

TURNING THE TIDE: CONSERVATION IN ACTION

How community-led efforts in Madagascar are reshaping the future of our oceans

A GLOBAL CHALLENGE, A LOCAL SOLUTION

Oceans are facing unprecedented threats from pollution to overfishing but conservation is evolving beyond protection toward restoring ecosystems and empowering local communities. One powerful example comes from southwest Madagascar, where efforts are improving both ocean health and livelihoods.

CONSERVATION THAT STARTS WITH COMMUNITY

Real progress happens when local communities lead by driving sustainable fishing, sharing Indigenous knowledge, and shaping broader conservation efforts.



SPOTLIGHT: MADAGASCAR'S ENDANGERED DOLPHINS

In Madagascar, two Vulnerable dolphin species the Endangered Indian Ocean humpback dolphin and the Near Threatened Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin are at risk due to:

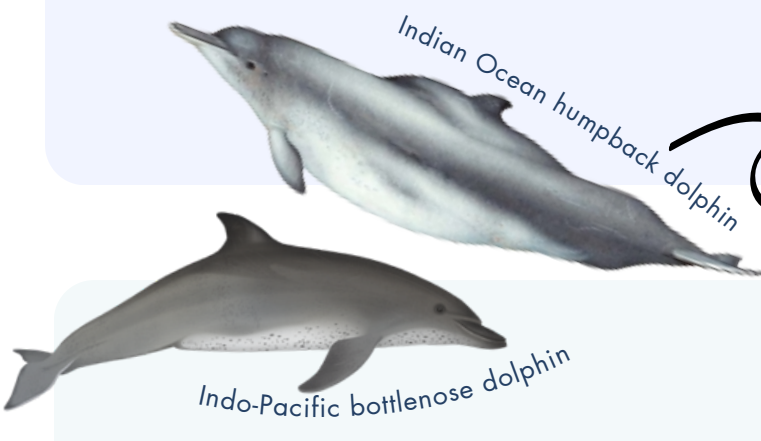
Accidental capture in small-scale (artisanal) fisheries

Direct hunting pressures

Without intervention, these populations could decline rapidly.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Indian Ocean humpback dolphin lives in 23 countries, with small, fragmented populations often under 200 are declining. Usually found within 2 km of shore, where small-scale fishers put their gill nets



Dolphin Quest supported 2024–2025 efforts with a grant to leading conservationists, including interviews with more than 400 fishers to map where bycatch and hunting occur. Since 2004, scientists and local Malagasy communities have worked together to protect these dolphins through a people-first approach community-led conservation, traditional governance (Dina), education, and alternative livelihoods. Proven in other parts of Madagascar, Dina are now being implemented in these communities, helping ensure solutions are practical, sustainable, and locally supported.

FROM PROTECTION TO TRANSFORMATION

Madagascar's work reflects a broader shift in ocean conservation:

- Moving beyond protection to active regeneration
- Combining science, technology, and local knowledge
- Creating lasting change through community ownership



WHY DOES THIS MATTERS TO ALL OF US?

Healthy oceans regulate our climate, provide food, and support millions of lives. What's happening in Madagascar shows that:

- Conservation works when communities are empowered
- Long-term commitment leads to measurable impact
- Local action can drive global change

BE PART OF THE WAVE

You don't have to live near the ocean to make a difference! Conservation is no longer just about saving species, it's about reshaping our relationship with the ocean. From Madagascar to the world, a new wave of change is underway.

Together, we can turn the tide.



LEARN MORE:

- https://iwc.int/management-and-conservation/smallcetacean/sm_fund/sm-fund-first-call/sm-fund-ecology-status
- <https://dolphinsquest.com/scientific-studies-overview/conservation-of-threatened-or-endangered-small-cetaceans-studies/african-aquatic-conservation-fund/>
- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/chapter/bookseries/abs/pii/S0065288115000668>



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