

Abstract

Emergency response involving oil-impacted Magellanic penguins' (*Spheniscus magellanicus*) in Florianópolis/SC, Brazil – August 2008

Andréa Corrado Adornes¹, Paula Lima Canabarro, Ana Paula Neuschrack Albano, Cristiane Myiaji Kolesnikovas¹, Sandro Sandri¹, Lauro Barcellos¹, Valeria Ruoppolo², and Rodolfo Pinho da Silva-Filho¹

¹Centro de Recuperação de Animais Marinhos (CRAM) - Museu Oceanográfico Prof. Eliézer de C. Rios/ FURG, R. Heitor Perdigão, 10, Rio Grande - RS, Brazil CEP- 96200-580; ²IFAW, Av. Benedito Ferreira Silva, 472, São Paulo – SP, CEP- 04786-000, Brazil

In August 2008, hundreds of live and dead oil impacted penguins stranded on the coasts of Santa Catarina, Brazil. The birds rescued were sent to CETAS-IBAMA and the local NGO R3 Animal, located at Parque Florestal da Polícia Ambiental do Rio Vermelho, in Florianópolis. CRAM's wildlife response team was activated to respond to assist the local groups. The pre-existing facilities were adapted to rehabilitate as many birds as possible. During the stabilization phase, the penguins were rehydrated twice daily, alternating with fish-slurries. As the birds' health improved they were fed whole fish, and only debilitated birds were maintained with gavage feeding. After being fed, the birds were rinsed with water, to keep their feather clean of fish oil, residues and feces. When the animals were stabilized, standing and presenting round chests (meaning in good weight) they were clinically evaluated and then cleaned of all oil. When they were clean, the birds were kept in a separate area, the oral hydration was eliminated, and they were taught to feed inside feeding-boxes (Callahan, 2001). In the first three days after they were washed, the birds were kept in pools filled with fresh water, from the public services. During this three-day period, the birds were able to establish the bulk of their waterproofing in this fresh, clean water. In the following days until release, the birds were kept in brackish water pumped from Rio Vermelho and kept overflowing all day and maintained food intake through the feeding boxes. Fifteen days after being washed, the birds were evaluated for waterproofing, and those that were approved were subject to a physical and clinical examination, including weight and blood sampling. Birds that were 100% waterproof, had good body condition, PCV above 38% and Buffy coat <2%, with an absence of wounds or pressure sores, were banded with stainless steel flipper bands, accordingly with the Brazilian banding scheme (CEMAVE) and released by boat off Ilha do Xavier, in Florianópolis. Of the 328 oil-impacted penguins received, 88.10% (289/328) were released.

