Chilean Navy – were included in the text for the regulation of whale watching in Chile that was developed by the working group of the Under Secretariat of Fisheries.



Par madre-cría de ballena franca austral avistada en Quintay, V Región.

This legal instrument will **only allow coastal sighting of this critically Endangered species** with the aim to protect the whales from any human threat and/or harassment.

Marine Mammal Sighting Network



CCC staff monitoring the central region of Chile

(journalist of CCC), scouted more than **300 km of Chiloé Island** coast and the northern region of **Aysen** with the aim to strengthen the **NMMSN**.

Thanks to the support of **DIRECTEMAR**, coastal communities, local and national media and international NGOs, the **National Marine Mammal Sighting Network (NMMSN)** established in 2003 by **Centro de Conservación Cetacea** has proven to be the most cost effective tool to collect information about cetacean species and strengthen public awareness about the importance of protecting the natural marine patrimony.

Between May 25 and June 3, Priscila Escobar (veterinarian of CCC) and Barbara Fuenzalida

As a result, **ten coastal communities** were visited and **23 new members** were adhered to the NMMSN, including artisanal fishers, tourist operators and local authorities, among others. The people showed great interest to collaborate with the recording of the sightings. Moreover, considering the high potential to develop whale and dolphin watching operations, several people expressed their interest in building capacities to conduct the activity in a responsible manner.

Peale's dolphins (*Lagenorhynchus australis*) and Chilean dolphins (*Cephalorhynchus eutropia*) were recorded during the inspection in southern Chile. Additionally, the people contacted reported **by-catch of small cetaceans** in fishing gears and **salmon farming cages** were observed along the interior waters of Chiloé fjords, raising our concerns about the increasing threats for cetaceans and their marine environment.

In order to promote the work conducted under the NMMSN, we have produced semester bulletins that are distributed via



Intensive aquaculture has been identified as one of the main threats to marine conservation in southern Chile.

email and snail mail to more than **one thousand members**. Also we keep systematic communication via telephone with many of our members throughout the year.

The **bulletin Number 10 of the NMMSN** was dedicated to the conservation of *alfaguaras* or blue whales and all the efforts and activities conducted as part of the **Alfaguara Project**, including the **Second Blue Whale Week** and the **International Seminar on Responsible Whale Watching**.

Bulletin Number 11 of the NMMSN addressed a wide variety of issues, including the regulations for marine fauna watching, cooperative work and internships conducted with the **University of Las Palmas de Gran Canarias of Spain** and the **Pacific Whale Foundation of Ecuador**, information regarding humpback whales and the citizenship campaign ***Chile Says NO to Whaling in the Southern Ocean***.

Additionally, in 2009 we printed 500 identification guides for cetacean species with the purpose of helping NMMSN members to recognize great cetaceans more easily and identify different behaviors and swimming patterns.

Thanks to the work conducted by the NMMSN, the number of cetacean records along the country in 2009 reached 223 records that include 476 great cetaceans and 359 small cetaceans.



Veterinarians of CCC measure a dead whale found in Pichilemu, VI Region

Minke Whale Stranding

After receiving notice from the **National Marine Fishery Service** (Sernapesca) about the stranding of a whale in January 2009 in the fishing community of Pichilemu, the team of CCC composed by the veterinarians Andrea Bahamonde and Priscila Escobar, assisted to the location with the aim to identify the species, measure the animal, take photographic records and collect biological samples for posterior analysis.

The dead stranded **whale was positively identified as a juvenile of Antarctic minke whale** (*Balaenoptera bonaerensis*).

The animal presented body marks of interactions with fishing gear and was found entangled in resting nets. This highlights our concerns about the **negative impacts of possible cetacean by-catch and fatal cetacean/human interactions** in whale and dolphin populations found in Chile.

Establishing a Framework for Achieving Chile's MPA Commitments

As recognized worldwide, **Marine Protected Areas** (MPAs) are a significant, but under-utilized mechanism for addressing marine conservation and helping to reverse the global decline in ecosystem health. Their value has been recognized in international agreements to which Chile is a signatory.

Yet the country has made little progress in meeting its MPA commitments, including its failure to implement a **representative network of MPAs by 2012**. This situation is being experienced in several countries worldwide.

