

Leatherback Sea Turtle Might Be Removed from US Endangered List

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Category : Science/Environment

Unlocking Word Meanings

Read the following words/expressions found in today’s article.

- 1. **compel** / **kəmˈpɛl** / (v) – to force someone to do something
Example: The company was **compelled** by the government to stop its operations.
- 2. **warrant** / **ˈwɒr ənt** / (v) – to be justifiable or acceptable
Example: His complaint definitely **warrants** action from the company, but the way he phrased it was very unprofessional.
- 3. **repercussion** / **ˌri pərˈkʌʃ ən** / (n) – a consequence that is usually unpleasant
Example: Abuse of natural resources may lead to serious **repercussions**.
- 4. **mistake (something/someone) for (something/someone)** / **mɪˈsteɪk fɔr** / (phrasal) – to think that someone/something is another person/thing
Example: I **mistook my bag for yours**; they look the same.
- 5. **slaughter** / **ˈslɔ tər** / (v) – to kill an animal for its meat and other body parts
Example: Pigs are **slaughtered** for their meat.

Article

Read the text below.

A fishing group in the United States is calling for the removal of the leatherback sea turtles—the largest sea turtles in the world—from the country’s list of endangered animals.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) had officially listed the leatherback sea turtles as an endangered species in 1970. Being listed as ‘endangered’ is equivalent to having legal protection. To protect these turtles, fishermen are **compelled** to make adjustments in the nets they use to avoid capturing the species. Restrictions have also been placed on fishing times and areas.

However, the Blue Water Fishermen’s Association believes that protection for the leatherback sea turtles is not necessary because the species’ East Coast population in the United States is actually not endangered. Because of this, the New Jersey-based association is petitioning the NOAA to tag the species only as ‘threatened’ instead of ‘endangered.’

The NOAA has already reviewed the petition. While the association’s request seems **warranted**, its argument focused only on the regional population of the sea turtles. Thus, the NOAA still needs sufficient data on the species’ global population before it can make a decision.

Removing the leatherback sea turtles from the endangered list may have serious **repercussions**. Without protection, this species may face a lot of threats.

Aside from getting trapped into fishermen’s nets, these turtles are also at risk of accidentally eating plastic as they may **mistake it for jellyfish**. Leatherback sea turtles are also intentionally **slaughtered** for their skin and meat. Even their eggs are consumed by some people as food.

Viewpoint Discussion

Enjoy a discussion with your tutor.

Discussion A

- In your opinion, how often should the endangered list be updated or re-evaluated? Explain.

