

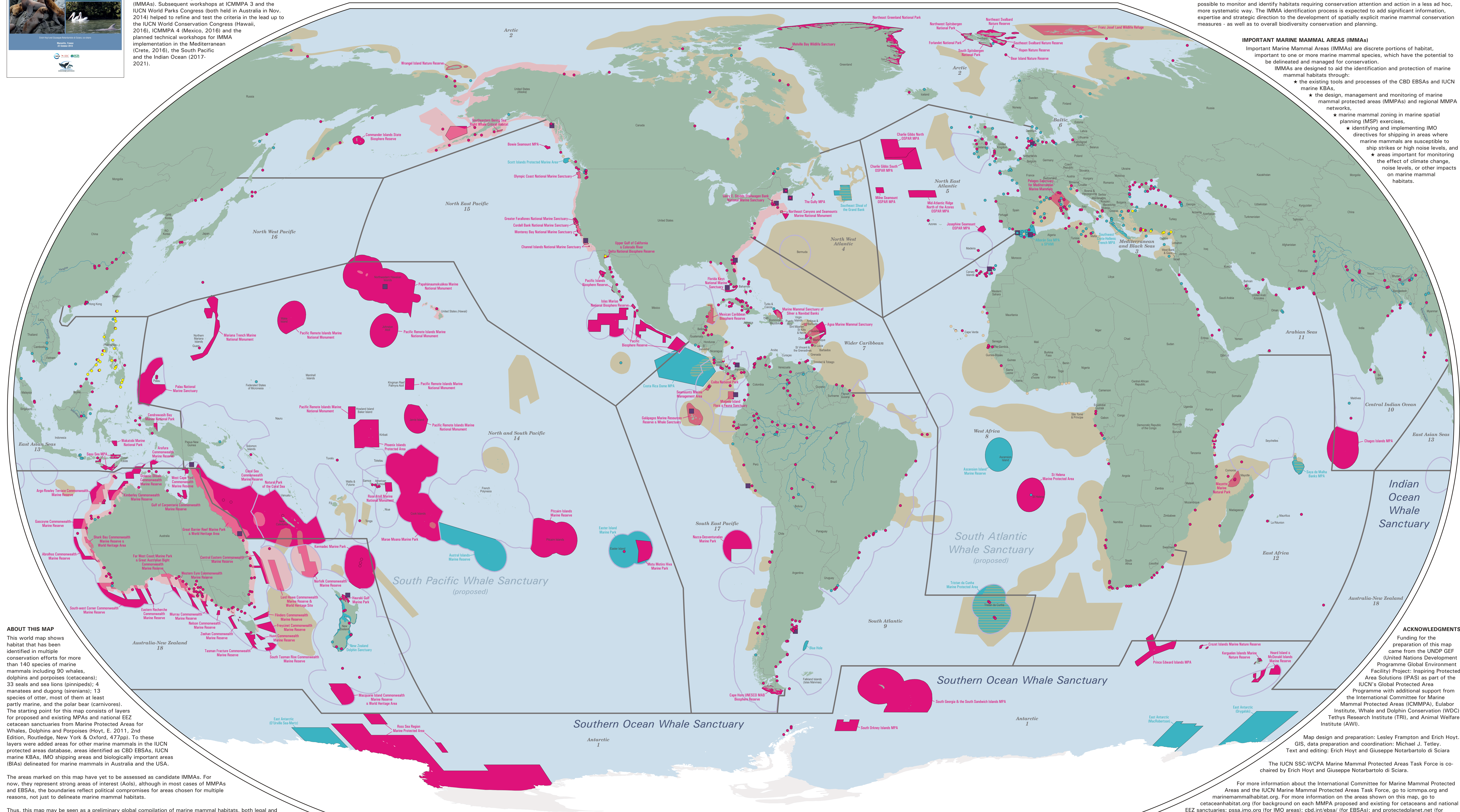
IUCN MARINE MAMMAL PROTECTED AREAS TASK FORCE
 In October 2013, the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force was launched by IUCN and the International Committee for Marine Mammal Protected Areas (ICMMPA) at the International MPA Congress (IMPAC 3) in Marseille, France. This Task Force - set up within the IUCN Species Survival Commission and the World Commission on Protected Areas - had become aware of the urgent necessity for a standardised protocol to help categorise, collate and advocate evidence used in global strategic conservation planning for marine mammal habitats. The first action of the Task Force was to hold a workshop to develop criteria for a new conservation category: important marine mammal areas (IMMAs). Subsequent workshops at ICMMPA 3 and the IUCN World Parks Congress (both held in Australia in Nov. 2014) helped to refine and test the criteria in the lead up to the IUCN World Conservation Congress (Hawaii, 2016), ICMMPA 4 (Mexico, 2016) and the planned technical workshops for IMMA implementation in the Mediterranean (Crete, 2016), the South Pacific and the Indian Ocean (2017-2021).

Working Towards Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs): Ground Zero

CRITERIA FOR IMPORTANT MARINE MAMMAL AREAS (IMMAs)
 The criteria for IMMAs weigh up the data on vulnerability, distribution, abundance, diversity, key life cycle activities including feeding, reproduction and migration, as well as distinctiveness in areas which sustain populations with important genetic, behavioral or ecologically distinctive characteristics. The IMMA criteria are closely aligned with that of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) ecologically or biologically significant areas (EBSAs) and IUCN key biodiversity areas (KBAs). IMMAs have already, in effect, been contributing to the selection of EBSAs and are expected to help in the identification of KBAs. It is envisaged that IMMAs will also be useful for identifying areas susceptible to ship strike which may be addressed with directives and advice to shipping from the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). As with EBSAs and KBAs, IMMAs have no legal standing and are simply tools that may contribute to conservation initiatives. Yet the preparation of ever more finely detailed global and regional maps showing the range of human threats across the ocean (e.g. Halpern et al., 2008), matched to the global IMMA, EBSA and KBA maps as they are produced in coming years will make it possible to monitor and identify habitats requiring conservation attention and action in a less ad hoc, more systematic way. The IMMA identification process is expected to add significant information, expertise and strategic direction to the development of spatially explicit marine mammal conservation measures - as well as to overall biodiversity conservation and planning.

