

Dear Ms. Liz Sandeman,

Following your email from October 4th requesting information about the common dolphin Martinha, we inform the following:

- i) In a recent exchange of emails with CRAM-ECOMARE you were informed that due to the absence of the stranding national coordinator, the ICNF would not be able to reply to your request until the 8<sup>th</sup> of October and therefore you were specifically requested to refrain from launching any campaign about CRAM-ECOMARE and/or the ICNF;
- ii) Notwithstanding, the campaign was launched anyway, representing a serious sign of professional disrespect and unfolding a great deal of misunderstandings towards the work of the ICNF and the Portuguese stranding network. For example, explanations provided by CRAM-ECOMARE (former CRAM-Q) on a letter dated August 2016 to Ms. Amanda Flint (representing the World Cetacean Alliance) were disregarded and so was the ICNF's reply to FAADA (letter dated February 2017);
- iii) CRAM-ECOMARE has been acknowledged by both ICNF (the Portuguese Authority for Nature Conservation) and DGAV (the Portuguese General Directorate for Food and Veterinary) as a professional and well-qualified marine mammal rehabilitation centre, with a strong background and experience in handling marine species. Since its foundation, CRAM-ECOMARE has been a pioneer institution in the rehabilitation of marine wildlife with one of the highest marine wildlife rehabilitation success rates on the Portuguese coast;
- iv) Contrary to your statement, Martinha was never concealed and the conditions she is presently in, do not compromise her welfare. In fact, since 2016 Martinha is using a new tank holding 1500 m<sup>3</sup> of water, 5 meter depth and 800 m<sup>2</sup> surface, with physical filtration, UV treatment and a protein skimmer with ozone and she has access to live prey and naturalised housing conditions. Presently, there is no other realistic solution that would improve her welfare;
- v) As mentioned before (letter to FAADA), Martinha was considered non releasable due to her chronic pathologies and her release in the ocean would give her a very low, if any, chance of survival in a short period of time;
- vi) Presently, Martinha is in good condition, very active and ICNF maintains complete confidence in the work done by the experts at CRAM-ECOMARE;
- vii) In its capacity as the Portuguese Authority for Nature Conservation, ICNF will continue to monitor the work done at CRAM-ECOMARE and in particular Martinha's situation.

Taking into account all the above considerations ICNF reiterates its previous statement and maintains its opinion in that Martinha should be maintained at CRAM-ECOMARE.

Sincerely yours,

Rogério Rodrigues

**Rogério Rodrigues**  
**Presidente do Conselho Diretivo**  
**Instituto da Conservação da Natureza e das Florestas, IP**