Claudio Campagna, Ph.D.

Claudio Campagna, Ph.D., M.D., has won a coveted Pew Marine Conservation Fellowship to help strengthen and preserve the threatened marine environment off the coast of Argentina. Campagna is one of only five 2004 recipients of Pew Marine Conservation Fellowships—the world's most prestigious award honoring and investing in applied ocean conservation science and outreach.

He will use his Pew Fellowship to expand, strengthen, and publicize a project he founded in 2001 called Sea & Sky ('Mar y Cielo' in Spanish). Sea & Sky is working to establish a protected 'park' in the waters of Patagonian large marine ecosystem.

PFP: How did you first come up with the concept of the Sea & Sky Program, and how did you put your idea into action? Why did you call it Sea & Sky?

Campagna: During the early 1990s, I was part of a team that produced the Patagonian Coastal Zone Management Plan The project required—for more than 3,000 kilometers of coastline—that we develop a vision of use compatible with ecosystem conservation. The biological work that we conducted suggested that some of the most extraordinary coastal wildlife spectacles, such as the extended colonies of penguins, sea lions, and elephant seals, are dependent on the productivity of very few localized areas of the ocean ("ocean fronts") away from land. Not surprisingly, these most productive areas of the ocean also attract national and international fisheries of considerable importance.

We found that administrators, pressed for short-term results, do not have an understanding of the ocean as an ecosystem that would translate into integrated management. Thus, without a major change in paradigms, the expected future of the Patagonian large marine ecosystem would be that of virtually all highly productive areas in the ocean: depletion of resources, degradation of the environment, loss of biodiversity. My own research on seals and sea lions at the time was showing the importance of linking coastal ecosystems with the open ocean. I then felt I had to do something to protect those animals and places that gave sense to my life.

I believe that we can change the way we think about the ocean and derive from that new thinking decisions and actions compatible with a holistic understanding of nature, one with a less utilitarian view of the world.

Regarding the name of the project, one day I was glancing at a book with illustrations by Maurits Escher and saw one of his 1938 woodcuts, 'Sky and Water.' The self-sustained, intricate pattern