

Project Update: July 2014

San José (Lambayeque, Peru) is a fishery town that has been targeting elasmobranchs (sharks and rays) for at least 100 years. Therefore, their culture and tradition are tangled with them. Here, like nowhere else in Peru, you will find the highest landings of hammerhead shark and highest elasmobranch species diversity. Also, much of the shark meat in northern Peru and most of the mobula meat that is commercialised in Peru is consumed here. That's why we choose San Jose to perform our environmental education project who was named MYSTERY OF THE SEA: SHARKS, KINGS AND GUARDIANS OF THE OCEAN. For 1 week, 61 children attended the activities were they learned by playing about: the threats (fishing, pollution and habitat loss), their migratory condition, their importance in the marine ecosystem, their life cycle and why shark species have different types of fins and teeth and how these reveals their habitat and food, the main species of sharks and rays that exist in San Jose and in Peru, why hammerhead sharks get closer to Peruvian coast. Many of those kids will grow up to become fishermen, even though they know so little about sharks. So, our goal was to create a personal connection between them and sharks and rays, to inspire and motivate them toward conservation. Because you cannot love and conserve what you don't know. They were enthusiastic, excited and show fascination for these creatures, and above all curious and deep interest to know more.



Figure 1. Conciencia Team and children that attended the workshop. Figure 2. Children showing the hammerhead shark they have drawn with its particular characteristics



Figure 3. Children showing the shark they have made and choosing the food its shark eat (inferring from their fins and teeth). Figure 4. Children showing the story they had read that is about the adventures of pregnant hammerhead shark and their friends (most elasmobranch caught in San Jose: Thresher shark, mobula and rays) in Peruvian waters.



Figure 5. Antony, one of the most enthusiastic kids in the workshop who showed fascination for sharks and wants to become a diver so he can protect sharks.