

Marine Mammal Commission

About Us

The Marine Mammal Commission is an independent government agency charged by the Marine Mammal Protection Act to further the conservation of marine mammals and their environment. We work to ensure that marine mammal populations are restored and maintained as functioning elements of healthy marine ecosystems. We provide science-based oversight of domestic and international policies and actions of federal agencies with mandates to address human impacts on marine mammals and their ecosystems. Our role is unique—we are the only U.S. government agency that provides comprehensive oversight of all science, policy, and management actions affecting marine mammals. We consist of three Presidentially-appointed Commissioners, a nine-member Committee of Scientific Advisors, and 14 employees.

What We Do

As an independent agency with oversight authority, we are able to affect the evolution of policy decisions and develop consensus among competing interests on controversial issues surrounding marine mammal science and conservation. We review proposed actions by federal agencies and others and provide recommendations to minimize the impacts of such actions on marine mammals and their environment.



Multiple human-related risk factors affect marine mammals, including direct and indirect effects of commercial and recreational fisheries, underwater sound, contaminants and disease, harmful algal blooms and dead zones, vessel strikes, and climate change. We regularly consult with other federal agencies to understand, monitor, and mitigate these risk factors.

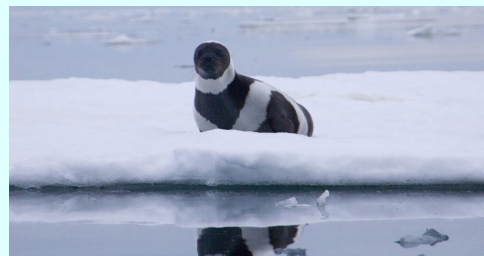
Our work is centered on five strategic objectives outlined in our FY15-19 Strategic Plan, and we pay special attention to species considered to be most vulnerable to human activities.



Our Strategic Objectives

The Arctic

Marine mammal populations in the Arctic are maintained as viable functioning elements of their ecosystems through management measures that address direct and indirect effects of climate change and the ensuing economic, scientific, and other activities in the region.



Offshore Energy

Scientifically robust mitigation and monitoring measures are developed, refined, and implemented in order to prevent, minimize, or mitigate the impacts of offshore oil and gas and renewable energy activities on marine mammals and their ecosystems.



Health and Strandings

Marine mammal strandings are more thoroughly investigated and analyzed to improve understanding of the factors causing mortality and affecting the health of marine mammals, determine the efficacy of measures such as ship speed reduction to reduce mortality, and elucidate the relationships between marine mammal health and human health and ecosystem services.



International

Anthropogenic threats to marine mammals, particularly those most vulnerable to extinction, are identified and reduced in the coastal and fresh waters of other nations and on the high seas worldwide, through bilateral and multilateral scientific and conservation efforts and sharing of expertise.



Fisheries and other Human Activities

Understanding of human impacts on marine mammals and their ecosystems, and the management of those impacts, is improved through enhanced scientific research, policy analysis, and information dissemination.

