

URGENT: HELP REQUESTED FOR ACOREMA AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE IN PISCO – PERU

INTRODUCTION

Last 15 August an earthquake nearly Richter 8 with epicentre located off the Pisco coast devastated nearly 80% of the city in just 3.30 minutes, leaving extended loss and damage, death, pain, more poverty and chaos. ACOREMA was not the exception: Our Environmental Interpretative Centre, bearing several national prizes due to its work on the marine environment was severely damaged. The expression of concern and solidarity from people and friend institutions has been the most valuable and encouraging. There are no material goods comparable; all the empathy received in these difficult weeks will be in our hearts forever. Although the current situation of the ACOREMA Centre is adverse, its spirit, comprised by the ACOREMA team and the thousand of children that used its facilities, is alive. The present situation precludes the Centre to continue the work of teaching about the marine environment and building human capacities to conserve it.

Facing this reality, ACOREMA is in the need to urgently request the support that will allow re-building the Environmental Interpretative Centre and to continue our work.

In this context, here we detail a summary of our current situation and the need of support.

CURRENT STATUS OF ACOREMA ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETATIVE CENTRE

Front of the building: Standing, with moderate damage.

Main entrance, corridor and stairs: With moderate damage. Collapsed remains have been cleaned up.

Projection room: Moderate damage in walls, ceiling, doors and windows. Collapsed remains have been partially removed. A TV set and a VCR/DVD equipment have been recovered, as well as the snail collection. Models and panels are lost.

Main/interpretative room: Moderate damage in wall, ceiling, doors and windows. A life-size, fiberglass dolphin replica as well as smaller replicas of marine turtles, dolphins and Humboldt penguin. All the panels, exhibits and other interpretative modules have been lost.

Library: Moderate damage in walls, ceiling, doors and windows. A large part of the books have been recovered, as well as a transparency projector and a radio. The computer present in this room is out of use.

Entrance room to the Whale Yard and children working area: Access not possible. The floor and part of the ceiling have collapsed.

Whale yard: The front area has severe damage. The columns in the central area are moderately damaged, but the columns at the extremes and the walls are badly damaged. The humpback whale skeleton on exhibit was recovered through a hole in the wall. The beaked whale skeleton can not be recovered.

Conference room: Completely destroyed. The slide projector, tables, chairs, screen, and slide series have been lost.

Bathroom: Completely collapsed.

Main office: The access is partially closed due to the collapse of two walls. The small space left allowed recovering of a major part of ACOREMA documents, part of the awareness materials and part of the equipment, including a small copy machine, the main computer, printer, scanner, binoculars, camera, fax and a GPS. Part of this equipment is working, other need maintenance. The cetacean collection (skulls, samples, etc.) and some office furniture have been recovered from the collapsed room.

Access yard and stairs to the tower: Completely destroyed.

ACOREMA tower: Is standing, but access is not possible.

Some views of the ACOREMA Centre and the recovered materials are included. The materials, documents and equipment recovered were transported to Ica, some 50 km south of Pisco, and kept at the house of one ACOREMA member. It is important to note that as a consequence of the earthquake, Monica Echegaray and Julio Reyes lost their houses in Pisco. They are currently living in Lima with parents and relatives. This situation force them to permanently translate between Lima, Ica and Pisco to continue their work.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE OF THE REQUEST FOR HELP

The provide ACOREMA of the minimum conditions to ensure the continuity of its work on research and conservation of threatened marine biodiversity and coastal marine ecosystems in the areas affected by the earthquake.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To plan and initiate the reconstruction or construction of a new Environmental Interpretative Centre of ACOREMA.
- To continue developing research and education activities about marine-coastal issues in the Pisco area.
- To contribute to enhancing the quality of life of the population affected by the earthquake, specially the children, in the Pisco area, through the generation of spaces where the marine-coastal identity can be improved.

HOW TO HELP?

For adequate accounting records and expense reporting, ACOREMA opened a US dollar account, independent of the one used for projects in operation. Currently, our needs are focused in two items: a) activities with children and b) reconstruction of ACOREMA Centre. If you are interested in supporting any of these activities, please contact us at the address: acoremabiodiverso@yahoo.com in order to identify the donor, registering its data and provide the account number. Also, specify to which activity your donation is directed. Although we thank all support, we will reserve the right to reject the help of people/institutions which are in conflict with our principles.

THANKS FOR BEING WITH US IN THESE DIFFICULT MOMENTS!



ACOREMA
Status of the Environmental Interpretative Centre
in Pisco. October 2007