

## Falkland Islands Science Symposium: South Atlantic Seduction

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I was seduced! And it wasn't just me. The entire scientific delegation to the Falklands was seduced at one time or another while visiting. No – it wasn't because of the open and charming people who lived here and welcomed us at every event. Nor was it because of the superb meals (and wine!) with which we were plied at every dinner. It wasn't even because of the field trips to photograph penguins, or seals, or collect fossils, in wonderful outdoor settings. Rather, this was a

totally non-subtle, full-on, in your face seduction that took advantage of a scientist's greatest weakness. I'm talking of course about our unstoppable excitement when faced with new scientific challenges and possibilities. So the decision by SAERI, the Falkland Islands and the British government to fly us all down here to woo us with scientific seductions was a brilliant move. I suspect that all of the scientists in the delegation are already fully engaged in other projects back home and in other countries. So few of us expected to take on any new projects when we accepted the invitation to come to the Falklands; we just couldn't resist the invitation to see a new part of the world. But once here, and once confronted with new scientific possibilities, we were hooked. Most of us are now committed to collaborate with SAERI on various projects. Scientists are so naïve!



# SAERI NEWS

I do scientific research on fish and shark populations in Canada and Iceland, where the environmental conditions are very similar to those in the Falklands. So to a Canadian scientist, it is fascinating to see how life has evolved under Canadian temperatures in a location on the other side of the world. One thing that piqued my interest was the occasional capture of porbeagle sharks in the waters around the Falklands. Porbeagle sharks, which are a smaller relative of the great white shark, are a common fishing target in the waters off of eastern Canada, where the conditions are very similar to those here. So why aren't there more porbeagles here? After asking around, I found out that none of the fishermen here use the pelagic longline gear and large hooks that would be suited for catching porbeagles. So it could be that porbeagles are actually quite common in Falkland waters. And if so, I wonder if they behave, live and grow in the same way that those in the North Atlantic do. How interesting! As I said earlier, I've been seduced!

