

proyecto
ALFAGUARA
conociendo nuestro pasado
conservando nuestro futuro



Ilustración: © Tymen Engelaar

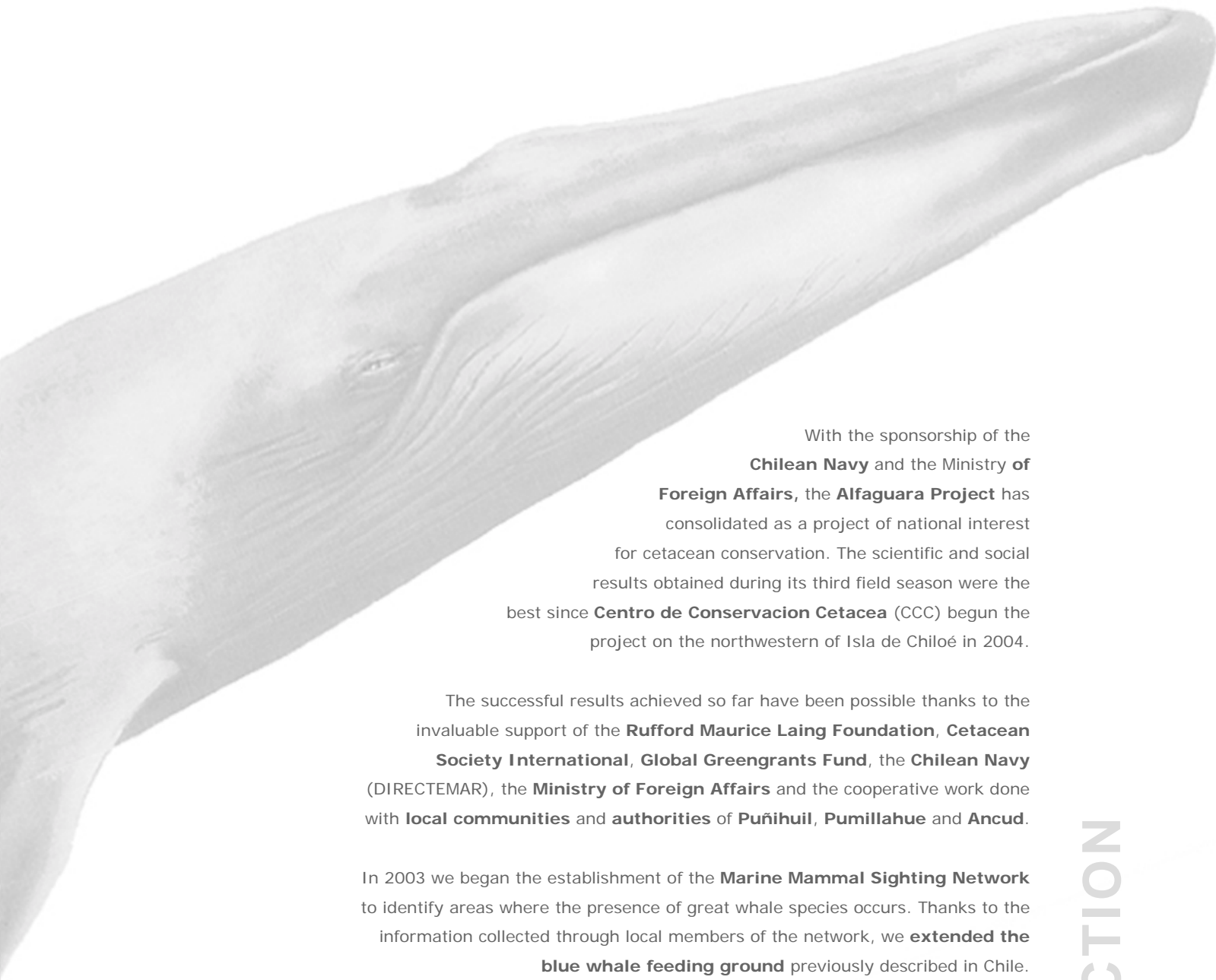


CENTRO DE CONSERVACION CETACEA
REPORT TO RUFFORD MAURICE LAING FOUNDATION
2006



Centro de Conservación Cetacea
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Texts: Bárbara Galletti. Graphic Design: Elsa Cabrera
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With the sponsorship of the **Chilean Navy** and the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, the **Alfaguara Project** has consolidated as a project of national interest for cetacean conservation. The scientific and social results obtained during its third field season were the best since **Centro de Conservacion Cetacea** (CCC) began the project on the northwestern of Isla de Chiloé in 2004.

