

Cultural significance of cetaceans

Q43

Please describe any historical and/or contemporary practices involving cetaceans which are of cultural significance to people within the proposed WHS?200 word limit

There are no first nations originally from the Canary Islands. First invasions were from nomads from the north of Africa and Vikings from northern Europe. Both cultures found harmony and lived for hundreds of years, they were known as Guanches. They had no strong connection to sea, they ate fish, but they mostly fished from land. There is not much evidence of cetaceans in ancient art or culture. (Evidence 2.1 -2.3)

In contemporary times cetaceans have earned a place within our culture, (Evidence: 2.4 -2.7), and this phenomenon is growing over time, mostly because of the many environmental and educational programs related with the cetacean population in Tenerife. For example:

- The creation of a specific centre called "Centro de interpretación itinerante de Canarias" in order to highlight the marine biology values in the area in general, and cetaceans in particular. This NGO, called "Rumbo Ziday" also did several activities related with scientific tourism, one of the famous one is "Be a Biologist for a day", where the tourist can experiment some of the work as a biologist you would do in a regular day. (Evidence 2.15)

Q44

Define how these practices harness a greater appreciation for living cetaceans and their natural habitats?200 word limit

To quote the famous scientific Jean Cousteau: " We protect what we love, and we only love what we know". All of these cultural activities and initiatives allow children, local people and general public the values that we have on the area.

There are two main initiatives that have brought a lot of appreciation for cetaceans and their habitats within the proposed site, these are:

- The Project Whales and Dolphins at School, by Balfin Association. This project carried out a massive outreach and awareness reaching more than 20 thousand children and teenagers at their schools and colleges. Over 13 thousand of those kids, got the chance to go whale watching as a school fieldtrip. The Program involved not one, but several lectures, and handbooks for both the lectures and the practicals out at sea. The response and success were outstanding. (Evidence 4.34)
- The Dolphinity festivals, by The Dolphin Embassy. This festival blended together, science, art, spirituality and joy to celebrate and connect to, cetaceans. They promoted respect and appreciation for cetaceans, considering them as highly intelligent animals and conscious beings. It was the first festival bringing together different communities, interest and backgrounds at a round table. (Evidence 2.8; 2.25)

Q45

List any museums, visitor centres, art galleries etc. that showcase either historical or contemporary practices involving people and cetaceans.

☐ Museo de la Naturaleza y el Hombre en Tenerife. They have a special section dedicated to marine environment, with special attention to cetaceans (permanent exposition). (Evidence 2.16; 4.23)

☐ Museo Elder en Gran Canaria. A place dedicated specifically to cetaceans. It is a permanent exposition.

☐ Photographic exhibition en Caja Canarias, by Asociacion Balfin. A temporal expo of wild cetacean photographs. Over 5 thousand people visited it. (Evidence 4.31; 4.32)

☐ "Centro de interpretación itinerante de Canarias" by Rumbo Zidae. Is a mobile exposition and outreach station, that moves around villages. (Evidence 2.15)

Q48

List all annual cetacean-related festivals, ceremonies, meetings, or other events. Include start and end dates where appropriate.

There are many festivals directly related to cetaceans and marine life, celebrated every year in the proposed site:

- Aquaviva Fest, celebrated in the village of Adeje every August from 2005 to 2011
- Son Atlántico Fest, celebrated in the Village of Arona every August since 2008
- Dolphinty World Festival, celebrated In Los Gigantes and Adeje, since 2016
- Boreal, celebrated every summer in the village of Buenavista since 2015
- Fenáutica, celebrated every June in the village of Las Galletas, at least the last 8 years.

There are workshops, exhibitions and documentary premiers, some examples are:

- Whales and Dolphins Exposition, at the Itinerant Canarian Interpretation Center of Cetaceans. Village of Arona , 2014
- Cetaceans and Underwater Acoustics, at the Travels and Adventures in Nature event, organized in Buenavista by the Canarian Government.
- Los Gigantes, a Treasure of Nature in Our Hands. Workshop in Los Gigantes 2018.
- Connect to The Blue. Environmental Fair and Workshops. Village of Las Galletas 2019.
- The Life in our Sea. Public Debate organized by the University of La Laguna 2019.
- Disa Marine Lab. This is a mobile exposition about marine biodiversity inside a bus that visits several villages, since 2018.
- Canarian Sea, photographic exposition Sacha Lobenstein.
- Habitants of the South West Waters of Tenerife. Francis Perez Exposition. Canarian wildlife photographer internationally recognized.
- Hotel la Pinta Cetacean Exposition. Hotel with a permanent photographic exposition about local cetaceans.
- Climate Change Workshop in the village of Arona.
- Rescuing the Natural Marine Inheritance , workshop held in the village of Arona.
- Documentary Premiere "SouthWest of Tenerife"
- "A Plastic Ocean", Documentary Premiere and public debate. Village of Playa de San Juan.
- Documentary Premiere "Isora, Story of a Pilot Whale Pod" from the local filmography Aqua Work, Rafa Herrero, recognized by the BBC.

Q49

Describe these events, highlighting their key benefits in terms of encouraging a sense of pride, heritage, history, sustainability, and legacy. 300 word limit

All these events, workshops, activities, etc call both, general and local public for an invitation to get an insight into the wonder of cetaceans, and marine life. Young people, families, groups of friends, ... participate in these activities and learn about the natural treasure that we have.

These events have a particular aim, to show environmental conservation values, such as: i-) Reducing consumption of non-renewable sources. ii-) Driving down waste and pollutants levels. iii-) Awareness of the environmental values but also the problems related to this. People can also learn about solutions or changes that we can do to protect or preserve our community. iv-) Awareness about climate change, ocean acidification, tropicalization phenomena and invasive species, v-) Generating synergies between citizens and local authorities to preserve marine natural environments of Tenerife, etc.

In general, all these activities produce a sense of pride in the local community because they become aware of the Natural Heritage of Tenerife. The local people can have a better understanding about the threats and risks for the conservation in the area, knowing that every single action matters. Quoting Mother Teresa of Calcutta: "We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop."

All the tourists that visit the islands play an important role in conservation and whale watching practices. Many of the festivals are organized in coastal areas, right at the heart of the main touristic areas, and are held both in Spanish and English, so that the tourists can participate, learn, and contribute to cetacean and marine life conservation.