IMPORTANT MARINE MAMMAL AREAS (IMMAs)
 Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) are discrete portions of habitat, important to one or more marine mammal species, which have the potential to be delineated and managed for conservation. IMMAs are designed to aid the identification and protection of marine mammal habitats through:

- the existing tools and processes of the CBD EBSAs and IUCN marine KBAs,
- the design, management and monitoring of marine mammal protected areas (MMPAs) and regional MMPA networks,
- marine mammal zoning in marine spatial planning (MSP) exercises,
- identifying and implementing IMO directives for shipping in areas where marine mammals are susceptible to ship strikes or high noise levels, and
- areas important for monitoring the effect of climate change, noise levels, or other impacts on marine mammal habitats.



ABOUT THIS MAP
 This world map shows habitat that has been identified in multiple conservation efforts for more than 140 species of marine mammals including 90 whales, dolphins and porpoises (cetaceans); 33 seals and sea lions (pinnipeds); 4 manatees and dugong (sirenians); 13 species of otter, most of them at least partly marine, and the polar bear (carnivores). The starting point for this map consists of layers for proposed and existing MPAs and national EEZ cetacean sanctuaries from Marine Protected Areas for Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises (Hoyt, E. 2011, 2nd Edition, Routledge, New York & Oxford, 477pp). To these layers were added areas for other marine mammals in the IUCN protected areas database, areas identified as CBD EBSAs, IUCN marine KBAs, IMO shipping areas and biologically important areas (BIAs) delineated for marine mammals in Australia and the USA.

The areas marked on this map have yet to be assessed as candidate IMMAs. For now, they represent strong areas of interest (AoIs), although in most cases of MMPAs and EBSAs, the boundaries reflect political compromises for areas chosen for multiple reasons, not just to delineate marine mammal habitats.

Thus, this map may be seen as a preliminary global compilation of marine mammal habitats, both legal and to be considered for legal or other status, as well as to be compared with IMMAs as they are selected. The habitats of many species and most populations of marine mammals, however, have no formal recognition or protection and are absent from the map. In 2016, the Task Force initiated a five-year process to evaluate the evidence for the habitat needs of these species and to identify IMMAs region-by-region starting with the Mediterranean and continuing throughout the southern hemisphere, and eventually extending across all oceans. Besides putting IMMAs on the map in each region, the Task Force will demonstrate the implementation of single or overlapping layers of IMMAs in MMPAs, IMO and other conservation directives that target specific threats to marine mammals - ship strike, noise, bycatch, entanglement and overfishing.

COLOUR KEYS AND ACRONYM GLOSSARY FOR EVALUATING IMPORTANT MARINE MAMMAL AREAS

- Existing Marine Mammal Protected Areas (MMPAs), designated by law in the waters of one or more countries, or on the high seas by regional agreement. Also includes freshwater habitats for river dolphins, freshwater pinnipeds, sirenians, and otters as well as land-based areas for polar bears and rookeries and haulouts for pinnipeds. A MMPA is defined as a protected area that has enforceable management goals directed toward the conservation of marine mammals and their habitat. A protected area (PA) is a clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values (Dudley 2008).
- Proposed Marine Mammal Protected Areas (p-MMPAs).
- Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) identifying marine mammal habitat through the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). EBSAs appear as continuous areas on the map. Some abut or have smaller overlapping sites contained inside but these are not delineated on the map.
- IUCN candidate Marine Key Biodiversity Areas (candidate Marine KBAs), selected in limited countries to date as outstanding examples of marine biodiversity (locations shown include marine mammal habitats).
- Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs) and other International Maritime Organisation (IMO) directives for marine mammal habitats (shipping lanes or speed restrictions in or near marine mammal habitat).
- Biologically Important Areas (BIAs) with marine mammal habitat (in Australia and USA only). BIAs that abut or overlap are shown continuously on the map.
- National (EEZ) Marine Mammal Sanctuaries (areas declared mainly as "no hunting areas" for cetaceans in the national waters of a country or territory).

Two International Whaling Commission (IWC) ocean-wide sanctuaries are noted on the map: the Indian Ocean Whale Sanctuary and the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary. There are also two proposed IWC sanctuaries: South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary and South Pacific Whale Sanctuary. These are mainly no-hunting areas although they have stimulated considerable scientific research and debate, as well as engagement by bordering countries. Yet, because of their large scale, they are not considered to be contributing to knowledge of specific marine mammal habitat areas.

This map is a draft living document. The latest high resolution version of the map and other Task Force documents supporting IMMAs can be downloaded from the Task Force website marinemammalhabitat.org. Please send additions, changes and suggestions to both Erich Hoyt, erich.hoyt@mac.com and Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciarra, disciarag@gmail.com.

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For more information about the International Committee for Marine Mammal Protected Areas and the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force, go to icmmpa.org and marinemammalhabitat.org. For more information on the areas shown on this map, go to cetaceanhabitat.org (for background on each MMPA proposed and existing for cetaceans and national EEZ sanctuaries); psa.imo.org (for IMO areas); cbd.int/mbas/ (for EBSAs); and protectedplanet.net (for searchable map information on MPAs in the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA)).

