



ECOLOGY PROJECT
INTERNATIONAL



MEXICO FIELD PROGRAM

Youth from Mexico and the U.S engaged in hands-on conservation through EPI's immersive field courses in southern Baja California and the Sea of Cortez. A total of 425 students and teachers participated in 28 Coastal Ecology courses along the reefs surrounding Espiritu Santo Island, Magdalena Bay, the Gulf of California, and Sierra Cacachilas. Participants joined research partners to learn about and help contribute to research on whales, sea turtles, reptiles, and water quality.

CONSERVATION RESEARCH

Coastal Marine Ecosystem Ecology

EPI participants conducted invertebrate censuses, helping Dr. Dinorah Herrero collect species diversity and abundance data that contributes to policy-making decisions regarding the management of two marine protected areas in southern Baja California.



Whale Ecology

Participants collaborated with researchers at the University of Baja California Sur (UABCS) to conduct cetacean surveys in the southern part of the Gulf of California. Students identified individuals through photo ID, collected skin samples, and observed and documented behavior. This research informs efforts to establish a new humpback whale refuge.



LOCAL STUDENTS SEARCHING FOR WHALES IN THE GULF OF CALIFORNIA

Magdalena Bay Ecology

With Grupo Tortugero and local fishermen, students participated in a sea turtle monitoring project. Youth from the fishing community of Puerto San Carlos joined the Waterkeeper Alliance to collect and analyze water samples to look for contaminants.

Desert Ecology

At two sites in the Sierra Cacachilas, students partnered with researchers from the San Diego Natural History Museum to conduct a reptile and amphibian species diversity study. Data will address questions regarding behavior and ecology of desert species.

FIELD PARTICIPANTS AT-A-GLANCE



341 MEXICAN PARTICIPANTS
84 U.S. PARTICIPANTS
2,652 FIELD DAYS

PROGRAM OUTCOMES



604 NUMBER OF BENTHIC MARINE SPECIES REGISTERED
24 HOURS CONTRIBUTED TO SEA TURTLE RESEARCH
9% IMPROVEMENT IN ENVIRONMENTAL LITERACY SCORES

"I have changed the way I think about consumption and I am willing to reduce what I use that causes damage to the environment."

~ Dalia, San José del Cabo

ALUMNI & OUTREACH

Mexico program alumni develop as conservation leaders through EPI's Californios Verdes (CV) Eco-Club. Club members designed a series of events and activities in collaboration with local NGOs including field trips, rallies, workshops, and awareness events that aim to welcome and inspire community-wide involvement and build capacity for local conservation initiatives.

ALUMNI ACTIVITIES AT-A-GLANCE

135 TOTAL WORKSHOPS, EVENTS, TRIPS, AND RALLIES

20 ALUMNI LEADERS

7,169 TOTAL COMMUNITY AND ALUMNI PARTICIPANTS

ACTIVITIES

Workshops and Field Trips

EPI hosted two planning and two evaluation retreats for Eco-Club members to provide them with the tools to design, implement, and evaluate conservation projects. Participants learned leadership, team-building, and planning skills.

Three sea turtle and four whale shark monitoring trips took place with ASUPMATOMA and Whale Shark Mexico. Field trips were led by 14 Eco-Club members who were trained as field outing leaders, and engaged 72 alumni and students in collecting data on these iconic marine species.

Awareness Events & Community Activities

The Californios Verdes are a constant presence in the La Paz area, providing support and leadership for rallies, field trips, workshops, and other community-based events. For example, they participated as guides in the 5th Anniversary of Balandra Beach as a Natural Protected Area. While guiding boat, kayak, and trekking trips, they shared the importance of the area with nearly 500 community members. They also supported the Third Tribute to Whale Sharks, an awareness event that also draws hundreds of attendees. Through these activities, Eco-Club members lead or engage with thousands of area residents annually.

Eco-Club members shared lessons learned during the planning and execution of their projects in a public forum that was live streamed to hundreds of viewers.

FUNDERS

Alianza WWF - Fundación Carlos Slim
Helmsley Charitable Trust
Dalio Ocean Initiative
San Diego Natural History Museum
Walton Family Foundation



AN EPI ECO-CLUB MEMBER STANDS GUARD AS SEA TURTLE HATCHLINGS MAKE THEIR WAY TO THE OCEAN

NOTABLE

With more than 22 other NGOs, EPI partnered to create the Sustainable Community Alliance. Together, we hosted the Sustainable Ideas fair and My Sustainable Community fair. More than 800 individuals, NGOs, and government representatives from La Paz and surrounding communities attended the events.



EPI Mexico has educated thousands of Baja citizens on sustainable practices and reducing use of plastics through eco-rallies, workshops, and festivals. As a result, in collaboration with 35 other organizations, the Alianza Deplastificate campaign formed and led a movement that resulted in a new state law restricting the use of single-use plastics in Baja California Sur.

“Through the Eco-Club I acquired leadership and management skills and learned how to problem-solve and make decisions.”

~Eduardo, La Paz

To provide teachers with tools and techniques to deliver hands-on education programs that engage their students in outdoor learning EPI offered two teacher training workshops, one focusing on marine invertebrates, and the second on reptiles in the desert ecosystem. This professional development opportunity for local Mexican teachers prepared them to employ EPI's experiential teaching techniques with their students, bringing new outdoor learning experiences to hundreds of youth in Mexico each year.



PARTNERS

ASUPMATOMA
CONANP
Enseña por México
Grupo Tortuguero
Magdalena Bay Waterkeepers
Adrian Munguia, PhD
Prescott College AC
Ponguinguola AC
San Diego Natural History Museum
Sociedad de Historia Natural
Niparajá
Whale Shark Mexico