Since 2009 **Centro de Conservación Cetacea** is conducting an in depth evaluation process oriented to assess existing challenges and to identify and present a number of findings and recommendations for establishing an overarching Marine Protected Area (MPA) framework, with criteria and guidelines. Having such an agreed framework in place will give Chilean government authorities a much more effective and responsible basis, in keeping with its international commitments, for designating MPAs by 2012 and thereafter.



Coast of the IV Región, Chile

Support of the Minister of Environment

In April 2009 the importance of the project was officially recognized when receiving the official endorsement of the **National Commission of Environment (CONAMA)**. According to a letter received by the Minister of Environment, Ana Lya Uriarte *“the project will generate both information and elements for analysis that will be useful for marine protected areas management in Chile.”*

Evaluation Process

During 2009, the project identified important aspects delaying Chile MPAs commitments such as the establishment of an effective national network of MPAs.

The current status of MPA planning and implementation processes were analyzed through the review of international and national laws and regulations related to MPA; the review of governmental and national/international NGO reports; and the development of two emblematic case studies: the failed

blue whale MPA proposal and the **National Whale Sanctuary**. Both were discussed in several international meetings conducted during the time frame of the project.

An important source of the information was collected through interviews and questionnaires. Also, several meetings with the **Minister of Environment** and the coordinator of the GEF/MPA project in Chile were conducted. The project designed and distributed a **questionnaire** among key national governmental officials, representatives from NGOs, fishing industry, coastal and academy/science communities as well as international experts.

Important aspects identified so far include difficulty in ensuring governance of MPAs, the **lack of public participation**, no clear responsibilities among national institutions and lack of coordination, systematic deterioration of the Chilean legal framework related to MPAs and financial restraints, among others. The interviews, questionnaire results as well as relevant information collected from literature and international conferences are **currently being analyzed and consolidated into a report**.

First International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas

Between 30 March and 03 April, Ms. Elsa Cabrera from **Centro de Conservación Cetacea** was invited to give a presentation at the First International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (ICMMPA) in Hawaii, USA.



Poster presented by CCC in Hawaii, EE.UU

With the sponsorship of **National Oceanographic and Oceanic Administration**, the **US Fisheries Services** and the Australia Government, the meeting gathered more than **200 specialists** from **41 countries** to identify the success and challenges to the establishment and management of networks oriented to the conservation of marine mammals and their ecosystems.

Ms. Cabrera gave a presentation on the unsuccessful *“Corcovado Marine and Coastal PA*

of Multiple Use” proposal in southern Chile as a case of absence of a national policy on MPAs and poor participation top-down process characterized by the lack of an open and transparent public participation process.

The presentation also highlighted the efforts made by several NGOs in Chile to advance towards the creation of an effective network of marine protected areas in the country and identified other problems that are obstructing its establishment, which included the lack of a legal framework for MPAs in Chile and the increasing tendency to present proposals that grant guarantees to highly environmental destroying industries, obstructing the effective protection and conservation of marine ecosystems.

During the conference, it was emphasized that national MPA networks need to be effective and that the 2012 goal should not accelerate the creation of inadequate/paper MPAs that could even be negative to marine conservation by promoting a false image of protection. Specialists agreed that it was urgent to identify critical habitats to cetaceans in order to effectively advance in their protection and that participation of all society sectors should be guaranteed during the planning and implementation of MPAs.

International Marine Conservation Congress

From 19th to 24th May, the **International Marine Conservation Congress (IMCC)** and the **Second International Marine Protected Area Congress** was organized by the **Society for the Conservation Biology** at Virginia, USA. Mr. Cristian Perez, project advisor, attended the IMCC and the MPA Congress

exchange experiences and collect data for the project.



Southern Chile, a special area of interest for MPAs in Chile and Sustainable Management of Marine Protected Areas”.

Workshop on Marine Protected Areas under the Permanent Commission of South Pacific

Between 08 and 10 July, in Algarrobo, Chile, the multilateral organization of the **Permanent Commission of South East Pacific (CPPS)** held a workshop on “*Governance, Public Participation*”.

Analyses of the current status of MPA’s from **Panama, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Chile** were reviewed and discussed.

Ms. Cabrera and Mr. Perez attended the meeting to present preliminary results of the project and collect valuable data. A series of recommendations adopted in the workshop were recently presented to the **General Assembly of the CPPS**. They included the need for CPPS countries to consolidate **Environmental Institutions** (i.e., Ministry of Environment) in order to facilitate the creation and central management of **Marine Protected Areas** in each country.



