

Project Update: November 2014

Assessing the implementation of scientific-based approaches among relevant local stakeholders is key in order to target our main goal throughout the process of establishing the MPA, and important to facilitate the development of an integrative and participative management plan to be implemented. Consequently, we have conducted a symposium and a workshop to evaluate the ecological and biological information from the mixed-colony.

Firstly, a session was conducted by professionals from our organisation, including a marine biologist, communication and education specialist and an environmental lawyer, and it was attended by local stakeholders, such as ecotourism sector, independent artisanal fisheries, government authorities (Under Secretary of Fishery and the Ministry of Environment) regional agencies, represented by Local Tourism Department, Forestry National Commission (CONAF) and the Environmental Department from the Regional Council (Municipalidad de Ancud).

Secondly, a survey, based on semi-structured questionnaire, with a Likert type statement (anchor points 1 = strongly disagree, 10 = strongly agree), was developed in order to measure local perception of the establishment of a conservation measure based on biophysical components of threatened penguins. Interviews were elaborated according to be able to illustrate the tendency of both artisanal small-scale fishermen and tourism operators in order to implement their perception and potentially their ecological knowledge to a final framework. Moreover, and due to the relevance for penguin conservation presented by this proposal, we have received the support from the local community, through support letters signed from key representatives, as well local authorities.

At the same time, we have been invited by the Congressman Environmental Commission to provide more information regarding this proposal as well to include new conservation mechanism for flagship species in the country. Followed we were invited to participated at the 10th Foro de Conservación de Mar Patagónico y Áreas de Influencia (www.marpatagonico.org), hosted by Wildlife Conservation Society, Oceana, WWF, among others. At that instance we were able to present our MPA proposal, which was warmly received by several participant organisation representatives giving an additional support from the socio-environmental groups of the region.



Left: Beginning of the tourism activities. Right: Interviewing relevant actors from Puñihuil community



Left: Restaurants and facilities from tourism operators. Right: Visitors at the mixed-colony of Humboldt and Magellanic penguins