

## Stakeholders and local community participation in WHA

### Q65

Describe how local communities have been given the opportunity to participate in decision-making at key stages of the WHS accreditation process? 200 word limit

When the candidacy for Whale Heritage Site was accepted, ACEST held a special meeting to discuss the criteria selecting members for the Directive Committee, having as priority to include representatives for the following groups of interest within the local community:

- Whale watching community.
- Scientific community.
- Associations that focus on outreach at schools, festivals and events.
- Public figures of Wildlife Photography and Filmography
- Regional and National Government, of both, Environment and Tourism
- Freelance naturalists

These people were chosen by their trajectory in marine conservation; involvement with local community; and their honest motivation detached from personal interests.

They were reached out by email and phone calls (due to COVID protocols). The initiative was presented in an extended way following the content and outline from the first report elaborated. The information presented for the WHS included all its values, criteria, process and most importantly the endless benefits for our local communities and visitors; for the whale watching sector; and for the preservation of cetacean biodiversity and habitat.

It was also explained that they will have a vote in the decision making, and how important their voice is for the initiative.

### Q66

Give examples of how the public have been informed via press, social media or other means, about the Whale Heritage Site Candidacy and the rationale behind it. 200 word limit

The WHS candidacy has been presented mainly in 4 ways:

1. Personal one to one conversation with people directly related to cetacean centred activities. Results successful.
2. Social media. Results successful.
3. Calling press, and asking the Tenerife Tourism Council to give publicity. No results yet.
4. Using the WHS Candidate by whale watching operators that are members of ACEST and WCA partners.

Overall it has been a very difficult and strange year for all of us. All festivals and events have been cancelled due to social distancing as COVID prevention protocol. The ways of promotion have been very limited. On top of that, it is important to considerate that this is only the beginning of a process, and further and more effective ways of promotion are in plan, as well as noticing the importance of creating social media accounts for it.

### Q67

List those stakeholders involved in preparing and maintaining the site for WHS status.

At this moment the stakeholders are ACEST's, and the WHS Steering Committee members.

ACEST members are the following:

Aqua Azul Tenerife  
Atlantic Ecoexperience  
Big Smile Charters  
Blue Jack Sailing  
Blue Ocean  
Bonadea2  
Exmaran  
Mar de Ons  
Mustcat  
Ocean Blue  
Picaruss Sailing Club  
Roulette charters  
Royal Dolphin

Sea Quest  
Tenerife Whale watch  
Whale Wise Eco Tours  
White Tenerife

From the Steering Committee:  
Tenerife Tourism Council  
La Laguna University  
Calderones de Canarias  
Especies de Canarias  
Asociación Tonina  
Hope Spot, Mission Blue  
Asociación Ventana al Mar  
Mare Research Group  
Puertos Deportivos de Tenerife

Effort will be put, to achieve more stakeholders to maintain the site, including hotels, associations, and government.

### **Q68**

Give examples of educational and community outreach events that have encouraged the public to promote the WHS and the reasons for its existence. 200 word limit

There has been no events of any sort due to the COVID19 pandemic. ACEST and other WHS supporters have not done any work on this YET. Mainly because schools and communities have been very busy and focused only in adapting to the new normality with the pandemic.

The proposed site has a background of good interaction between the community and whale watching stakeholders (evidence: 3.8 to 3.16). Once the pandemic is over, and social distancing is not an issue anymore, there will be educational and outreach events to promote the Whale Heritage Site among the community.

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