

Project Update: May 2016

Further research to study cetaceans in the Río Negro Estuary (RNE), Patagonia Argentina, was carried out from November 2015 through to May 2016.



Permanent exhibition on Sperm whale (photo: Fundación Cethus)

Beach surveys were conducted in search of stranded cetaceans and five new standings were reported (two skeletons of bottlenose dolphins, a newborn Franciscana and skeletal remains of two large cetaceans).

A sperm whale hemi-mandible was found on a beach located in Balneario El Cóndor. The piece was recovered and cleaned up. Thanks to the joint work with the Dirección de Turismo de Viedma (Tourism Department of Viedma), a permanent exhibition of the hemi-mandible and an

informative poster are exhibited in the tourist information office of El Cóndor, with the aim of increasing public awareness on cetaceans in the region.

A local person alerted us about a Franciscana dolphin that was stranded alive on the Balneario El Cóndor. Immediate actions were coordinated in conjunction with the Secretaría de Desarrollo Sustentable (Sustainable Development Secretariat), Policía de Río Negro (local police), the Municipality of Viedma and Prefectura Naval Argentina Patagones (Argentine Coast guard), to assist the dolphin. The animal was a newborn Franciscana and fortunately it was successfully reintroduced into the water. This event produced a big multimedia impact.



Franciscana's newborn stranded at the RNE (photo: Fundacion Cethus)

Additionally, behavioural and acoustic studies on Franciscana and bottlenose dolphins that inhabit this area were conducted since March 2016. The information obtained from these studies as well as the multimedia promotion is relevant to highlight the need to create the Río Negro Estuary Natural Protected Area.