The successful results achieved so far have been possible thanks to the invaluable support of the **Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation**, **Cetacean Society International**, **Global Greengrants Fund**, the **Chilean Navy** (DIRECTEMAR), the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** and the cooperative work done with **local communities** and **authorities** of **Puñihuil**, **Pumillahue** and **Ancud**.

In 2003 we began the establishment of the **Marine Mammal Sighting Network** to identify areas where the presence of great whale species occurs. Thanks to the information collected through local members of the network, we **extended the blue whale feeding ground** previously described in Chile.

Since then we have been successfully conducting the **Alfaguara Project** by combining **long term research**, **educational and capacity building programs** oriented to guarantee an **effective conservation** of the rich **biodiversity** of the area and to guarantee the **sustainable development** of the **communities** involved.

The present **report** describes the **activities** developed by our organization under the **Alfaguara Project** during **January/July 2006**, its **results** and **financial balance**.



Barbara Galletti monitoring whales from the coastal platform.

From **February** to mid **April 2006**, we developed the **third field season** of the **Alfaguara Project** in order to monitor the populations of whales species registered off the northwestern coast of Isla de Chiloé. During this period, we conducted **twelve marine inspections** on board fishing marine vessels and **one aerial survey** with the support of the Chilean Navy. Additional aerial surveys were planned, but weather conditions prevent us from carrying them out. We also constructed a **coastal sighting station** in order to monitor the whales from shore.

Marine surveys were mainly oriented to **photo-identify individual whales** but we also took **biological samples** (faeces and zooplankton), **sound recording**, measurement of **environmental parameters**, and collection of relevant data about individual **behaviour** and relations, among others. The marine and aerial surveys allowed us to record **more than 180 whales**, including **144 blue whales**, **11 sei whales** and **17 humpback whales**. Although all whale species were registered in feeding **behaviour** it was also possible to observe other conducts. Blue whales were recorded in other **social behaviour** (chasing) and several humpback whales groups were composed by **mother/calf** or adults and juveniles.



Dr. Carole Carlson photo-identifies a blue whale (at the right hand side).



Photo-ID of a blue whale off the northwestern coast of Isla de Chiloé

The information gathered since 2004 was analyzed, providing important information on **population number, residency and site fidelity**. The results were **officially presented** by the Chilean governmental representative and President of CCC, Barbara Galletti, to the **Scientific Committee** during the **58th annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission (SC/58/SH18)**¹. They revealed that the **blue whale population** present in the area is comprised of at least **70 individuals**; that the **minimum residency time** of blue whales is at least **34 days**; and that there is a level of **site fidelity** in northwestern of Isla de Chiloe since we were able to make the first **recapture between years** of blue whales in southern Chile. During the Scientific Committee meeting, several researches noted that preliminary data in SC/58/SH18 suggested that the population of blue whales in southern Chile would be in the order of 100's².



In order to present the results to the Scientific Committee of the IWC, the information collected during marine surveys was immediately analyzed at CCC field based (located 10 km south of Puñihuil)



Barbara Galletti (right) during the Scientific Committee (SC) meeting exchanging views with the head of the Brazilian delegation at the SC, Mr. José Truda Palazzo Jr.

General results of the third field season for **blue, sei and humpback whales** were also presented by Miss Galletti to the Scientific Committee (SC/58/SH17³).

Several scientists noted that the information generated by our organization suggests that the northwestern of Isla de Chiloe could be the **northern boundary of the summer feeding area of humpback whales** and that the **blue whale population extends even further north to the 41°S**. The Scientific Committee recommended continuing and expanding this work to the north in order to collect additional information about the distribution of blue and humpback whales populations present in this ground.

As a result of the work presented by Miss Galletti, we were invited by Dr. Trevor Branch (South Africa) to participate in a scientific publication that will address the **distribution of blue whales in the Southern Hemisphere**. This paper will reveal that the **highest sighting rate of blue whales in the southern hemisphere occurs in the northwestern area of Isla de Chiloe**⁵.

