

LAURA GONZÁLEZ GARCÍA | CV

»» PhD in Marine Sciences, Technology and Management. ◀◀ CV APRIL 2020



- ▶ **Profile:** Marine Biologist & Oceanographer. Cetacean researcher. Whale Watching Tour Guide
- ▶ **Fields:** Cetacean distribution, Cetacean Ecology, Physical Oceanography, Habitat Modelling, Azores, Whale Watching, Tourism, Sustainability.
- ▶ **Skills:** Motivation, enthusiasm and autonomy; organizational and time management; good written and oral communication; leadership and team working; excellent interpersonal skills and networking.

Head Biologist and tour guide ([Futurismo Azores Adventures, Portugal](#)) 2017 - now

- ▶ Coordinator of the biologists team, leading and supervising research and educational projects.
- ▶ Whale Watching and Swimming with Dolphins tour guide.
 - Establishment and implementation of several standardized protocols for useful data collection during whale watching tours.
 - Co-supervision of ongoing Msc.Thesis focused on spatio-temporal distribution and photo-identification of bottlenose dolphins, common dolphins, pilot whales, sperm whales and fin whales sighted off São Miguel (see below).
 - Organization of outreach events, with schools, locals and tourists, for people of all ages; including talks and workshops about environmental education and research focused mostly on oceans and biodiversity.
 - Participation in international events, meetings, workshops, and projects regarding cetacean research and sustainable tourism.

Sail & Whale: Sailors, Citizens & Science for Marine Conservation ([S&W](#)) 2016-now

- ▶ Founder of a citizen science project for cetacean monitoring and environmental education.
- ▶ More than 600 sightings of 23 different cetacean species collected over the Atlantic.
- ▶ Development of own web and social media platforms (www.sailandwhale.com).

Pre-doctoral researcher ([Applied Physics Department, University of Vigo](#)) 2013 - 2016

- ▶ Oceanographic remotely sensed data processing and analysing (Matlab).
- ▶ Habitat modelling using mostly Generalized Additive Models (R).
- ▶ Assistant professor of "*Basic Field Methods and Remote Sensing*" for Biology students.

Research stay ([Ifremer - Brest, France](#)) Mar - Jul 2016

- ▶ Working at [Laboratoire d'Océanographie Physique et Spatiale](#).
- ▶ Environmental satellite data processing and analysing, mostly with Matlab.

Research stay ([University of Aberdeen - Scotland](#)) Oct- Dec 2015

- ▶ Working at [Oceanlab](#).
- ▶ Learning and development of statistical methods to analyse ecological data.

Research collaboration ([CETUS Project, CIIMAR / Univ. Porto, Portugal](#)) May - Sep 2015

- ▶ Cetacean monitoring on board cargo ships through the Macaronesia.
- ▶ Data processing, spatial analyses, habitat modelling.

EXPERIENCE

- Diving: divemaster & instructor** (Vigo, Galicia) 2012-2016
- › Buceo Atlantis. Diving instructor and guide (2013- 2016)
 - › Buceo Balea. Internship and divemaster (Nov 2012 - May 2013).
- Catamaran tour guide** (O Grove, Galicia) Jul - Oct 2013
- › Cruceiros do Ulla - Turimares. Tour guide and sailor, thematic tours in Rias Baixas (Galicia).
- Oceanographic Expeditions** (Atlantic Ocean) 2011/2012
- › PELACUS 0411 - O/V Thalassa. Sea bird and marine mammal observer.
 - › SPURS-MIDAS - O/V Sarmiento de Gamboa. Applied Physics researcher.
- Nautical section manager and reservations** (Vigo, Spain) Jul-Ago 2011
- › Beachescolas. Sailing school and leisure center in Bao beach, Vigo.
 - › In charged of the nautical section (sailing and kayaking) and reservations.
- Whale Watching Guide and Biologist** (Azores, Portugal) 2010-2012
- › Futurismo Azores Adventures (Estagiar-L 2010; season 2012).
- Research Assistant** (Azores // Galicia-Spain) 2008/2009
- › Nova Atlantis Research Center (Pico, Azores); study cetaceans off Pico (2009).
 - › IMEDEA; Control Integrado del Complejo Invasor en el P.N. de las Islas Atlánticas (2008/2009).
- Kayak Vigo** (Vigo, Spain) 2006-now
- › Founder of *Kayak Vigo*, kayaking club in Vigo in September 2006.
 - › Kayaking instructor (2006-2013).
 - › In charge of planning and management, maintenance, event organization and attendance, etc.
- Other jobs** (Galicia)
- › Environmental educator, kayak instructor, free-time instructor, tour guide
 - › Clarinetist, insurances seller, phone seller, cleaning services.

