

# IUCN SSC Sirenia Specialist Group

2020 Report



Helene Marsh



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## Co-Chairs

Helene Marsh <sup>(1)</sup> (Dugongs)  
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## Red List Authority Coordinator

Alejandro Ortega-Argueta <sup>(3)</sup>

## Location/Affiliation

- <sup>(1)</sup> James Cook University, Townsville, Australia  
<sup>(2)</sup> Clearwater Marine Aquarium Research Institute, Florida, US  
<sup>(3)</sup> Departamento de Conservación de la Biodiversidad, El Colegio de la Frontera Sur, ECOSUR, Mexico

## Number of members

107

## Social networks

### Website:

<https://mission.cmaquarium.org/research-institute/manatee-research/sirenews/>

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## Mission statement

The mission of the Sirenia Specialist Group (SSG) is to contribute to increasing current knowledge on the status and distribution of Order Sirenia across the entire geographic range of its distribution, to identify issues of concern, and to provide recommendations for research and conservation actions to ensure their long-term conservation.

## Projected impact for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

By the end of 2020, we aim to have achieved a substantial advance in reducing the risk of extinction of:

- (1) West Indian Manatee (*Trichechus manatus*) and Amazonian Manatee (*Trichechus inunguis*) in Central and South American countries, by increasing community awareness of the risks of poaching and habitat loss through management tailored to specific countries or regions.
- (2) African Manatee (*Trichechus senegalensis*) through information sharing and training of African researchers throughout the species' range via a collaborative network for manatee field work and conservation in 18 African countries, providing basic field research equipment and assisting with the development of plans tailored to specific countries or regions.

(3) Dugong (*Dugong dugon*) through the Global Environment Facility Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project, which focuses on conservation through sustainable community-led stewardship and socio-economic development in Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mozambique, Sri Lanka, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu, and in-country actions in the remaining range states.

## Targets for the 2017-2020 quadrennium

### Assess

Red List: (1) revise West Indian Manatee assessment; (2) complete Dugong regional assessment.

### Communicate

Communication: (1) publish *Sirenews* regularly; (2) ensure sirenian bibliography is readily accessible.

## Activities and results 2020

### Assess

#### Red List

- i.** The West Indian Manatee assessment is delayed; we are waiting for US data. The species was downlisted on the Endangered Species Act in 2018, but a recent dieback has created concern. (KSR #2)
- ii.** Some work has been done on the Dugong East African regional assessment. (KSR #2)

### Communicate

#### Communication

- i.** Three newsletters were published. (KSR #28)

Vulnerable Dugong, *Dugong dugon*  
Photo: Ahmed Shawky



### **Acknowledgements**

The Sirenia Specialist Group would like to thank James Powell for enabling *Sirenews* to be published regularly, and the Clearwater Marine Aquarium Research Institute.

### **Summary of activities 2020**

Species Conservation Cycle ratio: 2/5

Assess **2** 

Communicate **1** 

Main KSRs addressed: 2, 28

Resolutions addressed: WCC-2016-Res-011,  
WCC-2016-Res-039, WCC-2016-Res-060,  
WCC-2016-Res-085

KSR: Key Species Result



Vulnerable West Indian Manatee, *Trichechus manatus*, Xclalak, Costa Sur de Quintana Roo  
Photo: Luis. F. Amezcua