1. Cabrera, E., Carlson, C., Galletti Vernazzani, B. and Brownell Jr., R.L. 2006. *Preliminary report on the photo-identification of blue whales off Isla de Chiloe, Chile from 2004 to 2006*. Paper SC/58/SH18 presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, May 2006 (unpublished). 5pp. [Available from the authors]

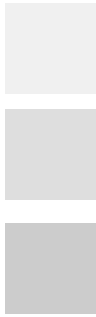
2. International Whaling Commission. 2006. Report of the Scientific Committee. Annex H. Other Southern Hemisphere Whale Stocks 58:12-17

3. Galletti Vernazzani, B., Carlson, C., Cabrera, E. and Brownell Jr., R.L. 2006. *Blue, sei and humpback whale sightings during 2006 field season in northwestern Isla de Chiloe, Chile*. Paper SC/58/SH17 presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, May 2006 (unpublished). 6pp. [Available from the authors]

4. Branch, T.A., Palacios, D.M., Stafford, K.M., Allison, C., Bannister, J.L., Burton, C.L.K., Gill, P.C., Jenner, K.C.S., Jenner, M.N.M., Maughan, B., Miyashita, T., Morrice, M.G., Sturrock, V.J., Anderson, R.C., Baker, A.N., Best, P.B., Borsa, P., Childerhouse, S., Findlay, K.P., Ilangakoon, A.D., Joergensen, M., Kahn, B., Maughn, B., Mikhalev, Y.A., Oman Whale And Dolphin Research Group, Thiele, D., Tormosov, D., Van Waerebeek, K. And Warneke, R.M. *Past and present distribution of blue whales in the Southern Hemisphere and northern Indian Ocean*. Paper SC/58/SH16 presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, May 2006 (unpublished). 27pp. [Available from the authors]

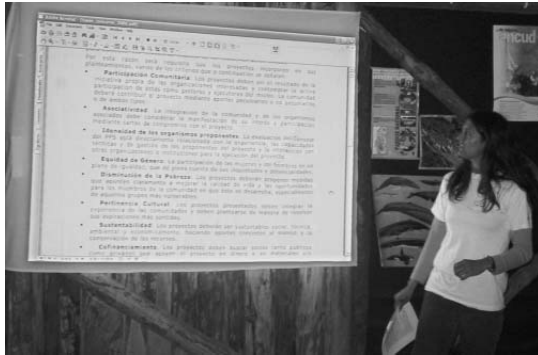


Humpback whale breaching



Since the effectiveness of nature conservation and management depend substantially in **local involvement**, our organization actively works with the community in order to **enrich our mutual understanding** about biodiversity conservation.

During February 2006, we conducted a **survey** between **ecotourism operators and artisan fishermen** of Puñihuil, in order to identify their **main priorities and needs**. After the analysis of the information, we concluded that local people give **high priority** to issues such as **garbage accumulation** in the **Puñihuil beach** and the **unregulated development of tourism** activities in the area. Afterwards, we arranged **regular meetings** with the community in order to **draw solutions** to the current problems faced by the growing tourism. During the meetings it was agreed that we needed to **continue working cooperatively** to assure the **conservation of the area** and the sustainable development of the local people, and that the best option to move forward these goals was to generate a **proposal for a project** to design a **community based management plan** for the area that would actively involve the local people in all the process.



Constanza Poduje (CCC) gives a presentation to the Puñihuil community regarding the main issues that need to be consider in a marine conservation proposal.

Motivated by this work and the possibilities for the future, the local micro entrepreneurs of ecotourism overcome their differences and formed the legal organization **"Ecoturismo Puñihuil"** oriented to strengthen their rights through the development of projects related to the responsible development of marine ecotourism and capacity building. This was a major achievement for us since we have been promoting this initiative since the beginning of the project in 2004.



After three years the local tourist operators of Puñihuil agreed to established "Ecoturismo Puñihuil" a legal association oriented to develop marine ecotourism activities in a responsible and sustainable manner.

In order to positively involve local authorities and obtain their support, we arranged a meeting with the **Mayor of Ancud** at the Puñihuil beach. This was the **first time** in more than four years that the **Mayor visited the area** and interacted with the local community. As a result, our organization and the local community were **invited to a formal meeting in Ancud** to present the work we have been doing cooperatively and our strategy for the sustainable development of the area.



Luz Maria Oyarzo (standing at the left hand side), President of “Ecoturismo Puñihuil”, presents the proposal for a marine conservation project to the Mayor and the Regional Council of Ancud that met for the first time in its history in Puñihuil.

