

SPOTLIGHT ON: KENYA



CONSERVATION CONNECTIONS

MAY 2026



CREDIT: NMMF

MEET THE INDIAN OCEAN HUMPBACK DOLPHIN

The Indian Ocean humpback dolphin is an endangered coastal, non-migratory species found around Kenya and greater East Africa, typically congregating in bays and estuaries. Given their draw to coastal spaces, they are frequently exposed to the very human threats of entanglement in fishing gear, loss of habitat, and the detrimental byproducts of ongoing climate change. Less than 200 are estimated to remain in Kenya, making them one of the most at-risk cetacean species in Africa. Their signature hump is a distinctive identifier against the cetaceans found in mainstream media (NMMF).

HELP IS ON THE WAY!

The Kenyan Marine Mammal Stranding Network, in partnership with the National Marine Mammal Foundation and Dolphin Quest from 2023-2025, is actively closing the data gap for this species, measuring the degree to which each threat is affecting their population and survival rate. This targeted conservation approach intends to better inform and empower Kenyan scientists, their local fishing industry, and community toward long term sustainability and conservation for the species, using methodologies like photo ID to collaborate on long-term individual residency and estimated population size in both protected and unprotected waters. In 2025, 517 local fishers, boat operators and officials had surveyed 772km.



CREDIT: KMMREC

A FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Thanks to dozens of surveys conducted, Operation GRACE and Kenya Marine Mammal Research Conservation (KMMREC) launched Kenya's first marine mammal response training workshop in 2023. The program covered health assessments, stranding response, and post-mortem investigations for local veterinarians, biologists, government personnel, and fishers. Community involvement is an integral countermeasure in lieu of available designated surveys for reporting sightings, bycatch, and enhancing efforts. Data gathered will be utilized to inform the Mombasa Marine Park management and long-term conservation plans.



CREDIT: NMMF



DOLPHIN QUEST

