

Project Update: March 2018

From August 2017 to March 2018, we have conducted three training workshops and several field activities in Bahía San Pedro, together with the indigenous community of Mahuidantu and its Marine and Coastal Area for Indigenous People (MCAIP). During the encounters we have trained more than 30 local indigenous people and fisherman each session. These workshops were to strengthen local knowledge on basic principles of ecology, biology and conservation of Humboldt and Magellanic penguin species in the area. Additionally, and an important factor that we have experienced and that has helped us to understand potential conservation restrictions, is how the community has related with penguins in the past. Specifically, the following subjects have been covered: i) marine environments and penguins, ii) marine-based tourism and spatial planning, and iii) community-based managing design and implementation process. During the workshops, we applied educational methodologies such as “problem trees” in order to identify critical problems and different approaches for solving them and also, we conducted a role play game that helped to interpret the level of potential relationships among tourism operators, suppliers, visitors, and enforcement.

Prior to the workshops, we conducted personal interviews and focus groups, in order to elaborate a diagnosis that allowed us to identify strengths, weaknesses, threats and potential opportunities required to evaluate and prioritise during the workshops. These interviews and focus groups also helped to highlight traditional ecological knowledge. This information was complemented through participatory cartography activities, where we overlapped cultural, biological and ecological information through ArcGIS software. The resulting maps of the indigenous coastal and marine spaces helped to identify the main hotspots of penguin populations, nesting sites and routes, as well as the socio-ecological interactions between those and the local indigenous communities and fishermen.

Due to adverse weather conditions, the census update of sympatric Humboldt and Magellanic penguin populations of Mahuidantu MCAIP is still pending and is expected to be conducted as soon as the conditions permit. We already have the necessary permits, equipment and a team of local fishermen, who will help in carrying out this activity.

Regarding the outreach materials for visitors contemplated in the time-lapse, we are waiting to have the final results from the census update in order to incorporate this information in the materials, though we already count with a preliminary design.



Penguin refuge at MCAIP Mahuidantu



Session with community members