

DUGONG IN ABU DHABI EMIRATE FACT SHEET



DUGONG:

Dugongs are air breathing marine mammals that are found in tropical and subtropical waters around the world.



Dugongs are brown in colour and when fully grown, they reach up to three metres in length and up to 400 kilograms in weight.



Only marine mammal that is herbivorous, Dugongs feed only seagrass.

DISTRIBUTION:

Dugongs are found between 26° north and south of the Equator.

13- 15month
3-7 years

They give birth to a single calf after 11-13 months and breed every 3 - 7 year.



Abu Dhabi has the biggest dugong population (40%) in the Arabian Gulf and the second largest population in the world.

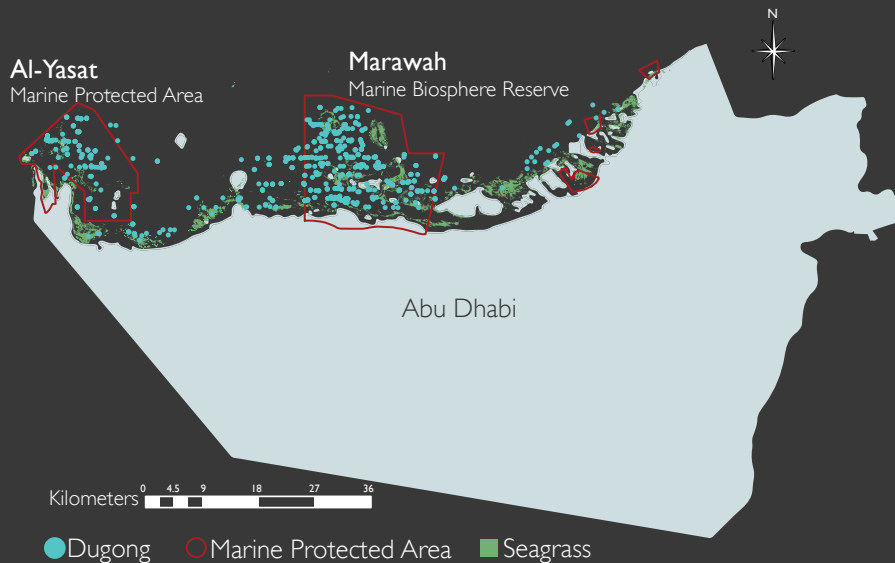
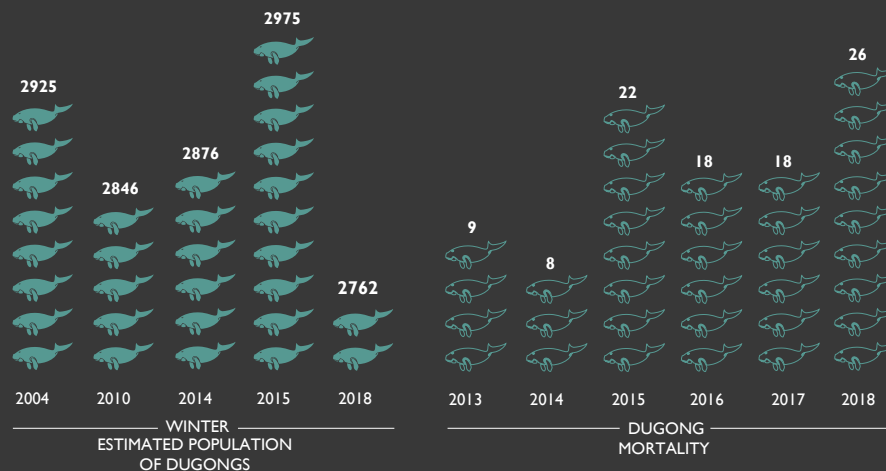
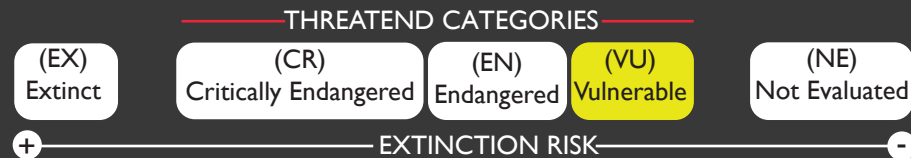
The highest density of dugongs in Abu Dhabi waters occur within Marine Protected Areas. Large herds of dugong up to 250 individuals are frequently seen in the MPAs.



STATUS:

Dugongs are victims of by-catch, accidental entanglement in fishing nets. Loss and degradation of seagrass meadows affect dugong physiology and reproduction.

Surveys conducted from 2004 to 2018 reveals that the population is within the limits of standard deviation, hence stable.



CONSERVATION:

The Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD) has been implementing conservation efforts for protection of dugongs and their habitat.

Efforts include long-term research and monitoring, investigating causes of mortality and developing capacity through workshops and training. Environment education programmes specific to dugong conservation are highly successful in enriching the public awareness.

RESPONSE:

EAD has established marine protected areas as a tool to protect marine endangered species and their habitats. The dugong population continues to be stable in the Marawah Marine Biosphere Reserve and Al-Yasat Marine Protected Area.

EAD has banned certain fishing methods to safeguard marine threatened species including dugongs.