Ph.D. Marine Science, Tecnology and Management (University of Vigo) 2013-2019

- › Defended in March 2019. "*Cum Laude*" & "*International Mention*".
- › *Academic Excellence Award* for PhD students of University of Vigo (2014).

Thesis: *Spatio-temporal distribution of the order Cetacea in the Azores: relationship between biotic and abiotic variables.*

The thesis follows a very similar approach with the one asked in this call. Whale watching data used on this PhD follows basically the same data collection methodology and format as the one from Monicet. The dataset comprises 7721 records of 20 different species collected over 7 years of whale watching in São Miguel. Description and analyses of the cetacean data have already identified potential biases and sources of error that has been addressed later on with the selection of appropriate processing and analysing methods. A deep oceanographic overview of the Azores, mostly focused around São Miguel island, has been undertaken using different spatial and temporal scales of oceanographic and climatological variables, both from remote sensing or modelling products. Different environmental variables of different spatial and temporal scales have been explored and tested for habitat modelling, recognizing limitations and advantages of their use in order to better understand their effect on the distribution of the studied species. One of the most relevant (and novel) results was regarding ocean dynamism. The use of oceanographic dynamic variables has allowed to conclude the importance of meso- and submesoscale oceanographic features on the distribution of the studied cetacean species.

Msc. Biodiversity and Ecosystems (University of Vigo)

2011-2012

- Qualification: 9.6350/10.

Thesis: *Spatio-temporal distribution of common dolphin, bottlenose dolphin and sperm whale off the south coast of São Miguel: predictive modelling of the favourable zones for observation.*

Relationship between the distribution of three cetacean species and different environmental variables (depth, slope, aspect and sea surface temperature) was analysed. Using GIS, favourable zones for observation based on the previous analysed values were predicted for sperm whales.

Msc. Oceanography (University of Vigo)

2010-2011

- Qualification: 9.1950/10.

Thesis: *Distribution of sperm whales (Physeter macrocephalus) off the south coast of São Miguel, Azores: the relationship between bathymetry, slope and bottom aspect.*

Sperm whale distribution was described using three years of sightings collected during whale watching tours of São Miguel. Distribution according to static oceanographic variables was assessed.

Bachelor in Biology (University of Santiago de Compostela)

2004-2009

- Five year degree, qualification: 8.2158/10.

High School (Centro Galego de Tecnificación Deportiva)

2002-2004

- Sport Technification Center in Pontevedra (Galicia, Spain). Sport: **rowing**.
- High School: 1º & 2º Bachillerato - "Matrícula de Honor" (with distinction).

COMPLEMENTARY TRAINING

ESA Advanced Training on Ocean Remote Sensing (ESA)

2015/2017

- 2015 - Ifremer, Brest, France (40 h).
- 2017 - University of Porto, Portugal (40 h).

Statistics training (Data analysis, programming)

2011/2015/2016

- Modelización de Nichos Ecológicos; GBIF Madrid, 2016 (24 h).
- Data Exploration, Regression, GLM & GAM with intro to R; Highland Stats, Coimbra, 2015 (30 h).
- Statistics with "R" for researchers University of Vigo, 2011 (30 h).

Enterpreunership training (Escuela Organización Industrial & UVigo)

Nov-Dec 2014

- Course *Iniciativa Emprendedora Universitaria*. University of Vigo, Spain (150 h).

Seminar on Marine Mammals: Biology and Conservation (Valencia, Spain)

Sept 2012

- *IX European Seminar on Marine Mammals*. Univ. Internacional Menéndez Pelayo (40 h).

Other information (Hard skills)

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- Languages: Spanish, English, Portuguese, basic Italian.
- Kayaking instructor (2005) and diving instructor -PADI OWSI- (2013).
- Driving license. Boat license (PER).

