

IN MEMORY OF DR. WILMER CARBAJAL VILLALTA



Dr. Wilmer Carbajal Villalta

On January 20th, Dr. Wilmer Carbajal Villalta left us, which has caused deep sadness in his family and in the Pedro Ruíz Gallo National University, in the Peruvian Sea Institute and among the artisanal fishing communities of Lambayeque and Piura. He was an indefatigable promoter of marine sciences, tireless executor of projects and academic and scientific initiatives and events, publisher of books and publications, educator and he was an outstanding and proactive official in all the positions of responsibility that he had to assume during his professional career.

To his professional abilities must be added his personal virtues: his good-naturedness, his optimism, his joy and good humor, his dedicated love for his family, his sincere dedication to friendship, his passion for life and for his profession.

Wilmer's professional training period was mainly between Peru, Chile and Germany, countries where he left many good friends among his colleagues. His personal and academic merits made him a prominent member of the international scientific community.

He was loved and recognized wherever he went. I remember an opportunity when we met in the city of Concepción, Chile, where he spent fruitful years of study with his family. Walking through the streets, numerous people recognized and greeted him, as was frequent in Santa Rosa, Chiclayo, Lambayeque or Paita. That's how loved he was by everyone who knew Wilmer, whom we already miss even though he just left.

Wilmer was born in Chulucanas, Piura, and in his 65 years he never left that sympathetic accent when speaking that was so characteristic of him. He graduated as a Fisheries

Biologist from the Trujillo National University. He continued his postgraduate studies at the Concepción University (UdeC) in Chile where he first obtained his Master's Degree and then his Doctorate in Oceanography. The UdeC has published a heartfelt tribute in memory of him, which highlights the pride of this prestigious university for having had him among its members. Wilmer used the knowledge acquired at UdeC in various universities, especially in the Faculty of Biological Sciences of the Pedro Ruiz Gallo National University (UNPRG) in Lambayeque, but he never lost contact with the UdeC, which he also considered his Alma mater. Until recently, Wilmer served as the UNPRG General Secretariat for two hard years at the UNPRG, which shows that he was not a man to shy away from challenges.

Wilmer founded the Peruvian Society of Marine Sciences in 2012, and since 2008 he had successfully led his initiative to hold the National Congress of Marine Sciences (CONCIMAR), which has become the most important academic marine event in the country and has already been carried out on six occasions; Wilmer was in charge of two of these editions, the first in 2008 and the fifth in 2016, both in Lambayeque, but he was involved in the successful organization of all CONCIMARs. He also created a consulting company (Costamar) after leaving IMARPE in 2010. In 2013 he was in charge of the diagnosis of ocean productivity in Peru commissioned by the GEF-UNDP Humboldt Project. More recently Wilmer created the Peruvian Oceanography Network (ROP), which seeks to spread knowledge and technology among all students and marine researchers in the country. The aforementioned describes well the commitment that Wilmer had with Peru, but also with the international scientific community.

Being a good scientist is just as important as being a promoter of science, and both qualities were more than fulfilled in Wilmer. That is why he was invited as a lecturer in various parts of the world, the good friendships that he cultivated and the network of contacts that he built spread throughout the world. This led him to accept the responsibility of assuming the Presidency of the Organizing Committee of the Fifth International Symposium on the Ocean in a High CO2 World to be held in 2022. Wilmer was also a prominent member and national coordinator of the Latin American Network of Ocean Acidification (LAOCA) and the Global Ocean Acidification - Observational Network (GOA-ON).

In the framework of World Oceans Day on June 8, 2020, he made a virtual presentation in which he summarized the state of national knowledge about the effects of ocean acidification in the Peruvian sea. In October 2020, he held a virtual exhibition in tribute to the scientists who, in his opinion, have contributed to the development of marine science in Peru, but his human greatness prevented him from including himself in that count. Today we can say that he is part of that gallery of distinguished marine researchers, and with deep sorrow, we also say that we have lost one of our best promoters and scientists, as well as being a great person and a great friend.

Mariano Gutiérrez Torero
Humboldt Institute Peru