

OC Faculty Member Receives Grant to Continue Research on Cetaceans



Spinner Dolphins in Tañon Strait, Philippines.

Oceanographic Center faculty member Edward O. Keith, Ph.D. and his collaborator at the University of Miami, Lemnuel Aragonés, Ph.D., were notified on May 24, 2006 that they were receiving a \$10,000.00 grant from the Sea World Busch Gardens Conservation Fund to support our ongoing study of the Ecology and conservation of cetaceans (whales, dolphins and porpoises) in Tañon Strait, Philippines.

They have been studying the biology and conservation of cetaceans in this area since 2003, and received an NSU President's Faculty Research and Development Grant in 2004 to support our work. Last year, the Sea World Busch Gardens Fund provided \$3,500 for this project. The main goal of the project is to develop a Special Area Management Plan for the southern Tañon Strait. We plan to conduct stakeholder consultations/meetings and environmental workshops to involve local, provincial, and national governmental units in the development of the Management Plan and they will develop educational materials for the inhabitants and resource users in the region.

They also plan to continue and expand their photographic identification catalog of cetaceans in the Strait, and to study the surface behavioral patterns, home ranges, movements, cetacean-fishery interactions, and diving patterns of the cetaceans within the Strait. Such information is vital in gaining a better understanding of the ecology and life history characteristics of these cetaceans and is needed for the development of the Management Plan.
