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OFFICE OF THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY TRANSITION

Exma. Mrs
Dr. Marina Goncalves
Head of the Cabinet of the Lord Secretary of State for Parliamentary Affairs Palacio de Sao Bento
1249-068 Lisbon

YOUR REFERENCE YOUR COMMUNICATION FROM OUR REFERENCE DATE Occupation n. 3888
12-11-2018

SUBJECT: Question No. 601 / XIII / 4. *, of November 12, 2018 Whereabouts of rescued dolphins
In response to Question No 601 / XIII / 4 * of 12 November 2018 by Mr André Silva of the People-Animal-Nature Parliamentary Group (PAN), the Minister for the Environment and Transition Power to transmit the following:

1. Where are the dolphins currently mentioned?

In September of 2007, the national network of throwings registered the throwing of a juvenile specimen ("Martinha") of common dolphin in the bay of S. Martinho do Porto. The animal showed signs of having been accidentally caught in fishing gear and was transferred to the facilities of the Quaios Marine Animal Rehabilitation Center (CRAM-Q).

As early as December 2012, an adult female dolphin born in Praia da Barra, Aveiro, entered the CRAM-Q, also with signs of accidental capture by fishing gear and with clear signs of capture myopathy (muscular damage caused by the caudal peduncle during the accidental catch event). As soon as the CRAM-Q technicians were able to reverse muscle damage and ensured that the female was able to swim freely without help or outside support, she was transferred to the same pool where Martinha was already, in an attempt that the younger animal ("Martinha") learned from the oldest female ("Barra") and so that the two dolphins could be released together.

It should be noted that CRAM-Q (now CRAM-ECOMARE) is a marine animal rehabilitation center duly licensed by the national authorities with competence in the areas of nature conservation and rehabilitation of wild species (ie Nature Conservation Institute (ICNF) and Directorate General of Food and Veterinary Medicine), with a long history of success in the rehabilitation of marine animals collected along the Portuguese mainland coast. It has a permanent technical staff (veterinarians, veterinarians and veterinarian nurses), with extensive experience in the handling and rehabilitation of marine animals (birds, mammals and reptiles) and maintains close contacts with international specialists in the field of medicine and rehabilitation of marine mammals, especially cetaceans.

The whole process of rehabilitation of these two dolphins was always supported by international experts in medicine and rehabilitation of cetaceans, who, when necessary, performed more complex chemical and pathological analyzes to these animals and moved to Portugal for a closer proximity .

Sadly, "Barra" never fully recovered from the problems that led to his impudence, and despite all his efforts, he died in September 2014.

Since August 2016, "Martinha" has been in the new facilities of CRAM-Q (now CRAM-ECOMARE), to which the other rehabilitated and irreversible animals in the center have also been transferred.

In the new facilities, the common dolphin has a tank with 1,500 m³ of water, 5 meters deep and 800 m² of surface, with physical filtration, treatment by UV and ozone, and where it has access to free prey and a naturalized habitat. During the cooler months, usually in December and January, the "Martinha" is transferred to a smaller pool (still much larger than recommended by National Marine Fisheries Service, USA), where the water temperature is artificially maintained to comfortable levels.

There is currently no other realistic solution that can further improve Martinha's well-being.

In fact, due to recurrent and recurrent chronic problems (mainly liver problems that require permanent veterinary medical follow-up), together with the fact that the "Barra" dolphin has not survived, eventual release into the wild in these conditions would prevent the dolphin from surviving " Martinha ", having therefore been classified irrecoverable.

Both CRAM-ECOMARE and ICNF have already tried to find a suitable place to host the "Martinha" and offer it all the welfare conditions it needs, but the fact that there is no other dolphin- nor equipment with the experience already acquired by the CRAM-ECOMARE technicians in the rehabilitation of this species, make any transfer of this dolphin to other facilities or entity impossible.

Currently, "Martinha" is in good physical condition and the ICNF maintains all the confidence in the CRAM-ECOMARE technical team.

2. If they have been released in their natural habitat, on what date have they been released?

As explained in the answer to the previous question, none of the dolphins was released in their natural habitat.

3. Have conclusive reports been elaborated on your ability to survive in the natural habitat?

As mentioned, the "Barra" dolphin did not survive. The "Martinha" dolphin presents recurrent and recurrent chronic problems and was not considered apt to survive in the natural habitat.

Yours sincerely, Perreaus The Head of the Cabinet

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Ana Cisa

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