Afterwards, several meetings were held between the **Puñihuil community, CCC and the Municipality of Ancud** to discuss the needs and concerns of the community regarding the development of marine ecotourism in the area. The **Municipality of Ancud** became very interested in the potential of the area and agreed to **support the community** in issues such as **garbage collectors, road access** and **street signs**.

Finally, the interest reached the **Regional Council of Ancud**, who decided for the **first time in their history** to make their monthly official meeting at **Puñihuil**. Representatives of **CCC** and **“Ecoturismo Puñihuil”** were invited to make a presentation of the proposal for a project generated cooperatively that was enthusiastically received by the authorities, who committed to support our activities from now on.



CCC and local fishermen of Puñihuil also participated in the rescue of human bodies from the sea after a marine fishing vessel from the VIII Region suffered an accident and sunk near Puñihuil. The **Ancud Navy** awarded an **official recognition** to the fishermen of Puñihuil that rescued the bodies. Our organization donated part of fuel to conduct the rescue.

José Aviles (left hand side), skipper of CCC marine vessel, receives an official recognition from the Captain of the Port of Ancud, for the invaluable work done in the rescue of four bodies from the ocean.



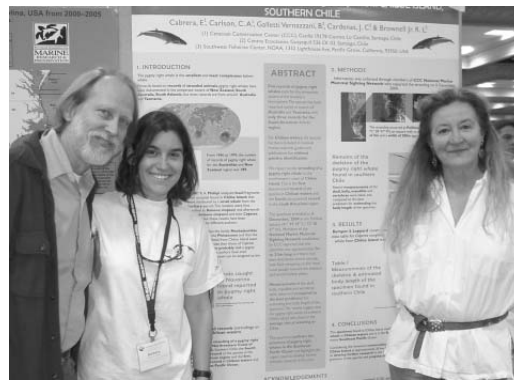
Barbara Galletti (CCC) during the presentation of "ABCetaceos" at the Regional Museum of Ancud.

As for educational activities, we made a presentation named "**ABCetaceos**" (or the A, B, C of Cetaceans) at the **Museum of Ancud** and the **local school of Cocotué Bay**. More than a **100 children** participated in the activity and received educational material produced by our organization.

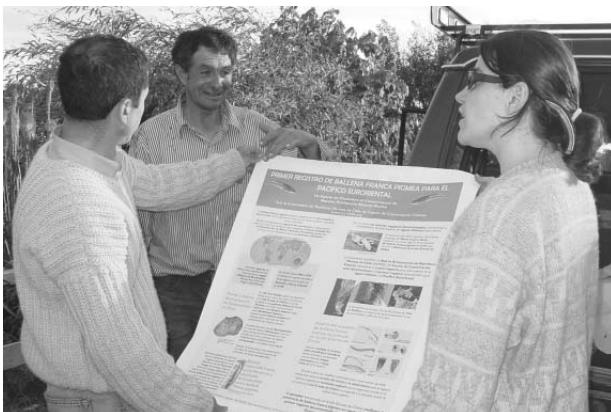
The educational project "**ABCetaceos**," begun in 2005 as a pilot project and seeks to educate children between 7 and 12 years about **cetacean species** found in Chilean waters, the **importance** of their **conservation** and the **significance** of **whales and dolphins** as an invaluable part of our **natural patrimony**.

Last year, the owners of the private **Museum of Quilo**, located at 30 km of Puñihuil, reported the stranding of a small whale to the **Marine Mammal Sighting Network** established by CCC in 2003. With the cooperation of **Dr. Carole Carlson** and **Dr. Robert L. Brownell**, we analyzed the remains of the specimen and concluded that it corresponded to the **first record of a pygmy right whale for Chile and the whole Eastern South Pacific**.

The results were presented in 2005 at the **57th annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission** and the **16th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals**.



Dr. Robert L. Brownell Jr., Barbara Galletti and Dr. Carole Carlson at the 16th Biennial Conference on Marine Mammals in San Diego, USA, where they jointly presented the scientific results of the Alaguara Project.



In 2006, we also designed, produced and donated a **road sign** to help promote the **Quilo Museum** as a tourist destination of the northwestern Isla de Chiloé and an **informative panel** regarding the significance of the stranding of this highly unknown specie that is currently being exhibited at Quilo Museum.

Barbara Galletti (CCC) hand an informative panel of the pygmy right whale to Aaron and Sixto Gonzalez, local owners of the Quilo Museum.

