

PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION OF SPECIES ON THE APPENDICES OF THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS

A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of *Lagenodelphis hosei* (Southeast Asia populations) on **Appendix II**.

B. PROPONENT: Government of the Republic of the Philippines

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

1.1_	Classis	Mammalia
1.2	Ordo	Cetacea
1.3	Familia	Delphinidae
1.4	Genus/species	<i>Lagenodelphis hosei</i> Fraser, 1956
1.5	Common names	English: Fraser's dolphin
		Spanish: Delfin de Fraser
		French: Dauphin de Fraser

2. Biological data

2.1 Distribution

Monotypic. Fraser's dolphin is distributed throughout oceanic tropical zones in both hemispheres with approximate latitudinal limits of 20-30° (and 20-30° S). It has been recorded from the Philippines, China, Indonesia and Malaysia and very likely occurs in the waters of the other nations in the region as well.

2.2 Population

The number and sizes of populations in Southeast Asian waters is unknown. Approximately 10% of Philippines waters have been surveyed to inventory cetaceans, but abundance estimates from that work are not yet available. In these surveys, Fraser's dolphin has been the third most commonly encountered species in oceanic habitats. Questions of stock identity have not been addressed.

2.3 Habitat

Fraser's dolphins live in deepwater oceanic habitats, often close to shore in the Philippines because of the very deep water surrounding some of the Philippines islands, and feeds at depth on small mesopelagic fishes, squids and shrimps.

2.4 Migrations

The extent of migrations is unknown. The ranges of regional populations almost certainly extend across international boundaries, e.g., between the Philippines and Malaysia, the Philippines and Indonesia, Indonesia and Malaysia, Australia and Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei, Macau and China, Vietnam and China, Vietnam and Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand, Thailand and Myanmar, etc. In the Philippines, abundance in some areas may show seasonal change, suggesting that migrations occur.

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3. Threat data

3.1 Direct threats to the populations

Hunting of dolphins is illegal in nearly all countries in Southeast Asia, but dolphin harpoon fisheries exist in at least the Philippines and Indonesia. Fraser's dolphin is one of the most frequently caught species in the Philippines in those fisheries so far examined. A complete survey to determine the number and size of these harpoon fisheries in the Philippines has not been carried out. As the dolphin fisheries are illegal, it is difficult to obtain accurate data on the catches.

Incidental catches in other fisheries probably pose a larger threat to Fraser's dolphins in the region than harpoon fisheries do. They are killed incidentally in large numbers in a variety of fisheries in the Philippines; the gear involved includes drift nets, set gill nets, purse seines and other round-haul nets used to catch tuna, mackerel, bonito, scad, flying fish and a wide variety of other finfish.

The impact of the direct and incidental catches on the populations are unknown because the ranges and sizes of local/regional stocks have not been determined.

3.2 Habitat destruction

Environmental contamination is not known to be a threat to the habitat of pelagic dolphins in the region at this point, but burgeoning populations and rapid economic development are reasons for concern about levels of marine pollution and their possible effects on all marine organisms.

3.3 Indirect threats

Very large and rapidly increasing human populations in the region have led to greatly increased pressure on stocks of marine fish and invertebrates, which has resulted in declining catch per effort, collapse of some stocks and shifts to increasingly smaller fishes and squids. This overexploitation of marine resources poses a potential threat to the dolphin populations, which increasingly are dependent on some of the same fishery stocks used by humans.

3.4 Threats connected especially with migrations

The number and ranges of populations have not yet been determined, but there are indications that abundance may undergo seasonal fluctuations in at least some regions, in tandem with that of other large pelagics such as yellowfin tuna. Thus, populations may be impacted by incidental kill in fisheries in more than one place, and these fisheries may be in the waters of different countries, e.g., the same Fraser's dolphins involved in a tuna drift net fishery in the Philippines may be involved in another such fishery in Indonesia, or Malaysia.

3.5 National and international utilization

In some nations in the region, in addition to the use for shark bait or human consumption of Fraser's dolphins taken in illegal harpoon fisheries, dolphins killed incidentally in other fisheries are also utilized. Such use of incidentally killed dolphins is illegal in some nations, but enforcement is difficult and the meat moves extensively in local commerce. The potential market for dolphin meat created by this illegal traffic poses a conservation threat beyond the impact of current takes, in that the present illegal harpoon fisheries could expand through use of purse seines or other net gear and greatly increase their catches. This has happened in Peru, and combined incidental and illegal directed dolphin catches there are now thought to be unsustainable.

International trade has not been documented, but illicit dolphin catches seized in recent years from distant-water fishing vessels, e.g., very recently in Taiwan, could have come from Southeast Asian waters fished illegally or under international EEZ fishing-rights agreements.

4. Protection status and needs

4.1 National protection status

In the Southeast Asian region, dolphins are fully protected in the Philippines, Australia, China, Thailand, Malaysia, and Indonesia. However, there are many problems of enforcement and interpretation in most of these countries and actual protection is minimal or non-existent in many places. Prospects are that legal protection will be enacted soon in Vietnam and Cambodia. In Singapore, dolphins come under the Fisheries Act and are not provided special protection. Information on the status of protection in Macau, Brunei-Darussalam and Myanmar was not available at this writing.

4.2 International protection status

Stenella longirostris is on Appendix II of CITES.

4.3 Additional protection needs

All Range States should ratify the Bonn Convention, and a regional agreement should be developed to facilitate the identification, assessment and conservation of the stocks.

5. Range States (in Southeast Asia)

Philippines (CMS party), Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia, Vietnam, China, Macau, Brunei-Darussalam, and Australia (CMS party).

6. Comments form Range States

7. Additional remarks

8. References

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