Sustainable fishing and conservation of biodiversity, challenges of MPAs in Chile

Latin American and Caribbean Regional Workshop on the Implementation of the Work on Protected Areas under the Convention on Biological Diversity

The **Latin American and Caribbean regional workshop on the implementation of the WoPA under the Convention on Biological Diversity** (CBD) was held from 2-5 November 2009, Bogotá, Colombia.

The workshop was oriented to evaluate the **CBD Program of Work on Protected Areas** (PoWPA) at a regional level to undertake the in-depth review of the PoWPA at its tenth meeting in Nagoya, Japan 2010.



Cormorant lile (Phalacrocorax gaimardi)

Mr Juan Carlos Cárdenas, project advisor, attended the meeting invited by the **International Collective of Sustainable Fishers** (ICSF) as representative of the civil society and distributed information regarding the two cases studies developed by the project: **The Chilean Whale Sanctuary** a successful, cooperative and participative initiative that reached unanimous agreement and the unsuccessful **“Corcovado Marine and Coastal PA of Multiple Use”** that failed mainly due to poor top-down participation process. Both cases studies were included by Chilean government representatives and were included in the regional report of the workshop.

At the meeting, **transnational companies and natural resources investments** were identified as the **main threats** to the establishment of new PAs as well as a menace for areas already created.

The threats to the region include that PAs are not a priority for governments; biologists and technicians do not incorporate social and cultural aspects in their management proposals; the different views of governmental institutions that compete to maintain an influence in the issue; the establishment of PAs with top down processes; the great number of institutions involved in the management of PAs; and the substitution of national and local communities during the PA process as consequence of large international NGOs political role. Additionally, many officials are changed every four years, several are not well prepared and some have an anachronistic view of PAs.

However, it was notice that **there was no self-criticism on the lack of accomplishments with international goals 2010/2012**; there was little debate about “benefit sharing”; impacts on local communities, traditional uses and indigenous people as well as governance/participation were avoided; and there was important critics to innovative financial system proposed for PAs, based on carbon sequestration schemes linked to climate change funding schemes.

In particularly, the majority of people were not involve on marine issues, MPAs or small scale fishers/ coastal communities issues/problems and the meeting had an absolutely predominant terrestrial approach, therefore concerns on advances for MPAs are increased.

Conservation Actions

Whale Watching Regulations



Orcas (Orcinus orca), southern Chile

Whale watching, conducted in a responsible manner and implemented by local coastal communities, is a valuable tool of the sustainable development that favors the conservation of these species and their marine ecosystem, generating important socioeconomic benefits in the areas where it is conducted.

With the purpose of avoid the possibility of negatively impacting the conservation and/or recovery of the species observed it is fundamental that whale watching operations are develop in an orderly manner, under a **legal framework**

that regulates the activity in order to guarantee it long term sustainable development.

After the implementation of the Law 20.293 of 2008, publicly known as **National Whale Sanctuary** or **Cetacea Law**, whale watching operations conducted in Chilean jurisdictional waters must be conducted according to a national regulation.

In April 2009, the **Under-secretariat of Fishers** established a multi disciplinary working group composed of several governmental institutions and civil organizations, including **Centro de Conservacion Cetacea**, with the purpose of addressing different aspects related to the responsible development of the activity in Chile and elaborate proposals in order to integrate them in the regulation. The regulation should be approved and implemented in 2010.

This way, Chile moves towards in a cooperative and participative manner towards the construction of **solid basis to the responsible and high quality development of whale watching in Chile** and the positioning of the country as an emergent destination for this activity worldwide.

InnovaChile Whale Watching Project

Particularly in Chile, the development of whale watching operations has been slow. However, it is believed that it can increase rapidly during the next years. In this context, it is fundamental to control its development in order to guarantee high standards for the activity in the coming years.

In this scenario, **Innova Chile of Corfo**, granted **Magellan University** and **Centro de Conservacion Cetacea** the implementation of a study to develop *Innovative Agendas in Tourist Products of High Quality Whale Watching in Southern Chile*.

In order to guarantee the long-term sustainability of whale watching, recommendations about the importance of developing and maintaining high quality standards oriented to guarantee the safety of the target species and the tourist were included in the final report.