Also last year, a 24,3 m **blue whale** stranded at Pumillahue Bay. Since then we have been actively promoting the rescue of its skeleton for public display at the **Regional Museum of Ancud**. After a year of a **cooperative work** coordinated by the **Regional Museum of Ancud** and supported by CCC and the **Puñihuil community**, the skeleton was successfully rescue in last April after several “**whale mingas**”.



Barbara Galletti (CCC) and the brothers Francisco and Miguel Altamirano from Puñihuil, after evaluating the carcass of a male blue whale that stranded dead in April 2005, three km south of Puñihuil.



The people from Puñihuil, Pumillahue, Duatao and other coastal communities of the northwestern Isla de Chiloé, actively participated in several “mingas” to rescue the skeleton of the blue whale. Some of them had to be transported by sea, in a highly difficult task successfully carry out by artisan fishermen.

The remains collected are currently at the **Regional Museum of Ancud** where they will be **rearticulated** for public exhibition, becoming the **first blue whale skeleton** displayed in **Chile** and the sixth for public exhibition worldwide.

“**Minga**” is a term from Chiloé to refer to hard and/or difficult tasks that require the **cooperation** of the whole community. A traditional “minga” is characterized by a **high level of team spirit** since it is done on a voluntary basis. After the rescue of the whale skeleton, the Museum of Ancud celebrated the hard work with a typical chilote meal known as “**curanto**”.



The blue whale skeleton, the first of its kind to be displayed in Latin America, is currently at its final destination in the Regional Museum of Ancud, waiting to be rearticulated when funding is available.

While conducting field season we were informed that the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** agreed to **officially sponsor** the **Alfaguara Project** and the **Chilean Navy** renovated their **official support** to all of our projects. Also, **representatives** from the **Ministry** of Foreign Affairs and from the **Chilean Navy** visited **Puñihuil** during February and March respectively, in order to know first hand about the **Alfaguara Project**. During their visit, we stressed the necessity of having governmental support to ensure the conservation of the area, through the **involvement of local people** and the establishment of a **marine protected area** that effectively shelters the entire blue whale habitat.

Also, Mr. Josh Cole from the **Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation**, came to visit the area in order to know more about the project and the biodiversity of the area, with very positive results.

After field season, we returned to Isla de Chiloé during **May** and **July** for three and two days respectively in order to have meetings with different authorities and institutions, and continue working towards the conservation of the natural and cultural patrimony. We held meetings with the **“Intendant”** of the X Region, with the **Regional Commission of Coastal Borderline**, with regional agency of the **National Tourism Service**, with the regional agency of the **National Environmental Commission** and with the regional agency of the **Marine and Coastal Protected Areas Commission** established under a **Global Environmental Fund (GEF)** project. In all these meetings, we highlighted the necessity to involve **local people** in the development of **conservation strategies** and the need to define a marine protected area with **all the available data** in a transparent and participative manner. The authorities agreed to create instances for discussion and, particularly, we agreed with the regional agency the **Marine and Coastal Protected Areas Commission and the National Tourism Service** to work **cooperatively** in the design of an effective marine protected area and in the development of projects oriented to improve the quality of the ecotourism services respectively.

Additionally, we held meetings with the **fishermen union** of Puñihuil to face their concerns about marine protected areas; with **“Ecoturismo Puñihuil”** to coordinate future actions for the implementation of the conservation strategies planned under the Alfaguara Project; and with the Regional **Museum of Ancud** to coordinate actions for rearticulating the blue whale skeleton.



Artisan fishermen at Puñihuil



During the Alfaguara field season, representatives of **CCC** and **“Ecoturismo Puñihuil”** traveled to Licanten (VII Region) to participate in the annual meeting of the **Chilean Association of Tourist Municipalities (AMTC)** where they presented the work done by our organization in Chiloé and requested the support of the AMTC to the Alfaguara proposal for a marine conservation project. Additionally, we **signed an official agreement of cooperation between CCC and AMTC** that seeks to promote the development of **community based marine ecotourism** along the Chilean coast.

