

RESOLUTION:

The Argentinean National Chamber of Deputies

RESOLVES:

To express the great pleasure and satisfaction of this Honourable Chamber to Dr. Pablo García Borboroglu for receiving the Whitley Gold Award, in recognition of his career and outstanding contributions in favour of penguin conservation and marine protected areas.

BASIS:

Mr. President:

We have become aware through various sources that Argentinean science, once again, has been recognised by the achievements of its researchers. This time, it was a CONICET¹ biologist and researcher, Dr. Pablo García Borboroglu, who received one of the world's most important conservation distinctions: the Whitley Gold Award, also known as the "Green Oscar of Science."

Pablo García Borboroglu was born on November 4th, 1969 in Mar del Plata. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Biology at the National University of Patagonia San Juan Bosco. Between 1993 and 1995 he developed his thesis on the study and census of the 14 existing colonies in the north of the San Jorge Gulf, Chubut. He earned his doctorate in Biology at the National Comahue University, in Sede Bariloche.

He studied at Duke University, USA, and other international institutions. He has been a CONICET researcher since 1998, working in the Centre for Marine System Studies (CESIMAR/CCT) in the Patagonian National Centre (CENPAT) in Puerto Madryn, Chubut. There he researches marine birds in Patagonia.

¹ National Scientific and Technical Research Council, Argentina

He has been an Associate Professor at the University of Washington, Seattle, USA since 2008, and is a scientific advisor on innumerable audio-visual productions around the world.

He's worked as an advisor or consultant on the following projects: "Work Agreement CONICET Cenpat – Chubut Province, 2013 to 2015", "Proposal Development for the Creation of the Blue Patagonia Biosphere Reserve – UNESCO", "Punta Tombo Protected Marine Area Proposal", among others, and he is the Founder and Director of the Emergency and Rehabilitation Centre for Oil-covered Magellanic Penguins (National University of Patagonia San Juan Bosco – Provincial Tourism Body, Punta Tombo).²

He has worked with different species of penguins, not only in Argentina, but in other regions of the world, currently leading conservation initiatives in other countries, such as New Zealand and Chile, including the creation and management of protected areas.

"His first contact with penguins was when he was three years old. The stories his grandmother told him about trips to Punta Tombo in the 1960s stayed with young Pablo."³ He started to study law in his birth city, but something from his childhood pushed him to move to Patagonia in 1989, where he became a tour guide.

"When he visited his first penguin colony, he was hypnotized...it changed him forever. This is how, while he worked in a tour agency, he looked for oil-covered penguins on the coast, and took them to a rehabilitation site."⁴ There he began his studies in Biology.

He received the Pew Fellowship in Marine Conservation in 2009⁵ with a project to create an international society that apart from saving penguins, could contribute to the protection of marine environments in general. He founded, and leads, the Global Penguin Society, which is an international coalition that promotes the protection of penguins through science, management and education in 19

² <http://cenpat.academia.edu/PabloGarciaBorboroglu/CurriculumVitae>

³ <http://www.conicet.gov.ar/investigador-del-conicet-recibio-el-oscar-verde-de-la-ciencia-y-la-conservacion/>

⁴ <http://www.conicet.gov.ar/investigador-del-conicet-recibio-el-oscar-verde-de-la-ciencia-y-la-conservacion/>

⁵ <http://www.conicet.gov.ar/investigador-del-conicet-recibio-el-oscar-verde-de-la-ciencia-y-la-conservacion/>

countries.⁶ “It aspires to design a global conservation strategy, that provides recommendations for governments based in scientific and technical evidence, and offers them the support of the coalition, promoting the signing regional protocols.”⁷

He has received various international prizes, including the Duke University Global Fellowship (2001), and the already mentioned PEW Fellowship (2009-2011) in the USA, both in marine conservation and in the US, as well as the Whitley Award (2010) and the Whitley-Segre Partnership Award (2012) in England.

Science alone cannot ensure marine conservation or that of the environment as a whole, and Pablo understands this. In concordance with this, we can see as we review his career that he did not limit himself to purely scientific contributions. His commitment to spreading awareness about caring for marine environments has led him to speak at the United Nations in order to ensure that conservation formed a part of the world political agenda. He is a member of the group of scientists who intervene in the environmental goal of the United Nations 2030 Agenda: “Transforming our world”⁸, and as you can see in some of the previous citations, he has frequent interactions with the press.

His work combines science, management, and education, promoting not only conservation work but also spreading awareness about these issues. His work “has contributed to the protection of more than 3 million hectares of marine and coastal areas that...penguins use, and has generated research that has been useful for conservation, environmental and wildlife management across four continents. To achieve this, he obtained funding to take forward his “crusade”, and he has enabled around 6,000 children from developing countries to visit their nearby penguin colonies, in order to develop a culture of conservation through penguins.”⁹

He also founded and directs the IUCN Penguin Specialist Group, based in Switzerland, which influences international conservation issues.

⁶ www.globalpenguinsociety.org

⁷ <https://www.eldia.com/nota/2009-5-17-quien-es-pablo-borboroglu>

⁸ <http://www.cienciaenlavidriera.com.ar/2016/01/01/garcia-borboroglu-pablo/>

⁹ <http://www.conicet.gov.ar/investigador-del-conicet-recibio-el-oscar-verde-de-la-ciencia-y-la-conservacion/>

A CONICET article referring to his work says: “For him, it is important to not only publish scientific articles, but to ensure they are useful and have a real impact. Because of this, his work has not only helped to sustainably conserve environments and species, but also has created jobs and genuine resources for regional economies, improving the management of human activity in coastal and marine areas.”¹⁰

Directing our attention now to the prize, we should say that the Whitley Fund for Nature is a non-profit environmental conservation organisation that fundraises and collects donations, in order to offer recognition, training, and grants to support conservation work in developing countries.

Its strategic objectives include: “finding, recognising and funding grassroots conservation leaders, with proven successes in resource-poor, biodiversity-rich countries” and “supporting the replication and growth of effective conservation solutions.”¹¹

“Our winners are local environmental heroes who lead projects with passion, harnessing the best available science on which to act. Through them we support work rooted in community involvement that is pragmatic and creates lasting impact.”¹²

The Whitley Awards are the Fund’s flagship prize, which are given out after being evaluated by an expert academic panel. They are known as the “Green Oscars”, with Her Royal Highness the Princess Anne of England as their Patron. We should mention that Argentina is third in the ranking of countries who have received this prize, and leads the Latin American chart.¹³

“Each year a previous Whitley Award winner is selected to receive the Whitley Gold Award in recognition of their outstanding contribution to conservation. Our Gold Award winners are international advocates for biodiversity with the passion

¹⁰ Prensa CONICET, 27 de abril de 2018 www.ctys.com.ar/index.php?idPage=20&idArticulo=3528

¹¹ www.whitleyaward.org

¹² Extracted from the Whitley Fund for Nature’s Objectives

¹³ latinamericanscience.org/spanish/2017/05/cuantos-latinoamericanos-han-ganado-el-premio-whitley-para-la-conservacion/

and ambition to spread conservation messages to a wider audience.” The selection process of the Whitley Gold Award winner is highly competitive, given that it is awarded to only one of the more than 190 people from 80 countries who have received the traditional Whitley Award in the past (as we said above, García Borboroglu had won in 2010 and 2012, which is why he could be considered for the Gold Award).

The Ceremony took place in the Royal Geographical Society and there were celebrities, philanthropists and European environmental organisations in attendance.

For all of the above reasons, and with the belief that we are, once again, facing an emergence of Argentina’s education and sciences, this must be recognised and held as an example. I invite the Deputies to share this initiative.