IUCN SSC Species Survival Commission

Species

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2022 Report of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and Secretariat

Stand-alone report
IUCN SSC Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC)

The IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) is a science-based network of thousands of volunteer experts from almost every country of the world, all working together toward achieving the vision of "a just world that values and conserves nature through positive action to both prevent the loss and aid recovery of the diversity of life on earth."

Members of SSC belong to one or more of near 200 Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Action Partnerships, Task Forces, and Conservation Committees that make up the Network, each focusing on a taxonomic group (plants, fungi, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fishes, and invertebrates), national species, or a disciplinary issue, such as sustainable use and livelihoods, translocation of species, wildlife health, climate change, and conservation planning.

Framed by the Species Conservation Cycle, SSC's major role is to provide information to IUCN on biodiversity conservation, the inherent value of species, their role in ecosystem health and functioning, the provision of ecosystem services, and their support to human livelihoods. This information is fed into the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan

The IUCN Species Strategic Plan encompasses the joint work of the IUCN Species Survival Commission and a number of partnerships to achieve more than 2,700 targets proposed by the Network during the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

To accomplish those targets, the Species Conservation Cycle was established, which is the conceptual framework for the Network activities. The Species Conservation Cycle's main purpose is to guide efforts for valuing and conserving biodiversity through three essential components that are linked to each other:

ASSESS: Understand and inform the world about the status and trends of biodiversity.

PLAN: Develop collaborative, inclusive and science-based conservation strategies, plans and policies.

ACT: Convene and mobilise conservation actions to improve the status of biodiversity.

Their implementation requires two transversal components:

NETWORK: Enhance and support our immediate network and alliances to achieve our biodiversity targets.

COMMUNICATE: Drive strategic and targeted communications to enhance our conservation impact.

SSC Species Report

Annual progress in the implementation of the 2021-2025 Species Strategic Plan is documented in the *SSC Species Report*, which consists of a comprehensive description and analysis of the activities and results generated by the members of the SSC Network each year. Each SSC Group contributes to this document by providing a yearly summarised description of their achievements, which is presented in stand-alone reports.

Structure of the IUCN SSC Stand-alone Report

Stand-alone reports summarize the activities conducted and results generated by each group member of the SSC. Following, is the structure of the stand-alone report and the contents under each session.

Title of the SSC Group

Photograph(s) of the Chair / Co-Chairs

Group information
Includes names of Chair / Co-Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Deputy Chairs, Red List Authority Coordinators and Program Officers, their institutional affiliations, number of members and social networks currently active.

Logo of the SSC Group

Mission statement
Includes the mission of the group.

Projected impact for the 2021-2025 quadrennium
Includes the description of the impact on species conservation resulting from the implementation of the targets formulated by the group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium.

Targets for the 2021-2025 quadrennium
Includes the targets planned by the SSC Group for the 2021-2025 quadrennium ordered alphabetically by component of the Species Conservation Cycle. Each target is labeled with a numerical code (e.g., T-001, T-012) that identifies it in the SSC DATA database and its status for the reported year is indicated (Not initiated, On track or Achieved).

Activities and results
Includes the targets for which activities were conducted and results were generated during the reported year, ordered alphabetically, first by component of the Species Conservation Cycle, and second by Activity Category. Description of activities and results includes the indicator that best describes progress, its associated quantitative or qualitative result, and the narrative description of the activity conducted or result obtained. Each activity or result reported is linked to the Key Species Result to which it is mainly associated (e.g., KSR#1, KSR#5).

Acknowledgements
Includes the acknowledgements to funding agencies, partners, and persons who contributed to the progress of the targets of the group.

Summary of achievements
Summarises information of the group's strategic plan for the quadrennium and progress achieved implementing targets for all the components of the Species Conservation Cycle during the reported year.