Public Campaign DON'T Privatize Our Sea



Pacific act in front of La Moneda presidential palace in Santiago de Chile.

The public campaign **Don't Privatize Our Sea**, impulsed by **Centro Ecoceanos**, the **Latin American Observatory of Environmental Conflicts** and **Centro de Conservacion Cetacea**, was focused in trying to stop the approval of an amendment to modify the **General Fishing and Aquaculture Law**, allowing the free and perpetual granting of more than 14 thousand hectares of Chilean sea in strategic zones of Chiloé and Magellan to salmon farming transnationals, banks and great national and international enterprise group.

The unconstitutional project was presented in the Chilean Parliament by the Government of former president Michelle Bachelet in early 2009, as a result to the sanitary and economic crisis of the salmon farming industry begun in 2007, generated by the virus ISA (Infectious Salmon Anemia).

Thus, the project allows to salmon entrepreneurs – who are responsible of the worst environmental, sanitary and social crisis in southern Chile – to mortgage to banks salmon farming concessions – that are public goods – with the purpose to pay millionaire debts and obtain new credits.

Thanks to the massive informative campaign, that included the collection of more than **10 thousand signatures**, important amendments were included in the project and its approval was postponed until the very end of Bachelet government.

The long-term implications of its approval to public use goods and to maritime zones of Chilean sovereignty are concerning and should be address with responsibility by national authorities.

LEVI'S Free The Earth Concert



Event "Free the Earth" organized by Levi's

In November 2009 CCC participated in the eco musical event **Free the Earth** organized by **The Levi's company** in order to promote national rock bands and increase awareness about environmental issues.

More than **four thousand young people** participated in the event.

During the concert, CCC made a strong public awareness activity regarding the **illegal slaughter of whales by Japan in the Southern Ocean Whale**

Sanctuary.

More than **one thousand signatures were collected** for the public campaign **Chile Says NO to Whaling in the Southern Ocean**, that were later delivered in La Moneda Presidential Palace of Chile.

Despite the public pressure on national authorities to publicly reject Japanese whaling operations in the Southern Ocean, the government **did not attend the petitions made by civil society in this regard.**

Environmental Education

In November 2009, CCC was invited to make a presentation in the Seminar "**Biodiversity Conservation: the Role of Environmental Education and Community Involvement**" that was organized by the **National Environmental Commission** in Puerto Montt, southern Chile.

During the opportunity, Barbara Galletti, president of CCC, made the presentation "**Marine Conservation and Public Participation**" that highlighted the experience of CCC with local community involvement in marine conservation initiatives along the country.

At the end of November CCC was also invited to make a presentation at the symposium "**Conservation Medicine**" organized by Andres Bello University in Santiago.

Academics, students, authorities and local and international NGOs attended the seminar.

Priscila Escobar, veterinarian of CCC made a presentation about the diversity of projects and campaigns oriented to strengthen conservation policies in the country.

International Whaling Commission



Left to right: Elsa Cabrera (CCC), Francisco Ponce (Subpesca) y Bárbara Galletti (CCC) at IWC61 in Portugal

Since 2001 **Centro de Conservacion Cetacea** has worked towards consolidating a national policy on the conservation and non-lethal use of cetaceans in the country. To do so, we systematically participate in the annual meetings of the **International Whaling Commission** and we work cooperatively with national authorities and parliamentarians in order to improve conservation strategies and policies in Chile.

As a result, the country consolidated a **Policy of State by**

enacting the **Law 20.293 in October 2008** that creates one of the biggest **national whale sanctuaries** in the world.

This landmark conservation measure was possible thanks to the eight month campaign **Chile 2008, A Whale Sanctuary**, conducted by **CCC, Centro Ecoceanos** and the **National Confederation of Artisanal Fishers of Chile (CONAPACH)**.

IWC 61

Representatives of **Centro de Conservacion Cetacea** attended the Scientific Committee meeting and the 61st annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission conducted in Madeira, Portugal.

During the meetings of the Scientific Committee, Barbara Galletti, president and scientific coordinator of CCC, participated as **chief of the Chilean delegation** and presented important results oriented to raise the scientific knowledge about the population of blue whales found in southern Chile, as well as other issues.

- ★ Present the **first abundance estimate of blue whales** in their southern feeding ground, conducted thanks to the aerial inspections provided by DIRECTEMAR (Chilean Navy)¹.

