



The Endangered Species Act Saves Marine Mammals and Sea Turtles

78 Percent of Endangered Populations Are Rebounding

A new study found that 78 percent of endangered marine mammals and sea turtles analyzed significantly increased in abundance after receiving protection under the Endangered Species Act.¹ The research showed substantial population recovery for 18 of 23 marine mammals and 7 of 9 sea turtles in U.S. waters that are protected under the Act, with sufficient long-term, high-quality data.

The species that showed significant recovery include most large whales, Florida manatees, California sea otters, eastern Steller sea lions, green sea turtles, Kemp's ridley sea turtles, hawksbill sea turtles, and Atlantic leatherback sea turtles. Overall, species listed for 20 or more years were more likely to increase in population abundance.

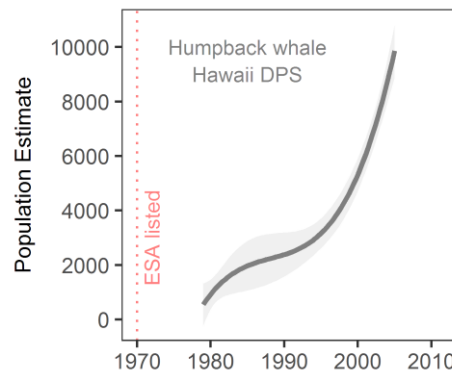
The Endangered Species Act Works

The Endangered Species Act is an important safety net for wildlife. Conservation measures triggered by the law have been successful in promoting marine wildlife recovery including:

- Ending species trade and exploitation;
- Science-based recovery plans;
- Regulations on activities that harm animals, such as oil and gas development, pollution, commercial fishing, beach lighting and construction, and military exercises;
- Mitigation measures on federally permitted and funded projects to reduce and avoid harm to endangered species and habitat;
- Protection of foraging and breeding grounds through critical habitat designation.

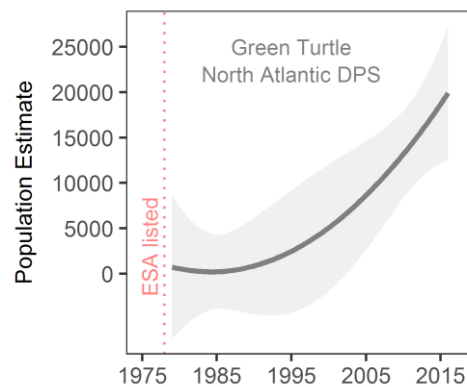
The Endangered Species Act is the world's strongest wildlife law protecting imperiled plants and animals. More than 99 percent of the species entrusted to the Act's care have been saved from extinction.²

Success Story Highlights



Hawaiian humpback whales are doing so well that they were removed from the list of endangered species in 2016. The size of the humpback

population in Hawaiian waters increased from 800 individuals in 1979 to more than 10,000 individuals in 2005.



North Atlantic green sea turtles have experienced a resounding population increase. Compared to only 62 nests in 1979, nest numbers are

now at record highs, with 37,341 nests on Florida nesting beaches in 2015.

This study shows that most marine mammals and sea turtles protected under the Act are on a path to recovery, and it underscores the capacity of marine mammals and sea turtles to recover from substantial population declines when conservation actions are implemented in a timely and effective manner.

¹Valdivia et al. Marine mammals and sea turtles listed under the Endangered Species Act are recovering. *In review at PlosOne*. Available: goo.gl/fU7xMk

²ECOS (2017). Summary of listed species and recovery plans. Available at: goo.gl/iWNm7S

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