FUNDEMAR

**INTERNSHIP/VOLUNTEER/RESEARCH**

PROGRAM

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The Dominican Foundation for Marine Studies, INC. (FUNDEMAR) has a marine station CECOMAR in the Bayahibe area, in Southeast Dominican Republic. Bayahibe is a Municipal district in the province of La Altagracia, located only 2 hours from the capital city, Santo Domingo. It is an eminently touristic area surrounded by several protected areas, mainly the Cotubanamá National Park, which has an interesting marine biodiversity as well as underwater cultural resources.

**Vision:** Conservation of the coastal and marine ecosystems of the Dominican Republic and its resources.

**Mission:** Contribute to sustainable development through research, education and protection of the marine environment and its resources

FUNDEMAR as an institution has the following objectives:

* To promote, advise, plan and execute research and programs related to marine and environmental sciences that can be used in the integral development of the country
* Contribute to the training and improvement of human resources in the field of marine and environmental science
* To contribute to the design, implementation of integral development plans that relate to the marine and environmental sciences
* Establish relations with national and foreign actors and institutions of similar character and objectives

# FUNDEMAR FUNDAMENTAL PROGRAMS

FUNDEMAR, develops an annual work plan (POA) and implements the work in the marine studies station CECOMAR, allowing us to achieve these aforementioned objectives. Within this plan we have three key programs:

## Coastal Marine Biodiversity

Includes our community education programs related to education on coral reefs, a permanent awareness campaign for the elimination of Lionfish Awareness about the threats to the health of reefs, among other activities.

## Reef Restoration

Currently our largest program in which we implement several restoration strategies such as: AGRRA Reef Health Assessments, endangered coral tissue growth in underwater 8 nurseries in alliance with local diving centers, transplanting fragments to the reef as a propagation strategy via cloning, documentation and registration of coral spawning times, and implementation of assisted fertilization and larval propagation techniques as a strategy to increase the genetic diversity and resilience of corals. We are proud to be the first NGO in the Dominican Republic implementing restorative techniques involving the sexual reproduction of corals. All of this is possible thanks to our local and international alliances.

## Conservation of marine mammals and their habitats

In 2004 we began the first studies of the population of dolphins in the Cotubanamá National Park. In 2007, the hotel association, within its tourism management project of the area, decides to invest in a study of the population of dolphins in the area and this is when FUNDEMAR starts the first long-term dolphin study in the Dominican Republic in this area from 2007 to 2009. In the study of marine mammals from 2007 to 2009, 150 individuals and five different social groups of bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) were identified, three of those groups confirmed as residents of the area and analyzed the functions of the social structure of these populations. The presence of other species was also recorded: Spotted Dolphin (*Stenella frontalis*), Manatee (*Trichechus manatus*), Humpback whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), Pilot Whale (*Globicephala*), Sperm whale (*Physeter Macrocephalus*), Dwarf Sperm whale (*Kogia Sima*), Whale shark (*Rhincodon Typus*) and Orcas (*Orcinus Orca*). Today we continue to receive reports of sightings and we have more than 640 reports in our database. This data feeds knowledge about marine mammals in Cotubanamá National Park over time. In 2019 a comparative social study of the dolphin populations will be carried out using the data from the previous study.

## Education Program

We receive a large number of international high school student groups who volunteer their time to learn and contribute to our marine conservation projects, mainly in the summer, but also during the year. Students learn and have a hands-on experience on relevant marine conservation topics such as:

* Marine mammal monitoring
* The issue of marine mammal captivity
* Coral reef basic ecology
* Importance of and threats faced by coral reefs today
* Coral reef restoration efforts and methods
* Ecology, identification, monitoring and importance of herbivorous fish
* Survey and analysis of the impact of solid waste on coastal ecosystems
* The impact of invasive species such as lionfish
* Practical experience in field data collection and analysis
* Restoration material construction

During this time, the volunteers watch documentaries and videos, have creative discussions on current issues to complement our presentations and activities.

## Strengthening the national system of protected areas

Support for conservation of protected areas: Southeastern Reefs Marine Sanctuary, Cotubanamá National Park, La Punta Natural Monument, and Catalina Island Natural Monument.