PUBLICATIONS

- Moura AE., Silva SE., SPEA., Correia AM., Sousa-Pinto I., Gil A., Freitas L., Ribeiro C., Carvalho A., Dinis A., Alves F., Ferreira R., Azevedo JMN., Fernández M., Cecchetti A., Medeiros R., Machete M., Silva H., **González L.**, Faustino C., Carvalho I., Brito C., Martinho F., IFAW/MCR, Sillero N. 2019. *Mamíferos Marinhos*. In: *Bencatel J, Sabino-Marques H, Álvares F, Moura AE, Barbosa AM. 2019. Atlas de Mamíferos de Portugal, 2ª edição*. Universidade de Évora, Portugal. ISBN 978-989-8550-80-4
- Valente R., Correia AM, Gil Á, **González García L.**, Sousa-Pinto I. 2019. *Baleen whales in Macaronesia: occurrence patterns revealed through a bibliographic review*. *Mammal Review*, 49(2), 129-151.
- **González García L.**, Pierce GJ., Autret E., Torres-Palenzuela JM. 2018. *Multi-scale habitat preference analyses for Azorean blue whales*. *PLoS ONE* 13(9): e0201786. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0201786>
- Moura AE., Silva SE., SPEA., Correia AM., Sousa-Pinto I., Gil A., Freitas L., Ribeiro C., Carvalho A., Dinis A., Alves F., Ferreira R., Azevedo JMN., Fernández M., Cecchetti A., Medeiros R., Machete M., Silva H., **González L.**, Faustino C., Carvalho I., Brito C., Martinho F., IFAW/MCR, Sillero N. 2017. *Mamíferos marinhos*. In: *Atlas de Mamíferos de Portugal*. Universidade de Évora, Portugal. ISBN 978-989-8550-46-0

CONFERENCES 2015-2020

- **González García L.**, Pierce GJ, Autret E, Torres-Palenzuela JM. 2019. *Temporal distribution and Multi-scale Habitat Preference Analyses for Azorean Blue Whales*. World Marine Mammal Conference 2019, Barcelona, Spain. 9-12 December. Poster presentation.
- Al Abbar F, Cabo Ibarzabal I, Balibrea C, Catalão RIV, Benítez MEH, **González García L.** 2019. *Distribution of common dolphins (*Delphinus delphis*) off São Miguel Island, Azores: Using "Highly Identifiable Individuals" to determine a potential residency pattern*. World Marine Mammal Conference 2019, Barcelona, Spain. 9-12 December. Poster presentation.
- Martins R, **González García L.**, Hartman K. 2019. *Residency patterns of Risso's dolphins off São Miguel and inter-island matches with Pico Island (Azores)*. World Marine Mammal Conference 2019, Barcelona, Spain. 9-12 December. Poster presentation.
- Ojeda V, van der Linde M, Fonseca M, Gardoki M, Soares M, **González García L.** 2019. *Baleen whale faeces in the Azores*. World Marine Mammal Conference, Barcelona, Spain. 9-12 December. Poster presentation.
- Valente R, Correia AM, Gil A, **González L.**, Sousa-Pinto I. 2019. *Where and when are you going? Unravelling distribution patterns of baleen whales through a bibliographic review*. World Marine Mammal Conference 2019, Barcelona, Spain. 9-12 December. Poster presentation.
- Martins R, **González García L.**, and Azevedo JMN. 2018. *Discovering a resident family of Risso's dolphins off São Miguel with a newly developed Photo-ID app*. DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.20296.57609. 53rd European Marine Biology Symposium 2018, Ostend, Belgium. 17-21 September. Poster presentation.
- Gardoki M, **González L.**, van der Linde M, Azevedo JMN and Fernández M 2018. *Mister Liable, a resident male sperm whale in the Azores?* DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.17360.56323. 32nd European Cetacean Society 2018, La Spezia, Italy. 6-8 April. Poster presentation.
- Ojeda V, Montoya C, van der Linde M and **González L.** 2018. *Complex temporal distribution of fin whales and sei whales in the Azores*. DOI : 10.13140/RG.2.2.26471.55204. 32nd European Cetacean Society 2018, La Spezia, Italy. 6-8 April. Poster presentation.
- Bellas Aláez FM, **González L.**, and Torres-Palenzuela JM. 2018. *Novel technics for habitat distribution modelling in marine mammals*. VI International Symposium on Marine Sciences. Vigo, Spain. 20-22 June. Poster presentation.

