ENDANGERED SPECIES DAY
15 MAY

Endangered Species Day was started in 2006 by the United States Congress. It is an opportunity for people to learn about the importance of protecting endangered species and the everyday actions that they can take to help protect them.

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), established the Red List of Species in 1964. The Red List of Species is the world’s most comprehensive source of information on the global extinction risk status of animal, fungus and plant species.

Currently, there are more than 116,000 species on the IUCN Red List, with more than 31,000 species threatened with extinction, including:

- 41% Amphibians
- 33% Reef Building Corals
- 30% Sharks & Rays
- 25% Mammals
- 14% Birds
Species are assigned to various categories based on the level of threat:

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www.iucnredlist.org

**The list is used to:**
- guide scientific research
- inform policy and conventions
- influence resource allocation
- inform conservation planning
- improve decision making
- for education and awareness to contribute to human health and livelihoods

**The list provides information about:**
- the range
- population size
- habitat and ecology
- use and/or trade
- threats
- conservation actions that will help thousands of species

SAAMBR is committed to the conservation of the marine biodiversity of the Western Indian Ocean and in the last eight years, scientists from the Oceanographic Research Institute have assessed or co-assessed **333 species** from many different marine families.

SAAMBR, through uShaka Sea World, works to improve the status of the endangered species in our care.
There are currently about **30 000** African penguins in the wild. The population continues to decline.

African penguins are threatened by:
- Overexploitation of their food, primarily sardine and anchovy
- Predation of adults and chicks
- Oil spills

**What SAAMBR is doing?**

- SAAMBR holds a genetically diverse insurance population of African penguins, these penguins could reinforce wild populations if the need arises.
- SAAMBR contributes to the African penguin Biodiversity Management Plan and is part of an advisory group working to improve African penguin survival in the wild.
- SAAMBR started the Penguin Promises campaign and educates the visitors to uShaka Sea World about conserving African penguins.
- SAAMBR rescues and rehabilitates African penguins on the east coast of South Africa. Once rehabilitated, penguins are sent to the Cape where they are released.
- SAAMBR provides a home for penguins that cannot be released because of their injuries.

**What can you do?**

- Reduce use of single-use plastic and recycle.
- Only eat seafood from a well managed resource.
- Buy local - by reducing your demand for products shipped from other parts of the world, you reduce the chances of oil spills.

[wwfsassi.co.za](http://wwfsassi.co.za)  
[www.msc.org](http://www.msc.org)
Green turtles, like other turtles, have a large distribution range. Their populations continue to decline.

The main threats to Green turtles globally are:

- **Bycatch** in fisheries and entanglement in lost fishing gear.
- Loss of nesting beaches and light pollution which disorientates hatchlings.
- **Climate change**
- **Plastic pollution**

**What SAAMBR is doing?**

- **SAAMBR** rescues and rehabilitates turtles on the east coast of South Africa. All turtles that are fit are released. We also provide a home for sea turtles that cannot be released; they live with us as ambassadors for their species.
- Scientists working at **SAAMBR’s Oceanographic Research Institute (ORI)** have studied the impact of bycatch on turtles and have contributed to the design of more environmentally friendly fishing gear. They also advise governments in the Western Indian Ocean on how to reduce bycatch.
- **SAAMBR’s education programme** informs visitors and learners to uShaka Sea World about turtle conservation.
- **SAAMBR** organises and participates in beach clean-ups.

**What can you do?**

- **Reduce your carbon footprint**
- **Reduce use of and recycle plastic**
- **Take part in or organise a beach cleanup**

- **www.sassi.co.za**
- **www.msc.org**

Only eat seafood from a well managed resource.
**KNYSNA SEAHORSE***

*Hippocampus capensis*

The Knysna seahorse is endemic to the Southern Cape of South Africa and is only known from three locations; the Knysna, Swartvlei and Keurbooms estuaries. The population continues to decline.

Knysna seahorses are threatened by:

- **Habitat destruction** from housing and tourism development close to estuaries.
- **Pollution** from domestic and industrial effluent and from agricultural runoff.

What SAAMBR is doing?

SAAMBR is home to a population of captive bred Knysna seahorses. We are continuously researching effective animal care programmes to maintain a healthy and genetically diverse population.

SAAMBR has an active education programme where visitors and learners to uShaka Sea World learn about Knysna seahorse conservation.

What can you do?

If you are privileged to see Knysna seahorses, please do not disturb or attempt to capture them. They are protected in South Africa.

Use environmentally friendly cleaning products in your home and garden; toxic products go down drains into rivers and estuaries.

Support sustainable tourism operators that are careful to preserve natural habitats.