

Project Update: February 2013

In 2012 we collected acoustic recordings and skin samples from the population of bottlenose dolphins in Bocas del Toro. In total, we conducted 25 days of boat surveys of which 20 contained acoustic samples for analysis. Results from the acoustic recordings show that the presence of boats elicits a higher rate of communication signals (i.e. whistle rate), particularly for groups containing calves. In addition, the more aggressive the approach was, the higher the whistle rate. This possibly indicates that dolphins are compensating for the noise created by the approaching vessels. Eleven skin samples were also collected during the surveys after the acoustic recordings were made. Currently, the DNA samples are being processed and analyzed. Some of these results were exposed at two scientific conferences: the SOLAMAC and The American Cetacean Society Conference.

