

Voluntary Cetacean Conservation Report 2024

Submitted by the government of Brazil

1. Legal developments (laws, regulations and other regulatory measures related to cetaceans)

Brazil published an ordinance n. 1,720 of June 6, 2024 which establishes the Brazilian Network for Stranding Assistance and Information of Aquatic Mammals - REMAB and its respective Regional Networks (REMANOR, REMANE, REMASE, REMASUL), operating throughout the national territory with the purpose of promoting institutional exchange, technical cooperation, and support for research aimed at the conservation of aquatic mammals through actions such as sightings, monitoring, assistance to strandings and other occurrences, rescue actions, rehabilitation, and release of animals, as well as the storage of information in the Marine Mammal Monitoring Support System (SIMMAM). There was also the publication of the joint Ordinance MMA/IBAMA/ICMBio No. 3, of January 8, 2024, which establishes guidelines and procedures for the activity of disentangling large cetaceans in Brazilian jurisdictional waters. Additionally, there was the publication of the interministerial Ordinance MMA/MPA No. 4, of June 30, 2023, which establishes the prohibition of fishing, retaining, landing, storing, transporting, processing, and marketing of Piracatinga (*Calophrysus macropterus*) in Brazilian jurisdictional waters and throughout the national territory for an indefinite period.

The Brazilian government also conducted public consultations to discuss the process of creating the Albardão Marine National Park in Rio Grande do Sul. This initiative aims to integrate the process with the local community, environmental agencies, public entities, residents' associations, landowners, and representatives of productive sectors. The future federal conservation unit will cover approximately 1.6 million hectares, mostly in a marine environment, with only 21,000 hectares in a terrestrial environment. The region is home to various species, including ten species of marine mammals such as the Southern Right Whale (*Eubaleana australis*), bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), Franciscana dolphin (*Pontoporia blainvillei*), and sea lions and fur seals.

After the SAMARCO dam collapse in Espírito Santo, Brazilian government environmental agencies established environmental conditions to monitor the impacts caused by the rupture. These conditions include continuous studies of aquatic fauna, including marine mammals like the Franciscana dolphin, with ecological analyses, also requiring mitigation plans for these impacts.

REMAB – <https://www.in.gov.br/en/web/dou/-/portaria-icmbio-n-1.720-de-6-de-junho-de-2024-564262433>

Piracatinga -
https://www.icmbio.gov.br/cma/images/stories/Legislacao/Portarias/PORTARIA_INTERMINISTERIAL_MPA_MMA_Nº_4_DE_30_DE_JUNHO_DE_2023_-_PORTARIA_INTERMINISTERIAL_MPA_MMA_Nº_4_DE_30_DE_JUNHO_DE_2023_-_DOU_-_Imprensa.pdf

Whale **disentanglement** -
https://www.icmbio.gov.br/cma/images/stories/Legislacao/Portarias/Portaria_desenredamento.p

[df](#)

Discussões para criação da UC de Albardão - https://www.gov.br/icmbio/pt-br/aceso-a-informacao/participacao-social/ALBARDAO_Estudo_Tcnico.pdf.

2. Current Government programs related to cetacean conservation

Brazil took direct actions in response to climatic emergencies that occurred in the Amazon with the extreme drought events in 2023, as well as in Rio Grande do Sul with the floods of 2024. These emergencies mobilized various institutions from all over the country, which conducted rescues and collected materials and information to better understand the situation. The Brazilian government is also promoting the development of projects aimed at assessing the impacts of the floods in Rio Grande do Sul on the fauna in the affected region. Part of this project related to aquatic mammals is being developed and managed by CMA/ICMBio.

The Brazilian Biodiversity Genomics Project (GBB) is a consortium between the Vale Technological Institute (ITV) and ICMBio through Partnership Agreement No. 1/2022, established between the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation and the Vale Technological Institute - ITV. The objective is the technical and scientific cooperation between the partners to develop the use of genetic and genomic analysis tools to generate molecular information about Brazilian biodiversity, and it includes the participation of the CMA, as well as other CNPCs. At this point, there was no national consortium for genomic sequencing in Brazil, nor a network to integrate existing knowledge about genetic barcodes of national biodiversity into monitoring and diagnostic actions for species conservation based on environmental DNA. The project also involves next-generation sequencing technologies and active participation as a national hub in international consortia focused on sequencing reference genomes of global biodiversity, a niche not yet occupied by any other Brazilian institution.

Currently, the CMA has 6 approved projects, including 3 reference genome projects and 3 population genome projects, encompassing the following species: *Tursiops geophysus*, *Trichechus inunguis*, *Pontoporia blainvillei*, and *Trichechus manatus*.

GBB - [Instituto Tecnológico Vale | Projeto Genômica da Biodiversidade Brasileira \(itv.org\)](https://www.itv.org)

3. Current threats to cetacean conservation and management measures taken/proposed.

Brazil held monitoring meetings for three National Action Plans: The Franciscana National Action Plan (PAN Toninhas), the Marine Cetaceans National Action Plan (PAN Cetáceos Marinhos), and the Amazon Aquatic Mammals National Action Plan (PAN Mamíferos Aquáticos Amazônicos). These meetings updated the progress of various conservation actions and scheduled steps for the coming years. Additionally, the government approved projects to support actions in these National Plans, including acoustic and aerial monitoring activities along the southeastern coast of Brazil and the organization of Large Cetacean Disentanglement Workshops, providing training for individuals in these activities.

Regarding the Biodiversity Extinction Risk Assessment System (SALVE) in Brazil, the results include the review, organization, and publication of the 59 forms assessed in the last SALVE assessment in 2018. Additionally, a schedule was developed for the assessment workshops that will take place in 2024/2025. In the first workshop, in 2024, 24 species will be assessed, including species classified as Critically Endangered - CR (2), Endangered - EN (6), Vulnerable - VU (4), Near Threatened - NT (2), Not Applicable - NA (7), Data Deficient - DD (1), and Least Concern - LC (2). In the second workshop, in 2025, 35 species will be assessed, including those classified as Data Deficient - DD (10), Not Applicable - NA (11), and Least Concern - LC (14).

SALVE - <https://salve.icmbio.gov.br/#/>

The Brazilian government published the protocol "Technical Guidelines for Surveillance and Response to Avian Influenza in Aquatic Mammals in Federal Conservation Units," which aims to disseminate the main technical guidelines regarding procedures and actions to prevent, mitigate, and avoid the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza outbreaks in aquatic mammals within Federal Conservation Units in Brazilian territory. It also addresses these guidelines in rehabilitation centres, research facilities, and fauna maintenance under the responsibility of ICMBio.

4. Reporting systems for cetacean injuries/mortality/strandings

The Ordinance 1,720 of June 6, 2024, also established the Marine Mammal Monitoring Support System (SIMMAM) as the official database of the Brazilian Network for Stranding Assistance and Information on Aquatic Mammals (REMAB) and its respective Regional Networks (REMANOR, REMANE, REMASE, REMASUL). This system is managed by the National Center for Research and Conservation of Aquatic Mammals of the Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation (CMA/ICMBio), in partnership with and developed by the University of Vale do Itajaí (UNIVALI). Currently, more than 74,000 records of strandings, sightings, and accidental captures have been registered by various REMAB members and general volunteering contributors. However, the data analyses are ongoing, and results will be provided in the future.

5. International cooperation activities (includes bilateral or multilateral cooperation, assistance and funding programs and appropriate contact information, and other international activities of the Country submitting the Report)

In March 2024, the 5th South-Western Atlantic Southern Right Whale Conservation Management Plan (SWA SRW CMP) Workshop took place in Santos, São Paulo to discuss the Southern Right Whale Conservation Management Plan, with the participation of representatives from Uruguay, Argentina, Brazil and Chile, the countries where the species occurs in South America. The workshop discussed and updated the table of actions from the 2022 CMP workshop. While progress was made on most actions, the workshop concluded that additional work is needed before these actions can be completed. New actions were also proposed. Considering that the SWA SRW CMP actions are advancing in all range countries, albeit at different paces, and that no immediate risks have been identified for the population, it was suggested that workshops to review the CMP be conducted every four years.

In March 2024, a detailed proposal for the establishment of a Conservation Management Plan for

the Lahille's bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops gephyreus*) was formulated. This proposal, to be jointly presented by Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay within the framework of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), aims to enhance collaboration and coordination among stakeholders in these countries. The primary objective of the CMP *Tursiops gephyreus* is to promote the conservation of Lahille's bottlenose dolphins throughout their distribution range. The implementation of this CMP will improve and expand coordinated research, policy formulation, and mitigation actions across Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina, thereby ensuring a comprehensive and unified approach to the conservation of this species. In April 2024, a new proposal was submitted to the IWC for the Conservation Management Plan for the Guiana dolphin, *Sotalia guianensis*, presented by Brazil, France, and Panama. The objective is to strengthen collaboration and coordination among stakeholders to promote the conservation of the Guiana dolphin and mitigate impacts on the species and its habitat in nine countries across South and Central America.

Brazil is part of the IWC Conservation Management Plan for River Dolphins, and ICMBio/CMA coordinates the Amazon Aquatic Mammals National Action Plan (PAN) in Brazil. Thus, Brazil was invited to participate in the signing event of the "Declaración Global por los Delfines de Río" in Bogotá, Colombia, where countries from Asia and South America committed to the conservation of these species. All countries presented their current situations and recent actions regarding the protection of river dolphins. Future actions related to these species were also proposed at the event.

Brazil also sent four professionals to the Whale Disentanglement Training Course provided by the International Whaling Commission (IWC) through its partner institution, the Center for Coastal Studies (CEC) in Massachusetts, USA. This training aimed to equip the team to build a professional and guided network capable of safely responding to the increasing reports of entangled whales along the country's coast. The training was extremely important for assisting entangled animals in Brazil and for training others involved in disentanglement efforts in the country, with the goal of quickly establishing a disentanglement network along Brazil's extensive coastline.

Additionally, Argentina proposed Brazil to be a co-sponsor in the Concerted Action for the Franciscana dolphin and in the inclusion of Lahille's bottlenose dolphin under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), to be evaluated by the Scientific Council of the Convention. Among the activities carried out under the CMS are the Concerted Actions, which are conservation measures, projects, or agreements undertaken between institutions as a priority to improve the conservation status of species listed in Appendices I and II of the Convention (CMS Resolution 12.28). The Concerted Action for the Franciscana dolphin will be proposed by Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay—if the latter two agree—countries through which the species is distributed. The proposal to include Lahille's bottlenose dolphin in Appendices I and II of the CMS is to be evaluated by the Scientific Council of the Convention.

Document prepared by: Karen Lucchini; Layse Albuquerque; Matheus Lopes; Fábía Luna
Centro Nacional de Pesquisa e Conservação de Mamíferos Aquáticos/Instituto Chico Mendes de
Conservação da Biodiversidade – CMA/ICMBio, Santos, SP, Brazil.