



# Resolutions

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The Dr S Jones Colloquium on Challenges in Marine Mammal Conservation & Research in the Indian Ocean (CIMCAR) was organized by the Marine Biological Association of India (MBAI) on August 26-27, 2011 at Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI), Kochi, Kerala, India. The CIMCAR was attended by marine mammal researchers from the Indian Ocean region, with a majority from India. During the Round Table plenary on 27<sup>th</sup> August onboard the *MV Stella Maris*, the following resolutions under 5 broad heads were passed by the learned body.

## 1. Further research

- Development of standard methodologies for marine mammals research
- To assess population status, the remote sensed and acoustic data may be employed in addition to regular sighting surveys
- Special training programmes and HRD to take up species identification of live sightings, ecological and behavioral data collection and necropsy of carcasses of beach-cast marine mammals Research programmes that deal with molecular taxonomy of specific populations of marine mammals to be strengthened
- Funding support for research activities on marine mammals may be provided / sourced from the Ministry of Environment and forests (MoEF), Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and from international agencies for collaborative research programmes.

## 2. Establishing stranding/sighting network

- The MoEF may take lead in establishing a Marine Mammal Stranding & Sighting Network with CMFRI, ZSI, FSI, CMLRE and WWF. The CMFRI may be entrusted with maintenance of the network.

## 3. Conservation issues

- National Plan of Action (NPOA) is to be formulated for protection of marine mammals and their habitats for which the MoEF may take initiative and constitute a Task Force.
- The MoEF and state forest departments may consider delegating powers of the Chief Wildlife Wardens in respect of marine species to specialized marine R&D agencies of the government and to create a coordination mechanism between forest departments and marine agencies
- Amendments to existing Marine Fishing Regulation Acts and Wildlife Protection Act to protect and conserve marine mammals and their habitats are required.

- Conservation of seagrass beds which are habitat of the endangered dugong must be given priority with participatory co-management of local communities. CMFRI may map the seagrass beds and associated fauna as the first step.
- Formulation of a regional Agreement/MoU on cetaceans within the framework of CMS is a priority.

#### **4. Reducing fisheries interaction**

- For reducing fisheries interaction, guidelines for use of fishing gear need to be developed by Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute and Central Institute of Fisheries Technology for inclusion in Marine Fishing Regulation Act.
- Following FAO recommendations, efforts should be taken by DAHDF to implement ecosystem approach to fisheries management.
- Efforts to be taken to introduce incentive schemes to stakeholders/fishermen adopting mitigation measures to avoid marine mammal- fishing interaction.

#### **5. Creating awareness**

- Awareness among students, fishermen, policy makers and other stakeholders on marine mammal conservation is urgently required.
- Workshops on marine mammals in collaboration with National Green Corps of MoEF; tapping digital media such as YouTube, eLearning, TV, Radio etc; launch of special Postage Stamps on marine mammals to create awareness are to be taken up
- Inclusion of conservation of marine mammals in school curricula is required. Science/Nature clubs and College academia may be involved in these activities.
- The year 2013 may be declared as the “year of marine mammals” in India
- The Marine Biological Association of India may take the lead to form information sharing networks on marine mammals among members and public to aid awareness on marine mammals and their conservation.
- Linkages with Navy and Merchant Navy ships, especially SCI may be created to aid acquisition of marine mammal sighting, abundance and behavior databases. A species identification guide may be prepared by CMFRI for use during sightings.
- Guidelines may be prepared by MoEF for collection and analysis of marine mammal samples for research to improve the knowledge/ database.
- Community participation and linkages which aid in awareness creation for conservation of marine mammals and their habitats are required to be built up.
- Sensitization/ Training on marine biodiversity for forest officials, coastguard officials and fishermen may be given to facilitate marine mammal conservation activities.

| More details on CIMCAR 2011 can be obtained by following links at <http://www.mbai.org.in/index.html>  
Comments, if any, may be sent by mail to [mail@mbai.org.in](mailto:mail@mbai.org.in) |

