

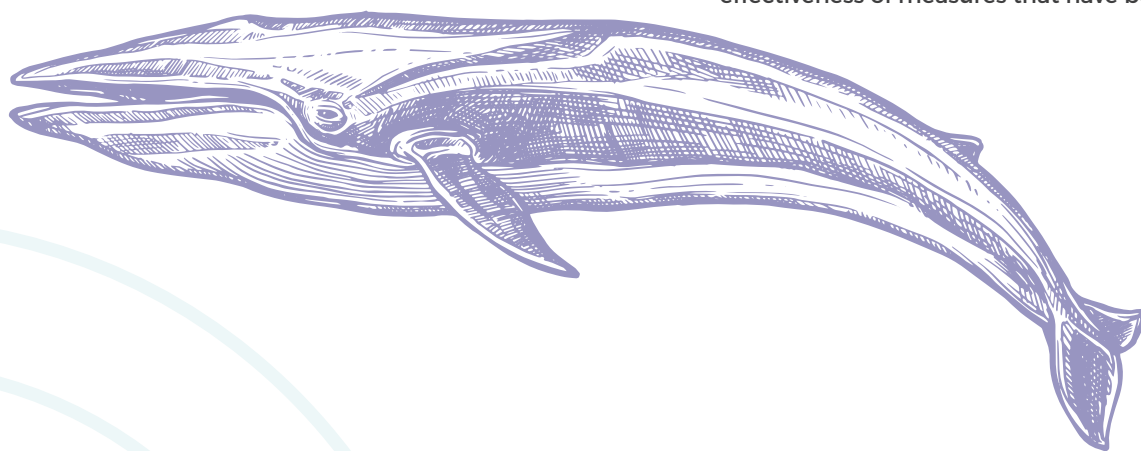
MARINE MAMMALS

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Marine mammals have been and are subject to significant pressure from both natural impacts and human activity, which results in many populations and species not being in good status. Many pressures still occur on a wide scale today, such as by-catch, or are even increasing, such as noise and hazardous substances, habitat loss or degradation of habitat. Marine mammals tend to have wide distributional ranges and some species are very rare. This makes the monitoring of marine mammals challenging, leading to a concerningly poor understanding of the distribution and population size of many marine mammal species.

As a result, the quantitative and qualitative assessments for marine mammals in QSR 2023 have revealed many species and populations to be in not good status. Moreover, limited improvement has been observed compared with previous assessments. For many species we simply do not know with confidence how they are faring. With the environment expected to change rapidly in the future, for example through climate change, and given the shifts in the structure of food webs, where marine mammals often sit at the top, the continuing exposure to pollutants and society's shifting of food and energy production, for example, from land to sea, the threats to marine mammals are likely to remain at a high level.

There is limited evidence that the measures implemented to protect and improve the condition of marine mammal populations have been effective. However, the opportunity exists for more tailored measures and to improve the implementation of management measures. Similarly, there is a need to capitalise on the amount of data gathered through regionally coordinated monitoring. This would not only allow for a better understanding of marine mammal populations but also help in evaluating the effectiveness of measures that have been applied.



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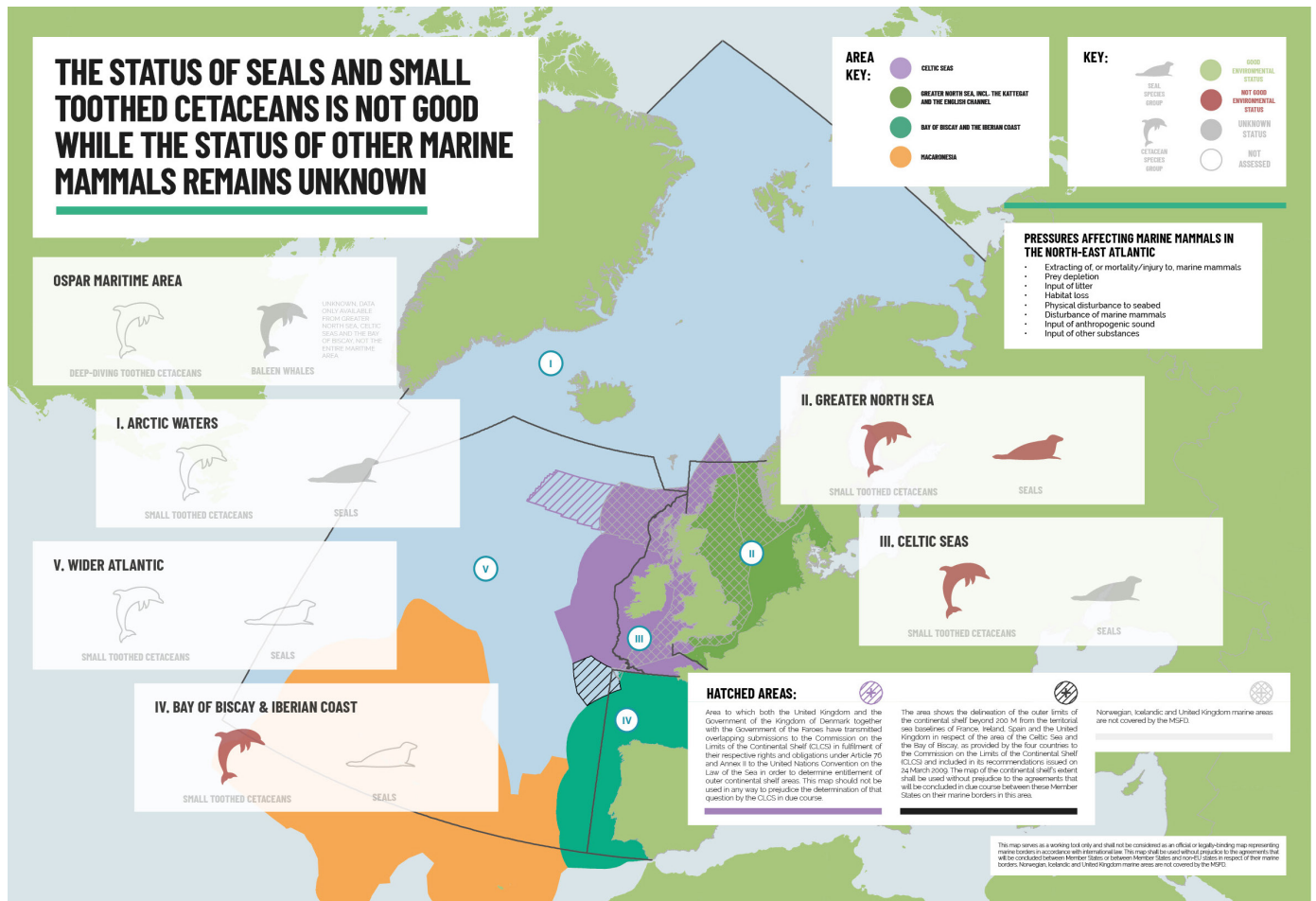
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