

Project Update: September 2008

'We are very excited about the possibilities this law will bring to marine conservation in Chile since it is certainly the most important achievement on nature conservation in the country.

The law is for all cetacean species register in Chilean waters (43) so it is applicable from whales, to dolphins, sperm whales, zifios and porpoises and its marine ecosystem too! It has specifications to avoid vessel collisions with whales, promote sighting networks, protects critical habitats for cetaceans, implement action plans, regulate whale watching and regulate the rehabilitation and reintroduction to the sea of stranded animals, among others. It also includes an article to regulate watching activities of penguins and turtles, to fulfil a legal flaw with those activities.

So now, this law will help us to ensure blue whales feeding habitat is effectively protected and we will be able to legally demand reduction of chemical pollution from salmon farming. Furthermore, we will now be able to enforce the voluntary code of conduct that we reached last year in Punihuil to penguin watching and limit the number of vessels.

As you may envisage, this achievement is the starting point of many marine conservation initiatives that will use cetacean as the corner stone'.

For more information go to <http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/sep2008/2008-09-11-02.asp>