

COMBINE SCIENCE AND EDUCATION FOR BETTER CONSERVATION ACTIONS: AN EXAMPLE IN NICARAGUA



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Oceans of Opportunities, Rivers of Ideas

ELI SCIENTIFIC
CETACEAN
CONSERVATION



NICARAGUA





"I have a dream "

...that one day
whales and
humans will be
able to live
together in a
sustainable way

JOELLE
DE WEERDT
PROJECT DIRECTOR



Master in Biology:
@VUB

Volunteering
@Cetamada

Volunteering
@SWF

Internship
@France

Wood biologist @Tervuren

Volunteering
@Morigenos

Internship
@Morigenos

Internship
@Whales of
Guerrero

Start Cetacean Conservation
in Nicaragua with ELI-S

2010

2011

2012

2013

2014

2015

2016

Today



1

SCIENCE

Study the different
cetacean species in
Nicaragua



2

EDUCATION

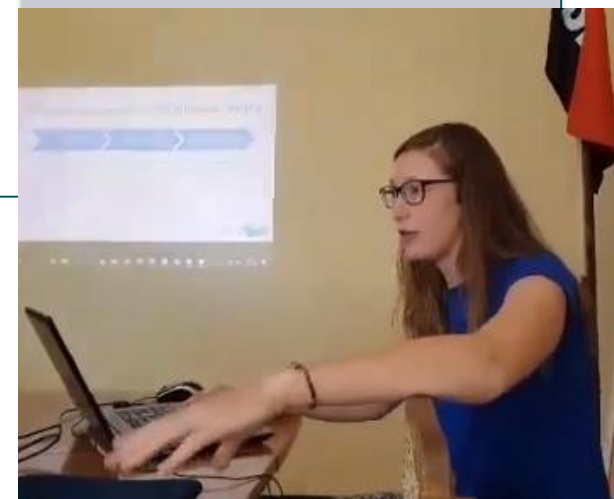
Raise awareness amongst
children and local
communities



3

CONSERVATION

Work with local decision
makers and the
government



SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH



Distribution
& Abundance



Behaviour



Acoustics



Photo-
identification



EDUCATION PROGRAM



Meetings & Events



Environmental
science classes



Information
sessions fishermen



CONSERVATION

Fishermen are important actors:

- Offers whale watching tours
- Possible collisions and invasive behaviors (cf. calves)
- Bycatch / Impact of bombs

	YES	NO
Do you know ELI-S?	61	39
Do you think that scientific research and education activities are necessary?	100	0
Are you happy with the actions lead by ELI-S?	97	3
Would you like to participate to an information session?	100	0
Would you like to get trained on sustainable whale watching activities ?	94	6
Do you know the difference between a marine mammal and a fish?	42	58
Do you know species of whales or dolphins occuring here ?	67	33
Would you like to be part of the observation network created by ELI-S?	100	0
Do you think tourism is important for your future ?	100	0
*If there is an alternative to bomb fishing, would you stop this activity ?	100	0

FISHERMEN REACTED POSITIVELY

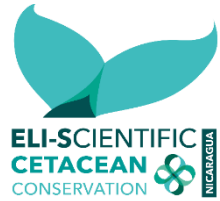


Conclusion

Science is

- Important as basis for both decision makers
- Essential to be combined with education activities to make conservation actions effective

Acknowledgements



Research assistants
2016 - 2018

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