¹ Galletti Vernazzani, B., Brownell, Jr., R.L, Cabrera, E. and Carlson, C.A. 2009. *First aerial surveys to estimate abundance of blue whales off southern Chile*. Paper SC/61/ SH21 presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, June 2009 (unpublished). 8pp. [Available from the authors]

- ★ Inform about **collisions between large vessels and whales** in southern Chile²
- ★ Present new information about **migratory movements of humpback whales**³
- ★ Promote the **international photo identification catalogue of blue whales** that is managed by CCC under the auspices of IWC.

Afterwards, Galletti participated as member of the **national delegation**, advising it in technical matters such as the **critical conservation status of the Chilean population of southern right whales** and informing about a diversity of conservation initiatives conducted by CCC at a national and international level.

As an organization leader in cetacean conservation in Latin America, the participation of Elsa Cabrera, executive director of CCC during the working groups and plenary assembly as **accredited NGO observer** was fundamental to coordinate regional actions among Latin American NGOs and strengthen Chile position towards the conservation and non lethal use of cetaceans.

Southern Ocean Research Partnership



SORP meeting in Sydney, Australia

Barbara Galletti, president of **CCC**, was invited by the **Government of Australia** to participate in a specialist meeting conducted in March 2009 in Sydney with the aim to shape the Southern Ocean Research Partnership, an initiative intended to neutralize Japanese efforts to continue the so-called scientific whaling operations in the Southern Ocean.

During the annual meeting of the **International Whaling Commission** in Portugal, Latin-American colleagues appointed Barbara Galletti as one of the regional representatives at the SORP Steering Committee.

From its creation, the Steering Committee seeks to articulate governmental initiatives to promote concrete actions of non lethal research in the Southern Ocean.

² Brownell, Jr., R.L, Galletti Vernazzani, B. and Carlson, C.A. 2009. *Vessel collision with a large whale off southern Chile*. Paper SC/61/BC7 presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, June 2009 (unpublished). 6pp. [Available from the authors]

³ Capella, J., Galletti Vernazzani B, Gibbons, J. & Cabrera E. 2008. Coastal migratory connections of humpback whales, *Megaptera novaeangliae* borowski, 1781, in southern Chile. *Anales Instituto Patagonia (Chile)*. 36(2):13_18



Photo ID of blue whale off northwestern Chiloé Island

Blue Whale Photo Identification Catalogue

After being assigned in 2008 as the organization in charge of developing the International **Catalogue of Blue Whale Photo Identification**, CCC has work actively in coordinating international support for this important initiative implemented under the auspices of the **International Whaling Commission**.

We develop **software specially designed by national engineers and technicians** that has been tested by several groups of blue whales researchers in the southern hemisphere. The next

phase will consist in agreeing ways of collaboration to share the data of different blue whale individual photo identification catalogues in the Southern Hemisphere.

The cooperative work and the efforts of this initiative will increase the knowledge about distribution, population and migratory movements of blue whales, facilitating our understanding about the species and propose conservation measures.

Latin American Efforts

The **increasing pressure of foreign nations to reopen commercial whaling** operations and the systematic increasing of so-called “*scientific whaling*” represent a threat to the conservation efforts made towards the management and non-lethal use of cetacean populations in the Southern Hemisphere.

Moreover, the increasing pressure made by Japan outside the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and the many permits to export whale meat from Iceland and Norway to Japan, are unacceptable menace to the future of whale populations and the IWC itself.



“Alfaguaras”

The Latin American countries that are members of the IWC, known as **Buenos Aires Group**, play a key role in the consolidation of the non-lethal use of cetaceans.

In coordination with regional NGOs, **CCC** works in joint **actions and strategies oriented to maintain a close relation to the Buenos Aires Group** and to transmit regional authorities the will of the Latin American people in relation to whales and dolphins.

In this context, CCC participated in the **Buenos Aires Group** meeting conducted in September 2009 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Chile Says NO to Whaling in the Southern Ocean



Pacific act in Santiago de Chile promoting the respect for the moratorium on commercial whaling and the ending of so called scientific whaling

signatures in a eco musical event produced by Levi's company and several public activities conducted with other national NGOs also gathered nearly **five thousand signatures** requesting the Chilean government to condemn Japanese "scientific" whaling.