- González Vilas L, **González L**, and Torres-Palenzuela JM. 2018. Temporal and spatial distribution of cetaceans in the Azores using ecological niche models. VI International Symposium on Marine Sciences. Vigo, Spain. 20-22 June. Poster presentation.
- Valente R, Correia AM, Gil A, **González L**, Sousa-Pinto I. 2017. Understanding migratory routes in the Macaronesia – assessing range of physiographic variables for baleen whales. 31st Annual Conference of the European Cetacean Society. Middelfart, Denmark. 1-3 May. Poster presentation.
- **González L**, Alonso J, Mutter M, Boertien M, Butter E, Morganti C and Torres Palenzuela JM. 2017. The first year of Sail & Whale: a success of synergy. II Congreso de Biodiversidad y Conservación de la Naturaleza. Almería, Spain. 28-30 September. Oral presentation.
- **González L**, Correia AM, Gil A, Morganti C, Mutter M, Boertien M, Butter E and Torres-Palenzuela J. 2016. Sail & Whale : Sailors, Citizens and Science for Marine Conservation. I Congreso de Biodiversidad y Conservación de la Naturaleza. Almería, Spain. 29-30 September. Best marine oral presentation award.
- Valente R, Correia AM, **González L**, Gil A and Sousa Pinto I. 2016. Blue and Humpback whales: unraveling migratory routes through a spatio-temporal analysis. International Science Conference. Vila Real, Portugal. 17-18 November. Poster presentation.
- **González L**, van der Linde M and Torres-Palenzuela JM. 2016. [Understanding blue whales off Azores](#). 30th European Cetacean Society. Madeira, Portugal. 14-16 March. Poster presentation.
- **González L** and Torres-Palenzuela J. 2015. Estudio preliminar de ballenas azules (*Balaenoptera musculus*) en Azores. Sociedad Española de Cetáceos 2015. Vigo, Spain. 2-4 October. Oral presentation.
- Gil A, **González L** and Correia AM. 2015. Rutas migratorias de las yubartas en el Atlántico: ¿dónde y cuándo? Sociedad Española de Cetáceos 2015. Vigo, Spain. 2-4 October. Best poster award.

MSC. THESIS SUPERVISION

- Gardoki Marina. 2019-2020. Residency patterns of a male sperm whale in São Miguel, Azores. Msc. Thesis for a Master in Biodiversity. Co-supervision with José MNV Azevedo. Universidade dos Açores, Portugal.
- Ernesto, Maria Ana. 2019-2020. Fin whale (*Balaenoptera physalus*) identification and distribution around São Miguel Island (Azores) and inferences in the movements towards other areas. Msc. Thesis for a Master in Marine Biology. Co-supervision with David Abecasis. Faculdade de Ciências e Tecnologia, Universidade do Algarve, Portugal.
- Brandão, Milla Silveira Pinto. 2019-2020. Short-beaked common dolphins (*Delphinus delphis*) in São Miguel Island, Azores: photo-identification of Highly Identifiable Individuals (HII) and spatio-temporal distribution. Msc. Thesis for a Master in Marine Biology. Co-supervision with Bárbara Bastos Horta. Faculdade de Ciências e Tecnologia, Universidade do Algarve, Portugal.
- Coelho, Inês Afonso Teixeira. 2019-2020. Habitat preferences of sperm whales (*Physeter macrocephalus*) off São Miguel island, Azores. Msc. Thesis for a Master in Marine Biology. Co-supervision with David Abecasis. Faculdade de Ciências e Tecnologia, Universidade do Algarve, Portugal.
- Negulescu, Ramona. 2019-2020. Spatial and temporal distribution and photo identification of the pilot whale population of São Miguel, Azores. Msc. Thesis for a Master in Marine Biology. Co-supervision with Rita Castilho. Faculdade de Ciências e Tecnologia, Universidade do Algarve, Portugal.
- Catalão, Rita. 2019-2020. Photo-identification and residency patterns of bottlenose dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*) in São Miguel, Azores. Msc. Thesis for a Master in Marine Biology. Co-supervision with Catarina Vinagre. Faculdade de Ciências e Tecnologia, Universidade do Algarve, Portugal.