

# 1<sup>st</sup> International Workshop on Beluga Whale Research, Husbandry and Management

In wild and captive environments

9-11 March 2007

L'Océanogràfic.

La Ciudad de las Artes y las Ciencias.

Valencia. Spain.

## INTRODUCTION

With numerous aquaria around the world displaying beluga whales and six polar countries managing beluga populations, there is a need for information sharing on research, husbandry and management practices in order to enhance their contribution to beluga conservation in the wild. A number of aquaria and researchers have expressed an interest in fostering better collaboration between their respective communities. This workshop will bring together researchers, veterinarians, husbandry staff, educators and managers to build relationships and promote communication and collaboration in order to:

- ▶ Review the current state of knowledge;
- ▶ Determine research needs in wild and captive environments;
- ▶ Develop a research agenda;
- ▶ Build a coordination network; and
- ▶ Develop public education goals.

There are two main objectives of this workshop: 1) to identify topics for research in aquaria that would be advantageous for on site conservation of belugas in their natural habitats and 2) to enhance captive beluga well-being based on wild research results. Furthermore, environmental problems affecting beluga whale populations and the research being done to mitigate these problems could be more fully interpreted in public education programs. Public education programs, both in aquaria and during beluga eco-tours, should convey stronger conservation messages. Belugas are an ideal species for education about climate change, arctic ecosystem fragility and to foster cross-cultural understanding and collaboration to promote arctic conservation.

The workshop is being hosted by L'Océanogràfic of Valencia in Spain, which includes beluga whale facilities and is actively doing research on this species.

## SUBJECT MATTER

The workshop will address a range of topics of common interest to wild and captive beluga research and management. The subjects include, but are not limited to the following:

- ▶ Beluga whale ecology;
- ▶ Conservation challenges;
- ▶ Stock management;
- ▶ Acoustics and behaviour;
- ▶ Reproduction;
- ▶ Health and husbandry;
- ▶ Management of the interactions between humans and beluga;
- ▶ Public education and outreach; and
- ▶ Aboriginal people and beluga science, knowledge and management.



## PROGRAM

In preparation for the workshop, registered participants will receive a working paper that reviews the status of beluga research in areas common to aquaria and wild beluga management interests. This is intended to bring participants up to speed in areas that may be outside their particular areas of expertise in preparation for discussion and collaboration during the workshop. The workshop will extend over two-and-a-half days with the goal of producing a research agenda that will be mutually beneficial to managers of belugas in both the wild and captive environment. It will simultaneously develop a list of public education goals to guide aquarium, eco-tour, and scientific outreach educational programs. The workshop will consist of four sessions led by invited speakers (to be announced shortly), followed by in-depth discussion. A reporter will summarize the key ideas from each session and these will feed into the development of a draft research agenda by the scientific committee. On the last day, the draft research agenda will be presented for discussion, revision and approval by the workshop participants. Throughout the workshop, posters about beluga research, husbandry, management, traditional knowledge, eco-tourism, and educational outreach will be displayed for review and discussion.

## PRE-REGISTRATION

Those pre-registered by e-mail will receive updates of this workshop. Registration will be available soon. If you want to pre-register, please go to the following website: <http://www.cac.es/microsites/beluga-workshop>

## CALL FOR PAPERS AND POSTERS

We strongly encourage people to share their research and experience in the form of an oral talk or poster presentation. Accepted abstracts will be published in the workshop proceedings and made available in electronic format downloadable from the website. Abstract guidelines are available on the workshop website.

Please submit your abstracts before **November 1, 2006** in English to:

**Mr. Manuel Castellote**  
Research Coordinator  
L'Oceanogràfic of Valencia  
and

**Ms. Ree Brenn**  
Amherst Lodge Consulting  
Canada

## ORGANIZERS

Mr. Enrique Alonso – Esq. UNESCO Chair (IUIEN-UAH)  
Ms. Ree Brenn – Amherst Lodge Consulting, Canada  
Mr. Manuel Castellote - L'Oceanogràfic  
Mr. Pablo Areitio - L'Oceanogràfic  
Dr. Francisco Torner - L'Oceanogràfic  
Mr. Javier de León - L'Oceanogràfic  
Dr. Juan Antonio Raga – Univ. of Valencia

## SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

\*invited speakers

**Dr. Lance Barret-Lennard**,  
Vancouver Aquarium, Canada

**Dr. Stanislav Belikov\***,  
Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia

**Mr. Tim Binder**,  
Georgia Aquarium, USA

**Dr. Andrei Boltunov**,  
All-Russian Institute for Nature Protection, Russia

**Dr. Kathy Frost\***,  
University of Alaska Fairbanks, USA

**Dr. Joe Geraci\***,  
University of Maryland, USA

**Mr. Willie Goodwin**,  
Alaska Beluga Whale Committee, USA

**Dr. Mike Hammill**,  
Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada

**Dr. Max Kotokak Sr.**,  
Canada/Inuvialuit Fisheries Joint Management Committee.

**Dr. Kit Kovacs**,  
Norwegian Polar Institute, Norway

**Dr. Oleg Lyamin**,  
University of California Los Angeles, USA

**Dr. Daniel Martineau**,  
University of Montreal, Canada

**Dr. Robert Michaud\***,  
Group for Research and Education on Marine Mammals,  
Canada

**Dr. L. M. Mukhametov**,  
Utrish Dolphinarium, Russia

**Dr. Gregory M. O'Corry Crowe**,  
National Marine Fisheries Service, USA Jooelee Paptsie.  
Hunters and Trappers Association.  
Representative from Nunavut, Canada

**Dr. Jooelee Paptsie**,  
Hunters and Trappers Association, Canada.

**Dr. Todd Robeck\***,  
SeaWorld, USA

**Mr. Pierre Richard\***,  
Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada

**Dr. Sam Ridgway\***,  
University of California San Diego, USA

**Dr. Tracy Romano**,  
Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration, USA.

**Mr. Robert Suydam\***,  
North Slope Borough Department of Wildlife, USA  
Representative from Inuvialuit Fisheries Joint  
Management Committee, Canada's Western Arctic



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V A L E N C I A