Animalia

Fungi

Plantae

National Species

Disciplinary

Action Partnership

Task Force

Red List Authority

Committee

Center for Species Survival

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2022 Report

IUCN SSC Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force

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57

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Mission statement

The Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force (MMPATF) was created in 2013 by the International Committee on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (ICMMPA), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) Marine Vice Chair, and the Chair of IUCN's Species Survival Commission (SSC) to help support a stronger global profile and to provide a stronger voice for the MMPA constituency within IUCN. The MMPATF works to facilitate mechanisms that encourage collaboration, sharing of information and experience, enabling access to tools for establishing, monitoring and managing MMPAs. In this way, the Task Force tries to promote effective spatial solutions and best practices for marine mammal conservation. Since 2016, the primary goal of the Task Force has been identifying Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) systematically, region by region, around the globe. IMMAs are defined as discrete portions of habitat important to marine mammal species, with the potential to be delineated and managed for conservation.

Projected impact 2021–2025

By bringing to the attention of managers, decision-makers and the general public the presence and whereabouts of important marine mammal areas, the MMPATF is facilitating the consideration of marine mammal habitats in decisions concerning marine spatial planning and the planning of human activities at sea that have or can have a negative impact on marine mammal status. The IMMAs have also been brought to the attention of policymakers, having been the subject of Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Resolution 12.13. Most of this work, however, is still in process given that IMMAs were made public relatively recently. The impact on marine mammal conservation status from IMMAs is indirect; the IMMA knowledge product is available to, and actionable by, decision-makers and marine users when planning and/or regulating human activities in marine spaces containing marine mammal habitat. Nevertheless, the impact can be substantial – e.g. when Navies decide to refrain from using high-intensity sonar inside IMMAs – but the Task Force has not yet devised ways of measuring it.

Targets 2021–2025

ASSESS

T-001 Complete Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMA) identification in the South East Tropical and Temperate Pacific Ocean and continue with the process in the Atlantic Ocean.
Status: Achieved

T-003 Complete identification of Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) in the Black Sea, Turkish Straits System and Caspian Sea.
Status: Achieved

T-005 Develop and apply a set of IMMA implementation indicators.
Status: On track

T-007 Secure funding for a regional expert workshop to identify IMMAs in the South West Atlantic Ocean, possibly to be held in Brazil or Argentina in late 2022 or early 2023.
Status: Achieved

T-009 Funding secured for another regional expert workshop to identify IMMAs in the North East Atlantic Ocean, including the Baltic and North seas, workshop conducted and IMMAs identified.
Status: On track

PLAN

T-006 Produce an Implementation Guidance 'Route Map' for IMMA Users.
Status: On track

Participants at the South West Atlantic Ocean Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA) workshop
Photo: Gill Braulik

NETWORK

T-002 Improve streamlining between the IMMA and the Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) process.
Status: On track

T-008 Support the development of Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs).
Status: Achieved

COMMUNICATE

T-004 Raise awareness of IMMAs as a tool for conservation planning and threat mitigation through maintenance of the e-Atlas, scientific publications, conference presentations, and use of social and other media.
Status: On track

Activities and results 2022

ASSESS

Planning

T-001 Complete Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMA) identification in the South East Tropical and Temperate Pacific Ocean and continue with the process in the Atlantic Ocean. (KSR 6)

Number of regions where IMMAs are identified: 6

Result description: The IMMA Expert workshop to identify IMMAs in the South East Tropical and Temperate Pacific Ocean was held in Costa Rica in June 2022. The candidate IMMAs were reviewed by an expert panel and 36 new IMMAs along with five candidate IMMAs and 11 Areas of Interest were published on the IMMA e-Atlas in December 2022, taking the total number of IMMAs identified globally to 209. Full details can be found in the news item here: https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org/36-new-important-marine-mammal-areas-immas-approved/, in the final report of the workshop here: https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org/download/preliminary-report-of-the-regional-workshop-south-east-tropical-and-temperate-pacific-ocean-important-marine-mammal-areas, and can be found on the e-Atlas: https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org/imma-eatlas/

T-005 Develop and apply a set of IMMA implementation indicators. (KSR 6)

Indicators applied across IMMA network of sites: 1

Result description: Related to the ongoing progress conducted around target 006, further investigations of comparable success metrics were compiled for use in creating IMMA 'Implementation' metrics. Further, renewed efforts were made for the streamlining of processes to allow the IMMA layer and 'effectiveness' measures to be assessed through the UNEP-WCMC/PROTEUS Critical Habitat Screening Layer (CHSL), as well as the development of an IMMA webmap service (WMS) hosted through the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) Geonode Portal.

