

# STUDY AND CONSERVATION OF SPERM WHALES IN THE CANARY ISLANDS

PARTICIPATE IN THE SECAC CITIZEN SCIENCE PROGRAM  
ON THE CANARY ARCHIPIELAGO

Research campaign plans for September and October 2021

## INFORMATION DOCUMENT



## PROYECTO CACHALOTES DE CANARIAS CANARY ISLANDS SPERM WHALE PROJECT



## THE CANARY ISLANDS SPERM WHALE PROJECT

**The Sperm whale** (*Physeter macrocephalus*) is listed as vulnerable in the National Catalog of Threatened Species (RD139 / 2011), in the Regional Catalog of the Canary Islands (L.7L / PPL-001 of 2009) and **is listed as "vulnerable"** by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). In the Canary Islands, the main threat to sperm whales is collision with fast ferries. The Canary Islands has one of the highest maritime traffic densities on the planet. Every year several cetacean strandings occur that show evidence of injuries caused by fast ferry collisions.

Between 2000 and 2018, 81 sperm whales were stranded in the Canary Islands. In 44 of these cases, the cause of death was attributable to collisions with vessels. These deaths have a significant impact on the populations of the species in the archipelago because the collision mortality rate exceeds the natural reproduction rate. Furthermore, this is not only a conservation problem in the Canary archipelago but a threat to species across the Macaronesian subregion. Due to the absence of studies, there is not much information on the biology and ecology of the sperm whales in this area.

Collision mortality could be reduced thanks to the approval of mitigation measures based in scientific studies. Nautical census with **Passive Acoustic Monitoring (PAM)** and **Photo-identification technics** are used in the SECAC project to fill the scientific void concerning this species in the archipelago and understand the structure of the population, ecology, movements and use of the habitat in order to create a map on the possible risk of collision.

## COME WITH US TO THE SEA

The SECAC carries out a Citizen Science project called "**Come with Us to the Sea**" where up to 7 people can participate in our research campaigns embarking on a 15-meter sailboat and contributing to scientific research in the "**Canary Islands Sperm Whale Project**".

## SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

The first day (Monday) will be a reception on the boat. Sea outings will be from days two through six and include theoretical and practical training. The seventh day (Sunday) will be a free day so that participants can get to know the island of Lanzarote, pick up their luggage, clean up and say goodbye. The program schedule may change due to weather conditions.

**Day 1.** 15:00h. Meet at the port of Puerto Calero. Introduce the group and SECAC. Deliver informational material and course program. Discuss coordination and coexistence at sea, as well as basic safety standards at sea.

**Day 2,3,4,5,6.** 9:00-21:00h. Research outings to the sea. A theoretical and practical training will be offered (lectures, discussions, laboratory, organization, and data entry).

**Day 7.** A certificate of participation will be given to each participant. Free day. The sailing boat will be available until 13:00h of that day.

## CONTENT OF THE THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL TRAINING

Theoretical session:

- Introduction to cetaceans
- Cetaceans of the Canary Islands
- Science and conservation: an introduction to conservation biology and long-term studies of cetaceans
- Canary Islands Sperm whales project
- Sampling design and data collection at sea

Theoretical and practical session:

- Organization and data entry
- Transfer GPS data to and Excel spreadsheet, download and archive images. Photo-ID, development of a database etc.)
- Photo-ID (compilation of a Photo-ID catalogue, methodology in the analysis of photo-ID, etc.)
- Lab, stomach content analysis, skeletal research

## 7-DAY EXPEDITION DATES FOR 2021

Campaigns	Dates	Seats
Lanzarote 1	20-26 September 2021	7
Lanzarote 2	18-24 October 2021	7



## FINANCIAL DONATION

The required donation for 7-Day Expedition is 950€. The donation includes food and accommodation on board. This financial contribution is a donation and not an economic consideration. We do not lead tours; but rather conduct scientific expeditions for research and conservation. The contribution does not include travel to and from the home port or other expenses. Each participant will be given a certificate of participation.

The campaigns will be carried out with a minimum number of 4 participants. If the campaign is suspended due to not reaching the minimum number of people required, the donation will be fully refunded or used for another campaign. If the participant cannot attend the campaign, the donation will not be refunded but used for another campaign only in the case that the participant informs one month earlier the campaign. We recommend obtain a travel insurance especially due to Cov19 restrictions.



## LOCATION OF THE ACTIVITY

### HOME PORT

This study is based on the island of Lanzarote. The base port for this research is the port of **Puerto Calero**.

A part of SECAC project is developed in the Marine Protected Area (MPA) Place of Community Importance (SCI) of the European Union's Natura 2000 Network: "**Eastern and Southern Marine Space of Lanzarote-Fuerteventura**" (ESZZ15002), declared for its rich marine biodiversity, the presence of 28 species of cetaceans, turtles, seabirds and the existence of seamounts.

### THE OUTING TO SEA

**The program may change due to weather conditions.** The sailing will be done with the "El Leño" boat (15 m length). The duration is approximate and will depend on the state of the sea and the work to be done.





## WHAT TO BRING?

Space on the boat is limited; so please bring a small bag, and just the most basic items:

1. **Documentation** (do not forget your ID or passport and original or copy of your health insurance card)
2. **Sleeping bag** (very important for sleeping on board) and **a towel**
3. **Cap, sunglasses, and sunscreen 50** (very important)
4. **Waterproof warm clothing**, windproof jacket (on some trips it can be cold)
5. **Comfortable, non-slip footwear**
5. Dive fins and goggles (optional)
7. Camera, video, binoculars (optional)

## RULES OF COHABITATION ON BOARD

The language to be spoken on board is **Spanish** and **English**. There are a few basic rules that will facilitate coexistence on board during campaigns in a reduced space – as well as ensuring the safety of all, the performance of work and maintenance of the boat. Among them we highlight:

1. Always follow scrupulously the directions given by the project manager and the boat's skipper
3. Always keep your life jacket on and respect the safety measures indicated
5. It is recommended to take something to avoid dizziness in advance of departure if you do not have previous sailing experience
6. Hydrate yourself by drinking water; protect yourself from the sun by regularly applying cream; and cover your head with a hat or cap
7. No smoking on board
8. No alcoholic beverages or narcotic substances are allowed
9. Absolutely nothing is allowed to be thrown into the sea
10. Maintain the order of the boat. Each person is responsible for their belongings.
11. Be kind and respectful to our companions
12. Bathing in open ocean is not allowed
13. It is forbidden to take pictures or video of the project (including cetaceans, working procedures and people on board) without first asking and receiving permission from the project director



## APPLY NOW!

To participate with us you must follow these steps:

1. Read this information document carefully, fill in and sign the forms: participation request and acceptance of conditions and signature (found at the end of this document). Scan and send all forms to SECAC at the following address: **secaclanzarote@gmail.com**

2. We will contact you to confirm the provisional participation.

3. For the **7-Day Expedition**, you must transfer **950 €** (if you prefer, you can first transfer 500 € to reserve your place, and a month before the expedition enter the amount of 450 €) to the SECAC account (see box below) indicating your first and last name, ID card or passport and, and identify the transfer as: "Donation for the SECAC science project" and (date on which you want to participate).

Santander Bank

ES54 0049 0255 7125 1219 6362

## CONTACT US:

For any consultation contact with us you can write at [secaclanzarotemail.com](mailto:secaclanzarotemail.com) or call to the telephone:

**Francesca +34 684303503**

**Coordinator of Canary Islands Sperm Wales Project**

Society for the Study of Cetaceans in the Canary Islands (SECAC). CODE:G-38343497.  
Casa de los Arroyos, Avenida Coll 3, 35500 Arrecife (Las Palmas) Lanzarote, Islas Canarias.  
**[www.cetaceos.org](http://www.cetaceos.org) [secaclanzarote@gmail.com](mailto:secaclanzarote@gmail.com)**

## Participation Application Form

Nombre/ <b>First name</b>	
Apellidos/ <b>Last name</b>	
Dirección/ <b>Address</b>	
País/ <b>Country</b>	
Teléfono/ <b>Phone</b>	
Email	
Nacimiento/ <b>Date of birth</b> (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Nacionalidad/ <b>Nationality</b>	
Sexo/ <b>Gender</b>	
Profesión/ <b>Profession</b>	
Intolerancia alimentaria / <b>Alimentary intolerance</b>	

### ACCEPTANCE OF CONDITIONS AND SIGNATURE

- By submitting the participation application form, I certify that all the information provided here is true and complete.
- I certify that I am over eighteen (18) years old, that I am fully competent and that I have physical abilities and a state of health that allows me to embark.
- I understand that due to the nature of research campaigns, it is essential that high levels of safety, discipline and understanding are established and maintained on board.
- I will be held accountable for my own actions and for any damage or loss that these may cause.
- I understand that SECAC is the owner of all the products of the work developed as well as the research data collected in this research
- I understand that it is prohibited to take photographs or videos on board, unless the Project Director previously authorizes it





- I will be responsible for my travel expenses, transportation on the island, and any other expenses incurred during the research stay.
- I have carefully read the Information document of the participation program, the rules and regulations of SECAC, and I agree to abide by them scrupulously.

Name and Surname	
Signature (scanned) and Date (dd/mm/yyyy)	