

UN urges protection for dolphins

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The United Nations has urged additional protection measures for dolphins and small whales.

A global survey, released at a conservation meeting in Kenya, finds that more than 70 percent of the species are at risk through snaring in fishing nets. Other major threats include intentional catching, pollution, habitat destruction and military sonar, the BBC said.

The UN Environment Program, also known as Unep, wants an upgrade of international protection on eight species, including the Ganges River dolphin, Atlantic spotted dolphin and the Northern right-whale dolphin.

Unep also urged extended protection measures for seven other species.

"Small cetaceans are amongst the most well loved and charismatic creatures on the planet," said Unep executive director Klaus Toepfer in a statement. "Sadly these qualities alone cannot protect them from a wide range of threats."

Two years ago a scientific study found about 800 cetaceans die each day through being snared in fishing nets.

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