

Project Update: May 2010

One of the main achievements in this period was to perform the opinion poll, producing the first awareness baseline for the Patagonian coastal zone, including Camarones, Comodoro Rivadavia, and Puerto Madryn. The analysis of 600 enquiries, which included 31 questions, showed that most people are worried about the conservation of the marine environment. In total, 62% think that the oil production is damaging the environment, even if it is recognized as the most important economic activity. Also, 82% of the interviewed people in CR and PM, and 53% in Camarones, priorities the marine environment, even if protection could slow economic progress. The lowest level of environmental priority in Camarones may be related to its high unemployment rate. As regards their knowledge about the recently created Marine Protected Area in San Jorge gulf, more than 95% do not know anything about the park, but when informed by the enquirer, more than the 70% agreed with its creation. This strengthens our idea that the authorities must inform people to generate awareness about the area, and to involve local stakeholders in the planning as soon as possible.

As regard our educational activities, we produced four posters on marine invertebrates in an alliance built with Proyecto Sub (CENPAT, Puerto Madryn), which are being distributed at schools after talks on marine conservation. Finally, we continued our field work in golfo San Jorge, and this season we deployed satellite transmitters in Magellanic penguins of Isla Leones, a colony that has declined more than 50% in the last 15 years.