For the **second consecutive year**, **Elsa Cabrera**, executive director of CCC, was confirmed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as the **official advisor of the governmental Chilean delegation** at the 58th annual meeting of the **International Whaling Commission (IWC58)**. Additionally, **Barbara Galletti** was **appointed as head of Chilean delegation of the Scientific Committee** of IWC58. This is very significant, since this is the **first time in more than a decade** that a Chilean representative participates in the Scientific Committee meetings of the IWC. Therefore, the scientific results of the Alfaguara project on blue, sei and humpback whales were officially presented during May 2006 at the Scientific Committee meeting in St Kitts. As a result, the **government actively participated in the technical and political meetings of the IWC** and strengthened a pro conservation and non lethal use position. The conservation position of the country and the excellent scientific results generated with the support of the **Chilean Navy** were **publicly recognized and congratulated** by the governmental delegations of **Argentina and Brazil** during the plenary sessions of the IWC meeting last June. A week before the plenary meetings, the **Senate of Chile** adopted a proposal for an **agreement on cetacean conservation** that promotes the **non lethal use of whales** and requests the Executive Branch to give the **issue the highest priority** as an outstanding aspect of the **Foreign Policy of Chile**. Finally, we actively participated in the creation of the **official video** presented in plenary sessions to introduce Chile as host country of the 60th annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission in 2008 (<http://www.iwcoffice.org/meetings/meeting2008.htm>).

After our return from St. Kitts we participated in a **Seminar** organized by the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs**, the **National Environment Commission** and the **Global Environmental Fund Marine Project** (Proyecto GEF-Marino), to analyze the **current problems faced by Marine and Coastal Protected Areas in Chile** that highlighted, among others, the flaws of the current legal framework for MPAs. At the end of the seminar the coordinator of the GEF-Marino project agreed to establish a **working group** to solve current problems of MPAs in Chile, a proposal that has been promoted by our organization since 2004.

From top to bottom: Elsa Cabrera and Ambassador Mariano Fernandez at IWC58; Elsa Cabrera and Ambassador Cristián Maquieira at IWC58; Elsa Cabrera and Barbara Galletti at IWC58; Carlos Marin (chancellery), Ambassador Fernandez and Elsa Cabrera during the press conference. .



Seminar on MPAs organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs



Top: Senator Andres Allamand reviews CCC information folder during a presentation made by our organization in the Chilean Senate. Right: Representatives from the Under Secretariat of Fisheries, Centro Ecoceanos and CCC during a round table discussion of the MPA Seminar.



On June we also made a presentation to the **Environmental Commission of the Chilean Senate** regarding the **Alfaguara Project** and the need to establish a **National Policy on Conservation and Non Lethal Use of Cetaceans**. The information was very well received by the authorities. Currently, we are also working with several parliamentarians in a **Project of Law** to establish a policy of non lethal use of whales and a legal **framework for cetacean MPAs** before the IWC in Chile (2008).

On July, **Ambassador Mariano Fernandez** (Chilean commissioner at IWC from 2003 to 2006) and **Miss Cabrera** gave a **press conference** in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the results of IWC58 and the position of Chile regarding whaling issues. During the conference, Ambassador Fernandez was very clear in stating that **Chile** is a **"like minded" country** that promotes and defends the non lethal use of whales in the southern hemisphere. This is very important, since this is the very first statement made by a highly recognized diplomat (Fernandez is the new Chilean Ambassador at the United States) that specifically refers to Chile as a "like minded" country.

During July, we held a meeting with the **Whale Working Group of Chancellery**, an instance under the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** comprised by national authorities with competence in the issue and NGOs. Although most of the national institutions agreed with a pro conservation position, **fisheries agencies are still reluctant** to represent the national pro **conservation position**, highlighting the necessity to revert this situation.



During the third field season of the **Alfaguara Project**, we participated in **two documentaries** about whale conservation and cultural traditions of the area made for the **Italian Radio & Television (RAI)** and by a **Chilean/Argentinean production company**.



In order to promote the **Alfaguara Project** and ensure public diffusion, we develop media coverage strategies. As a result, **1.000 promotional leaflets** of the project with the **Rufford Small Grant** logo have been distributed; **seven interviews** on local **radio Estrella del Mar**, **30 articles** in local and national **newspapers**. Additionally, a local TV channel and a nationwide TV channel promoted the work develop under the **Alfaguara Project**. All the promotion and media coverage mentioned **Rufford Maurice Laing Foundation** and **Cetacean Society International** as sponsors of the **Alfaguara Project 2006 Season**.

Additional media coverage was reached during the 58th Annual Meeting of the **International Whaling Commission**.

LA TERCERA
SÁBADO
10 de mayo de 2006

TENDENCIAS

DESCUBRIR los usos (y abusos) de la carne de ballena en Chile. ■ ENTREVISTA con los investigadores de la ONG Centro de Conservación Cetácea. ■ COPIA con los mejores videoclips para disfrutar en familia.

