

Spotlight: Myanmar



Conservation Connections Newsletter June 2026

The Gulf of Mottama in Myanmar is a unique and dynamic marine environment, but it faces significant challenges. Since 2018, the Myanmar Coastal Conservation Lab (MCCL) has been at the forefront of marine mammal research here, moving beyond traditional science to a human-centered, collaborative approach.



Irrawaddy dolphins

Listed as Endangered, the local population is estimated at over 1,000 individuals, making it one of

the most robust populations of this species.

Indo-Pacific finless porpoise

The population of these vulnerable porpoises is declining, with total numbers uncertain, but indicating significant reductions throughout their habitat.



Indo-Pacific humpback dolphins

Also Vulnerable, these dolphins are relatively rare in this specific study area.



The Problem: A Rising Threat

Conservation efforts have become increasingly urgent since the political shift in 2021. The primary threats to these species are:

- Bycatch
- Targeted catch and consumption

The Solution: Community-Led Action

The MCCL believes the future of conservation in the Gulf rests with the local communities. Their strategy focuses on co-creation, working with people rather than just for them.

- Young Conservation Leaders (YCL): A "training of trainers" program empowers village youth with skills in boat-based surveys, stranding response, and community engagement.
- Citizen Science with Fishers: Local fishers are engaged as active partners, using rugged mobile phones to record sightings and fisheries interactions while at sea.
- Collaborative Workshops: Using "design thinking," the MCCL facilitates workshops with Local Conservation Groups (LCGs) to map out "prototypes" for reducing bycatch and protecting their marine heritage.

Dolphin Quest's support is enabling these efforts in 2026-2027!



Myanmar

Co-Creating Conservation
in the Gulf of Mottama

Click on this link to learn more! →

[Myanmar Coastal Conservation Lab](#)

Gulf
Thailand

0 100 200 mi

INDONESIA

MALAYSIA