FUNDEMAR, through its marina station in Bayahibe (CECOMAR), collaborates in a permanent manner with the administration of the Cotubanamá National Park. In addition, through the marine Biodiversity Program, it works on the restoration and conservation of marine ecosystems, especially coral reefs, in these protected areas. In the tourist destination of La Romana (Río Soco, San Pedro de Macoris, up to Boca de Yuma), FUNDEMAR, together with the hotel association, the touristic cluster and the government entities, works for the good environmental management of the destination. Within this framework stands out the newly signed Co-management of the Southeastern Reefs Marine Sanctuary on February 23, 2018.

The Southeastern Reefs Marine Sanctuary is a natural reserve created by decree 571-09 whose purpose is to preserve the natural habitat and the special environments that are formed along the continental shelf of the south-east of the island of Hispaniola. The protected area, the second largest in the country, has an extension of 7,862.59 km2 and goes from the Mona channel (east of Cabo Engaño) to the existing marine portion south of the mouth of the river Higuamo, meeting space and shelter of numerous marine species.

# OPPORTUNITIES TO SUPPORT AND STUDY THE CONSERVATION OF COASTAL MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

FUNDEMAR, with the intention of promoting practical knowledge regarding marine ecosystems conservation, opens up the possibility of support and collaboration between people and institutions that identify with these lines of work. These collaborations may be individual or as a group. The individual can be qualified in three categories:

# General Internship (March-April or June-July)

Directed to students interested in biological sciences that want to contribute some of their time in supporting our [Marine Conservation Education Program](#_Programa_de_Educación) with international students and our initiatives in Bayahibe. This program has a duration of minimum two (2) months can be extended according to the needs of FUNDEMAR.

The Intern must comply with a general working program, Monday-Friday 9am-5pm which includes:

* Guiding and leading marine conservation activities with international student groups
* Give presentations on marine conservation issues and lead discussions
* Managing research data, evaluating results and creating reports
* Participate in the initiatives and events of FUNDEMAR whenever possible

The activities that will be carried out will be defined based on the education program and the activities of FUNDEMAR in that season. This program guarantees a robust learning experience on coastal-marine conservation and the effective use of their time in productive activities in support of the conservation of the local coastal-marine ecosystems. It also includes the use of the CECOMAR facilities and some marine incursions, either in snorkel or scuba provided by the institution, as well as the use of our boat "Calypso" to participate in field activities.

The intern will follow the program established by the CECOMAR technical team, who will systematically supervise and monitor the progress of and compliance to the program.

The intern will issue a total payment of $100.00 USD monthly. This amount allows the intern securing a stay of minimum 2 months renewable. The intern will sign a written agreement with FUNDEMAR in order to collaborate in our program.

The intern is responsible for managing their own accommodation in Bayahibe since FUNDEMAR does not have accommodation at the CECOMAR facilities. The intern will receive a certificate once the program is completed.

Note: All work products made by the intern and material used pertaining to FUNDEMAR, is owned by FUNDEMAR once the intern finishes their collaboration.

# Program for researchers, thesis students, Doctorates, others

Aimed at local and foreign people of advanced academic level who wish to carry out studies related to the three fundamental programs of FUNDEMAR in Bayahibe, mentioned at the beginning of the present document.

The intern will assume a payment of $ 100.00 USD per month. This amount allows the intern to use the CECOMAR facilities as well as the equipment, materials and technical support of FUNDEMAR. The intern will sign a written agreement with FUNDEMAR to complete the program.

The program does not cover food, telephone or health insurance. They will have access to the use of the FUNDEMAR’s equipment (boat, diving equipment, others) with the due payment of the costs incurred by the institution (fuel, oils, personnel, oxygen, etc.) if outside of FUNDEMAR's established activities. These costs vary depending on each program.

The researcher may develop their studies with complete autonomy receiving punctual support of the technical team of CECOMAR and will also have access to the institution’s scientific data under a written and approved authorization.

FUNDEMAR will appear as a collaborating organization in the study/thesis/report/article that results from the investigation. FUNDEMAR will receive a copy of the resulting work and data for its own filing and use for scientific purposes. The researcher will sign a collaboration agreement with the Foundation with institutional endorsement.