Investigadoras de la ONG Centro de Conservación Cetácea contabilizaron cerca de setenta especímenes al noroeste de Chile

Hallan nuevo santuario de ballenas azules al sur de Chile

En un nuevo refugio de ballenas fue descubierto frente a las costas de cabecera Puyuhilil, en el momento de la vida de Chile. En ese lugar, una investigadora del Centro de Conservación Cetácea (CCC) anotó una vez más un total de 144 ballenas, entre juveniles, las y ballenas adultas.

"Llegamos por primera vez en 2003 a esta zona, por primera vez en un momento de estancamiento que habíamos creado en tiempos anteriores", explica Elsa Calera, directora de la CCC. Desde entonces se trasladó cada verano a la zona para estudiarlos, como parte de un proyecto denominado Alfaguara y que cuenta con el respaldo del Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores.

"El verano pasado contabilizamos 70 ballenas adultas distintas mediante foto-identificación (ver infografía). Descubrimos que hay una gran fidelidad a una zona, ya que un individuo avistado en 2005 había regresado a la zona", cuenta Barbara Galletti, directora científica del grupo.

Persecución entre ballenas
Según asegura, "hemos visto algunos comportamientos inusuales, como la persecución de una ballena adulta a una joven. Posiblemente que prueba intencionalmente machos siguiendo a una hembra para aparearse, aunque esto

no se ha confirmado", explica Barbara Galletti.

Por su parte, CCC afirma que su trabajo no está siendo considerado en la propuesta para crear una zona protegida en la zona "en circunstancias que en los tiempos como el Corfo de Conservación para las ballenas", afirma Elsa Calera.

Desde el momento en que el gobierno, ya que el grupo forma parte de la delegación oficial que participa de la Comisión Ballenera Internacional, que se reunirá en junio próximo y en la cual representarán sus hallazgos científicos.

En febrero de este año, los ambientalistas reclamaron la visita de los balleneros mareros Antonio Molina y Alejandro Pérez, quienes preparan un documental sobre el regreso de las ballenas al mundo de un navegante español que se detuvo en Chile tras haber intentado completar una vuelta al mundo en solitario, antes de morir de la vida de ballenas.

Después de haber estado en Chile, el grupo de investigadores del CCC, con el apoyo del Rufford Small Grant, se trasladó a la Universidad del Claes, en Buenos Aires, Argentina, para estudiar la posibilidad de contar con ballenas en nuestra costa, como del CCC, todos los cetáceos del mundo están en nuestros apes.

UNA BALLENA AZUL Inventa lo que se cree cuando creemos que una ballena azul muestra su respiración a través del cual respire camote sobre la superficie.

CAPTANAS EN LA COSTA
Ballenas en Puyuhilil

Cría de ballena juvencita
Una pequeña ballena probablemente se ceba hora del agua y otra hora la boca para alimentarse.

Ballenas a respirar
Una ballena azul muestra su respiración a través del cual respire camote sobre la superficie.

Persecución entre ballenas
Una ballena persiguiendo a una joven ballena probablemente machos tras una hembra de ballena azul.

Gigantes del mar
Documentales científicos sobre de un nuevo grupo-organización para un documental sobre las ballenas.

From top to bottom: Dr. Carole Carlson and Barbara Galletti during an interview with the local radio "Estrella del Mar"; Raul Morales, director of the Italian documentary and his cameraman, on board the fishing vessel where CCC conducts its scientific research in blue whales; press article published by a major national newspaper regarding the work done by CCC in the north-western Isla de Chiló

PROMOTION AND MEDIA COVERAGE

This statement covers the costs related to the last field season developed under the **Alfaguara Project** from **January to April 2006**. The **exchange** rates considered is **872 Chilean pesos**, corresponding to the exchange rate obtained in December 2005 for the **Rufford Small Grant** Donation.

Expenses	Total Esterling	Incomes	Total Esterling
Meals	944	Rufford Maurice Foundation	5,000
Lodging	811		
Aerial Transportation	1,112		
Marine Transportation	1,069	Cetacean Society International	889
Terrestrial Transportation	1,691		
Educational Materials	587		
Others*	881	Greengrants Global Fund	1,663
Bank Tax	457		
TOTAL	7,552	TOTAL	7,552

** Includes also office supplies, internet and other communication.*







www.ccc-chile.org