



Call for support

MARINE CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

The sea is a resource we all rely on: it provides food and livelihoods, transport and energy, tourism and recreation, and a stable climate. But the pressure we're putting on our seas is taking a heavy toll. If we don't act now, they could soon be beyond recovery.

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Nowhere is this more apparent than in the Arabian Gulf and its surrounding waters. In just over four decades, the UAE has grown from small coastal communities based on fishing and pearl diving, into a highly developed cosmopolitan nation. This has had a major impact on our unique marine environment.

Emirates Wildlife Society (EWS)-WWF aims for people and marine ecosystems in the UAE to thrive in harmony. With smarter, interconnected marine management, responsible business practices, and more effective protection for crucial habitats and species, we can make it happen. But we need your help.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE CAN ENSURE A BALANCED AND HEALTHIER FUTURE FOR OUR SEAS BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

UNIQUE ENVIRONMENT UNDER PRESSURE

Through partnerships with government and business, we can ensure a sustainable future for our seas.

Our waters are home to a rich biodiversity including the second largest population of dugongs on Earth. Critically endangered hawksbill and endangered green and loggerhead turtles are also found here, as well as over 40 species of sharks.

But our oceans are in trouble, with species numbers in decline, vital habitats like coral reefs and seagrass beds disappearing, and fish stocks being pushed to the limit. Safeguarding our seas requires immediate action – the longer we delay, the harder it will be.

Known for its swift development, the UAE has a reputation for innovating and successfully adapting to a rapidly changing world in both the public and private sector. This country can lead the way in showing it is possible to balance environmental and human needs, and that strong growth can happen while simultaneously halting and reversing damage to the marine environment.

Challenges



+35°C

The Gulf and Arabian Sea already face extreme surface temperatures exceeding 35°C.



Estimated individual humpback whales in the Arabian Sea.



40% of the Arabian Gulf's coastline has been modified. Lack of proper planning is leading to unsustainable coastal development.

260,000



Fish traps are discarded in UAE waters each year: this gear continues to fatally endanger marine life.

Opportunities



The Gulf has a unique environment, helping us to understand ecosystem responses to climate-related stresses.



The UAE is a signatory of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which sets a minimum target of protecting 10% of coastal and marine areas through a network of protected areas.



To conserve the region's endangered iconic species we will work with existing and new partners in the UAE and the region, as well as international institutions.



The marine environment is culturally and economically important to the UAE and region.

THE SOLUTION

Our goal: By 2020, the UAE's most important marine habitats and species are protected, major threats are addressed, and healthy marine ecosystems are at the heart of planning and development policies.

Over the next five years, we'll be focusing on three key areas:

1. Promoting integrated marine management to ensure ecosystem functioning in the UAE

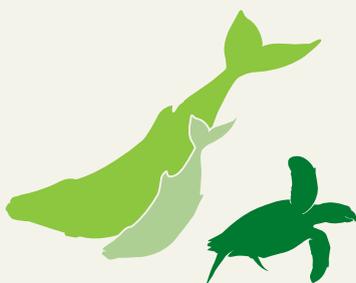


Better marine planning and management will mean ecosystems can continue to function and remain resilient in the long term, while meeting socio-economic development goals.

Within UAE waters, we'll promote a coherent network of marine protected areas (MPAs) as a fundamental component of the UAE's marine conservation agenda. Functional MPAs are critical for preserving the most important habitats, conserving biodiversity and enabling healthy ecosystems.

In parallel, we will help guide decision-makers and planners toward responsible development, so future plans can move forward in a way that minimises negative impacts on the wider marine environment.

2. Spearheading regional collaboration to conserve endangered migratory species



Endangered, iconic species like marine turtles and whales provide a focus for conservation and attract a wide range of supporters. As long-living animals that cross distances, they need long-term, large-scale conservation strategies that span national boundaries. This can benefit other species and habitats: by protecting them, we contribute to bigger sustainable impacts.

We will build on our successful turtle conservation work to support initiatives for conserving globally important populations of marine turtles and the endangered Arabian Sea humpback whale.

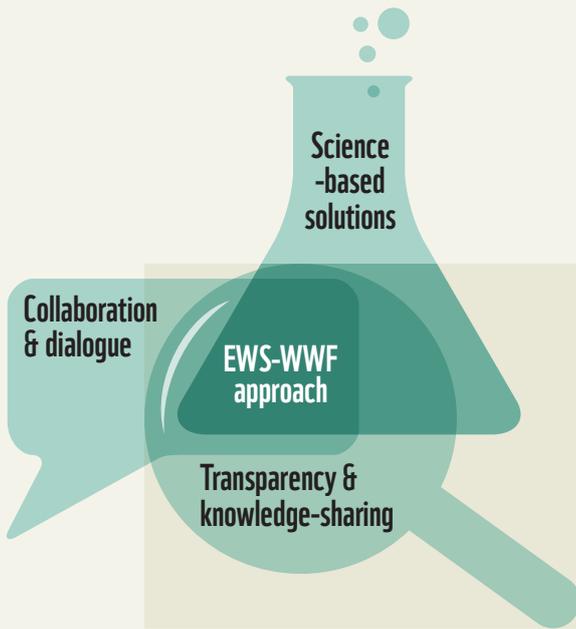
3. Engaging with the private sector to promote responsible practices



The private sector has a crucial role to play in marine conservation.

In particular, we will focus on the fast-growing tourism sector – which depends on healthy marine ecosystems and species, but also has a significant impact on them. We will work with the tourism industry to develop good practices and support businesses to become stewards of the UAE's marine resources.

Our strategy aims to establish the foundations to engage with stakeholders from other industries in the long term in order to explore and demonstrate environmental best practices by the private sector.



WHY PARTNER WITH EWS-WWF?

EWS-WWF is the leading independent environmental NGO in the Arabian region, and the only one working on marine conservation at the federal level in the UAE. We have a proud track record of working with public and private sector partners across the region to find practical, science-based solutions to conservation challenges.

We also have the unique advantage of being part of the WWF global network, which has enormous experience working with governments, businesses and communities on marine conservation. We leverage our relationships to bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to our region, while WWF's profile opens doors and helps us to raise public awareness on diverse issues.

Economic growth is at the top of the agenda for every Gulf state and business. But it doesn't have to come at the expense of a vital part of our natural heritage, our culture and our economy. EWS-WWF wants to see a future where people live in harmony with nature, and we believe it's possible to strike a balance between development and conservation. With your help, we can safeguard our crucial marine resources and iconic species for future generations.

WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT TO PUT OUR PLANS INTO ACTION. OUR SEAS ARE IN TROUBLE - BUT IF WE ACT NOW, THEY CAN RECOVER. WILL YOU HELP US TODAY?

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Established in 2001 under the patronage of HH Sheikh Hamdan bin Zayed al Nahyan, Rulers Representative in the Western Region, EWS-WWF mission is to work with people and institutions within the UAE and the region, to conserve biodiversity, tackle climate change and reduce the ecological footprint through education, awareness, policy, and science-based conservation initiatives.

For more information about EWS-WWF please visit: uae.panda.org