T-009 Funding secured for another regional expert workshop to identify IMMAs in the North East Atlantic Ocean, including the Baltic and North seas, workshop conducted and IMMAs identified. (KSR 5)

IMMAs in the North East Atlantic identified: 1

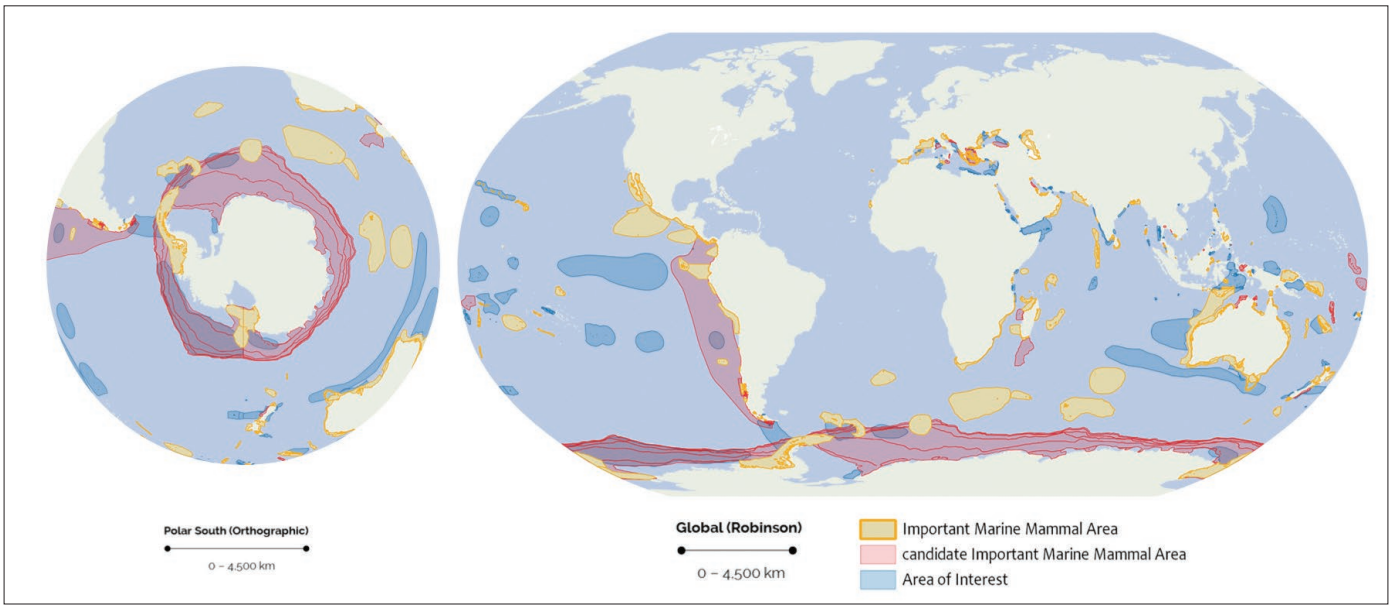
Result description: Funding was secured for the North East Atlantic IMMA Workshop from the Water Revolution Foundation with support from Tethys Research Institute and Whale and Dolphin Conservation. The Workshop will be held in Hamburg, Germany in May 2023.