# Special program for researchers, thesis students, doctorates, others

Aimed at local and foreign people of advanced academic level who wish to carry out studies not related to the three Fundamental programs of FUNDEMAR in Bayahibe mentioned at the beginning of the present document, but relating to Coastal-Marine subjects (ecosystems, biodiversity, climate change, sustainable tourism, underwater archaeology, Etc.).

The intern will assume a payment of $ 100.00 USD per month. This amount allows the intern to use the CECOMAR facilities as well as the equipment, materials and technical support of FUNDEMAR. The intern will sign a written agreement with FUNDEMAR to complete the program.

The program does not cover food, telephone or health insurance. They will have access to the use of the FUNDEMAR’s equipment (boat, diving equipment, others) with the due payment of the costs incurred by the institution (fuel, oils, personnel, oxygen, etc.) if outside of FUNDEMAR's established activities. These costs vary depending on each program.

The researcher may develop their studies with complete autonomy receiving punctual support of the technical team of CECOMAR and will also have access to the institution’s scientific data under a written and approved authorization.

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# Volunteer Education Program for Groups

Institutions will be able to promote volunteer programs as a **Group** which conditions will be established in each specific case, both at the level of thematic content, time, number of participants, costs, etc. The institutions interested in this modality must request it in writing to FUNDEMAR detailing the following information:

* Name of the institution
* Date requested for the program (start and conclusion of the program)
* Number of participants with their respective ages
* Topics of interest linked exclusively to the work developed by FUNDEMAR through its marine station CECOMAR
* If accommodation in Bayahibe will be will required and if support on this is required
* Food and or drinks required
* Requirements for other additional services (shipping, local guides, etc.)

# Minimum requirements for individual interns and researchers

* Over 18 years old
* Submit a letter from the institution (University, Institute, etc.) to which the intern belongs and represents
* Duration of stay: agreed between the parties (minimum two months)
* Cover transportation and food costs
* **Have health insurance** or cover own medical expenses if necessary
* In the event of participating in diving activities, must have **diving insurance**
* Availability to participate in institutional activities and commitment with the principles of FUNDEMAR

# Preferred requirements for interns

* Advanced level of English
* Open water diver or higher diving certification
* Experience in marine conservation activities and/or handling of corals
* Experience in education with kids or young adults
* University students or graduates

# Intern duties

* Must commit in writing to comply with the agreed work program and present a report/summary at end of stay
* In the event that the volunteer does not meet the established requirements, FUNDEMAR reserves the right to dispense of intern services
* Must comply with the schedule established in their program
* Sign liability waiver form of the use of FUNDEAMR equipment and its consequent payment by damage or Loss
* Sign liability waiver in event of an accident occurring during the execution of activities

# FUNDEMAR Commitments with Interns

* FUNDEMAR accepts interns for the purpose of collaborating in the various scientific work activities and programs
* FUNDEMAR will train the intern whenever necessary
* Each intern will have an assigned supervisor responsible for their work
* FUNDEMAR will give recognition of all the work done by the intern during your stay based on pre-assessment

# APPLY TO PROGRAMS

Since we have limited spots every year, we recommended emailing us to fundemar.cecomar@gmail.com informing us of your interest in participating in any of the three collaboration possibilities with FUNDEMAR and formally applying to our internship and research programs by including:

* **Resume/CV**
* **Application Form** (Annex 1)
* **Letter of Interest** detailing program of interest, why you are interested in collaborating with us and how you can contribute to our programs (knowledge/skills)

For more information you can call us at: +1 (809) 833-0481

Annex 1

**FUNDEMAR APPLICATION FORM**

Internship/Volunteer/Research

**Personal Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Names |  |
| Surnames |  |
| Address |  |
| Date of birth |  | ID or Passport No. |  |
| Institution |  | Occupation/ Position |  |
| Phone |  | Email |  |
| Studies |  |
| Languages |  |
| I am interested in the following FUNDEMAR program |
| □ | General Internship (March-April) |
| □ | General Internship (June-July) |
| □ | Research Program |
| □ | Special Research Program |
| □ | Volunteer Education Program (groups) |

**Why do you want to be part of FUNDEMAR’s internship/volunteer/research program?**

**What skills and knowledge can you contribute to the program of interest?**

**Time frame you could collaborate in?**

**Would you like to make a comment?**

**Where did you hear about FUNDEMAR?**

**Please attach your resume and letter of interest**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date |  | Signature |