

Protocols for management of human-crocodilian interactions in Costa Rica

Laura Patricia Porras Murillo*¹, Angie Sánchez Núñez² and Carlos Espinoza Marín¹

¹Instituto Internacional en Conservación y Manejo de Vida Silvestre, Universidad Nacional, Heredia, Costa Rica (laura.porras.murillo@una.ac.cr, pericutina@gmail.com)

²Sistema Nacional de Áreas de Conservación, Ministerio de Ambiente y Energía, San José, Costa Rica (angie.sanchez@sinac.go.cr)

Abstract: In recent years, the report of interactions between humans and crocodiles has increased in Costa Rica, which has generated concern in the human population. This concern increases due to the lack of information and protocols that allow for proper management of those interactions by the competent authorities. Because of this, wildlife authorities in Costa Rica prioritized the construction of protocols for handling these situations. In a participatory process, three protocols were created: Immediate management of crocodilians, Management of interactions between humans and crocodilians, and Economic valuation of damages. We work between February to December 2019. The process for the construction of the protocols included: 1- Review of the existing information on the crocodilian populations of the country, and the relevant initiatives to generate the protocols. 2- Meetings with crocodilian specialists and wildlife officials, 3- Workshops for consultation and construction with key actors in the field: tourism, NGOs, red cross, police, coast guard, government wildlife officials. These protocols detail the steps that wildlife officials must follow, in response to reports of human-crocodilian interactions. The process was constructed according to what is established in the regulations to the Wildlife Conservation Law and its regulations, participatory and exhaustive. The protocols obtained are easy to implement for wildlife officials in the country.

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