Communication

T-007 Secure funding for a regional expert workshop to identify IMMAs in the South West Atlantic Ocean, possibly to be held in Brazil or Argentina in late 2022 or early 2023. (KSR 5)

IMMAs in the Southwest Atlantic identified: 1

Result description: Funding was secured for the South West Atlantic IMMA Workshop from GOBI IKI with support from Tethys Research Institute, Whale and Dolphin Conservation and Ocean Care. The Workshop was held in Praia da Forte, Brazil in December 2022, and was attended by 31 scientists. Thirty-six candidate IMMA proposals were accepted and these are now being processed for expert review.



Important Marine Mammal Area e-Atlas as of Dec. 2022
showing 209 IMMAs, 30 candidate IMMAs, 150 Areas of Interest (AoI)
Photo: IUCN SSC-WCPA Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force

The publication is expected in mid-2023. See: https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org/36-new-candidate-immas-announced-in-the-south-west-atlantic-ocean/

PLAN

Planning

T-006 Produce an Implementation Guidance 'Route Map' for IMMA Users. (KSR 8)

Provide guidance for species conservation planning through cutting-edge, science-based tools and processes: 0

Result description: Progress in 2021 continued into 2022. Some discussions were conducted around this target, as well as efforts to raise additional funding. Further progress on this target will again be attempted in 2023.

NETWORK

Synergy

T-002 Improve streamlining between the IMMA and the Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) process. (KSR 3)

Establish a collaborative framework in all regions where IMMAs are identified: 1

Result description: At the 8th workshop to identify IMMAs, in the South East Tropical and Temperate Pacific Ocean region (Costa Rica, June), the Task Force invited the participation ofMaria Gabriela Toscano Montero, from the IBA Programme, Quito, Americas Regional Office, who represented the KBA programme. At the end of the workshop, Gabriela described how at least three of the IMMAs would be likely to fulfil the criteria including thresholds for KBAs or to facilitate the expansion and fill gaps in identified KBAs. She also talked about the growing flexibility of KBAs. Later on, during the 9th workshop to identify IMMAs, in the South West Atlantic Ocean region (Brazil, December), the KBA representative whom we invited was Cecilia Tobar, KBA Regional Focal Point for Latin America and the Caribbean. Cecilia could only attend remotely but it was agreed that an evaluation of the potential for KBA progress from the Brazil IMMA workshop would be possible at the end of the regional IMMA process.

T-008 Support the development of Important Shark and Ray Areas (ISRAs). (KSR 3)

Advice and know-how provided to SSC Shark Specialist Group: 1

Task Force Co-chair Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara was engaged by the Shark Specialist Group as Senior Advisor to the ISRA program. In this capacity, he attended the first ISRA workshop in the Eastern Tropical Pacific (Bogotá, October).

COMMUNICATE

Communication

T-004 Raise awareness of IMMAs as a tool for conservation planning and threat mitigation through maintenance of the e-Atlas, scientific publications, conference presentations, and use of other (social) media. (KSR 13)

Number of SSC members' presentations developed in relation to specific taxonomic groups: 3

Result description: A large number of media stories were published and talks were given at a number of different forums. A paper was published in *Frontiers in Marine Science* giving an overview of the progress in identifying IMMAs. News about the Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force and the IMMA programme can be read here: https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org/news/; documents, reports, and papers can be downloaded here: https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org/downloads/. Almost 50 scientific papers have been published that use IMMAs in their analysis or messaging; these can be found here: https://www.marinemammalhabitat.org/resources/publications/. Our social media platforms include Twitter: @mmpatf and Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/IUCNMMPATF.

Acknowledgements

In 2022 the Marine Mammal Protected Area Task Force was supported by the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative, part of the German government's International Climate Initiative (IKI), with support from the Tethys Research Institute and Whale and Dolphin Conservation.

Summary of achievements

Total number of targets 2021–2025: 9

Geographic regions: 7 Global, 1 Europe, 1 Body of water

Actions during 2022:

Assess:	4 (KSR 5, 6)
Plan:	1 (KSR 8)
Network:	2 (KSR 3)
Communicate:	1 (KSR 13)

Overall achievement 2021–2025: