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TEACHERS FROM HUALAIHUÉ SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE THE FIRST DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN CHILE

- ***The initiative of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, founding partner of Fundación Huinay, together with Enel Generación Chile, ran for ten weeks and was developed by the university's Centro de Investigación en Didáctica de las Ciencias y Educación STEM (CIDSTEM).***
- ***This inaugural course was taken by sixteen teachers from a host of educational establishments, both municipal and private, in the commune of Hualaihué, Region of Los Lagos.***

Region of Los Lagos, October 15, 2021. The first diploma in Education on Climate Change in Chile came to a successful conclusion. The course, given by professionals from the Centro de Investigación Didáctica de las Ciencias de la Educación STEM (CIDSTEM) of the Pontificia Universidad de Valparaíso (PUCV), with the support of the Fundación San Ignacio del Huinay, was designed for teachers at municipal and subsidized private schools in the commune of Hualaihué.

The 10-week initiative, part of the PUCV's long-standing collaboration with the Fundación San Ignacio del Huinay, was offered free of charge to teachers from Hualaihué, during which the sixteen teachers who took part had classes in a hybrid mode of both face-to-face and virtual, including five days of work in the Foundation itself, in Comau Fjord.

"This diploma is just one of the ways in which the Foundation is responding to the climate crisis, with a focus on delivering and developing knowledge to help understand the different factors of climate change, and with the aim of supplying educational tools to teachers that allow students in the area to include this important subject in their daily classes," said **Herman Chadwick**, president of the Foundation. He added, *"We at Fundación Huinay continue to invest in scientific research with the observation program of the terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of Patagonia and in education. These are the two central and complementary pillars of our action on climate."*

Nelson Vasquez, academic vice-rector of the PUCV, pointed out that *"The aim of this first Diploma in Education on Climate Change was to provide tools and to transfer academic knowledge, with a focus on the recognition and identification of its causes, thus allowing the sixteen teachers from Hualaihué who took part in the course to apply this matter of great national and international relevance in their curriculums. The news we receive every day about climate change is alarming. However, as a university, we are aware that the new generations face a tremendous challenge, which is associated with raising awareness about the reality we are living and with becoming true agents of change in the future. Teachers play a pivotal role in this process, since they are responsible for guiding and paving the way forward for their students. Hence the importance of this diploma, designed to help teachers learn about climate change and find a way to teach it in class, generating the educational action of schools both with students and local communities to contribute to environmental protection."*

Activities and initiatives such as this one take on even more relevance when, in light of the latest UN report on climate change carried out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), it



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was confirmed that the different human actions, especially those of an industrial nature, have been and remain the main influence on the warming of the Earth's atmosphere, oceans, and the land, generating changes and irreversible effects on the environment for centuries and millennia to come.

“The course was wonderful, an important learning process for us. Personally speaking, I’m finishing this process full of positive energy. I learned new strategies, I got to fully understand the causes of climate change and the action we can take to mitigate it and, with that, pass this on to my students, colleagues, and the educational community at large to generate actions and work on them in our establishment,” said Ever Gutiérrez, head teacher at the Cataratas del Alerce rural school in Hualaihué Puerto.

He went on to say, *“This type of activity, which articulates the efforts of the private sector, academia, and scientific world is spectacular and is something that we should always be around, because we are not separate worlds, we always coexist, especially since we are preparing our students for the working world, possibly for roles in which the science world meets the private sector, therefore making this work something that should always be done”.*

The sixteen teachers who graduated in this first Diploma in Climate Change Education were honored by the teaching staff of the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso, who led the classes, as well as scientists from the Fundación San Ignacio del Huinay and executives from Enel in a closing ceremony held on the premises of the Liceo Hornopirén high school.

FUNDACIÓN HUINAY

The Fundación San Ignacio del Huinay was created in 1998, thanks to an alliance between Enel Generación and the Pontificia Universidad Católica de Valparaíso. Located in the Region of Los Lagos, in Comau Fjord, the Foundation bases its scientific objectives on the study of the impact of long-term variability and climate change on the processes and interactions between the region's terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems. The Foundation operates in accordance with a policy of open-source data and replicable science, through the analysis of information collected by a network of automated monitoring stations, field sampling stations, and remote sensing.