

Volunteering in project CAMPA- Recovery of dugongs and their habitat in India
organized by Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun

From 16th February 2021 to 2nd March 2021

With research team of Gulf of Kutch, Gujarat

Submitted by

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Submitted to

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Project – CAMPA recovery of dugongs and their habitats in India.

This project is based on the Dugongs and their habitats.

- The Task Force has analyzed the entire spectrum of issues linked to dugong and their habitat conservation in India and herewith recommends following goals and objectives for Conservation and Management Plan for **Dugongs (Dugong dugon)** and their habitats in India.

Goal 1: Improve Understanding

- **Objective 1.** Improve our understanding of dugong through research and monitoring
- **Objective 2.** Improve our understanding of dugong habitats through research and monitoring

Goal 2. Conserve Species

- **Objective 3.** Reduce direct and indirect causes of dugong mortality

Goal 3. Conserve Habitat

- **Objective 4.** Conserve and manage dugong habitats.

Goal 4. Promote Awareness and Education

- **Objective 5.** Develop awareness for conservation of dugong and its habitat

Goal 5. Develop legal framework

- **Objective 6.** Develop legal protection of dugongs and their habitats.

Goal 6: Enhance national, regional and international cooperation

- **Objective 7. Develop national, regional and international cooperation on dugong research and conservation**

Species specification

Dugong (Dugong Dugon)

- The order Sirenia comprise Marine dugongs and manatees.
- Sirenia are the only completely vegetarian marine mammals and considered to be closely related to the elephant.

Description

- **Anatomy:** A very large marine mammals resembling like dolphin in general body shape, with a streamlined or spindle shaped torso flattened and deeply notched tail flukes and flippers for forelimb
- **Colour:** brownish grey above and dirty flesh color in the ventral side of the body
- **Behavior:** Dugongs are secretive creatures, rarely displaying the familiarity with human.
- **Distribution in India:** record of Gujrat, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamilnadu and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- **Habitat:** seagrass pastures in coastal or near – shore waters
- **Food:** seagrass



About our work as a volunteer

- On 16th February 2021 evening time wereached Okha. As a volunteer we performed different tasks with research team, such as field survey, awareness program as well sorting seagrassassociated microbenthic fauna. Later we met our guide **Miss. Prachi Hatkar – Research Assistant in Wildlife Institute of India**. She provided us to details about the project and kind of work that we would be engaged in. Subsequently, we visited nearby beach to understand more about marine ecosystems. Other team members briefed us about the nature of sea, tidal and tidal zone and the ecosystem of the zones.



- Prachi Hatkar mam basically works on the aspects of Benthic fauna: collection and identification of microbenthic invertebrate.

Sample collection

Sample collection is done from the boat with the grab. First we checked the depth of water, salinity, temperature of water. Prepare a ziplock bag with labels according to location and collection of the sample from sea by grab:

Samples were collected from different locations, observations were noted and preserved appropriately for further usage. Sorting and separation of microbenthic fauna was done and later observed in microscope to identify the small organisms.



Awareness program

- Along with this work, we were also part in awareness program in schools.
- Conduct 3 awareness program, two related to awareness about dugongs and one on costal birds and their importance.





Hermit crab



Chiton



Brittle star