On December 1st, 2009, representatives of **CCC, Centro Ecoceanos, OLCA and AnimaNaturalis**, accompanied by **senator Guido Girardi**, demanded former president Bachelet to lead actions so that Latin American countries made a diplomatic protest against "scientific whaling" operations in the Southern Ocean during spring and summer of 2009/2010.

However, the denominated negotiation process to define the future of the International Whaling Commission **neutralized all local and regional efforts against these whaling operations.**

At a national level, in October 2009 **CCC, Centro Ecoceanos** and the **Latin American Observatory of Environmental Conflicts (OLCA)** sent a letter to former president of Chile, Michelle Bachelet, celebrating the first anniversary of the **National Whale Sanctuary** and requesting the government to publicly reject so-called "scientific whaling" operations conducted by Japan in the Southern Ocean.

The public campaign **Chile Says NO to Whaling in the Southern Ocean** collected more than **one thousand**

International Cooperation

Integrative initiatives enrich national, regional and international marine conservation efforts, helping exchange methodologies and experiences among organizations that work towards common goals, such as effectively protecting cetacean populations worldwide.

Constructing Liaisons for the Conservation of Humpback Whales



Priscila Escobar (CCC) in Puerto Lopez, Ecuador

In order to strengthen relations and improve regional cooperation among Latin American NGOs related to cetacean conservation and research, CCC collaborated to the **Pacific Whale Foundation (PWF)** projects on **humpback whale and research and cetacean by-catch** in artisanal fishers.

Between August and October 2009, Priscila Escobar, veterinarian of CCC, traveled to Ecuador to work as assistant in the project conducted in the coastal community of Puerto Lopez.

The work was mainly oriented to **individual photo identification of humpback whales** onboard certified whale watching vessels and record cetacean behavior. Also, she collaborated with a **study to measure the level of cetacean by-catch** in artisanal fishers.

She also participated in environmental education activities conducted by PWF covering issues such as marine pollution and threats to humpback whales, among others. In these occasions, she had the opportunity to make presentations regarding the work conducted in Chile. Nature guides of **Machalilla National Park**, **tourist operators** of Puerto Lopez, the **Association of Nature Guides** from Salango and **local people** participated in these activities.

Strengthening Capacities in Cetacean Strandings

After the **First Workshop on Strandings and Necropsy of Marine Mammals** organized by CCC in June 2008, Dr. Antonio Fernandez – one of the most recognized international experts in cetacean health, proposed CCC an internship in **Las Palmas University of Gran Canarias** in Spain.

Between April and May 2009, Maria Paz Munoz, veterinarian student and CCC volunteer was selected for the internship.

The purpose of this experience was to know the work conducted in Spain regarding cetacean strandings, particularly in the Canary islands, known for its high rate of strandings.



María Paz Muñoz (CCC) learning from spanish specialists about cetacean strandings

During the internship, she had the opportunity to support the work conducted by the **Research Unit of Cetaceans of the University** that is in charge of making studies about all the species that strand in the seven islands that compose Grand Canary.

The internship was oriented to conduct **necropsies on dead animals, collection of biological samples and processes of preservation and analysis.**

She also was able to learn the functioning of the **Cetacean Stranding Network** and the work of the **Society for the Study of Cetaceans** in the Canary archipelago (SECAC), an NGO that makes population estimated of several species of cetaceans found in the area.

Media and Promotion



Since november 2009, CCC has a new website with links to social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and Youtube

More than **100 T-shirts of the Alfaguara Project** were distributed among local people of Chiloe Island as well as **50 reports** with the conclusions and recommendations of the **International Workshop on Responsible Whale Watching** that were given to local and national authorities.

In April 2009, the television program **Monitos del Monte** produced an episode about blue whales and the Alfaguara Project.

CCC and other national NGOs such as **Centro Eoceanos**, the **Latin American Observatory of Environmental Conflicts** (OLCA) and the **Action Network on Pesticides** (RAP-AL) produced a weekly radio program known as **“Environmental Pulse”** in **Radio Universidad de Chile** that was transmitted between September and January 2009 with an average of 150,000 radio listeners during each program.

In 2009, **285 written press articles**, **one TV program** and **19 radio programs** covered the work and activities done by CCC.

Additionally, the new **CCC website** (www.ccc-chile.org) was launched in November 2009. It includes the latest advances in web programming and it is integrated with social networks like Facebook, Twitter and Youtube.





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