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A species is **Endangered** when it faces a very high risk of extinction in the wild, based on measurements of population size and/or geographic range and their trends in the past, present and/or future.

### Vaquita

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The Vaquita, *Phocoena sinus*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This small porpoise is restricted to the upper Gulf of California, Mexico, and has the unfortunate distinction of being the world's most threatened cetacean species.

With a population estimated at only around 150, the Vaquita is undergoing a disastrous decline. The upper Gulf of California is intensively fished, and as a result the most serious threat to the Vaquita is entanglement in gill nets.

Since 2008, the Government of Mexico has established the Vaquita Refuge as a net-free fishing zone, and reduced the level of fishing effort in other areas through a combination of economic measures. Compensation for fishing permit holders who retire their permits or switch to other Vaquita-safe fishing methods, and improved enforcement to regulate illegal fishing have so far reduced the gill net fishing effort by about a third. However, given the perilous status of the Vaquita, stronger measures are needed to ensure that all gill nets are removed from the entire range of the species.



A species is **Critically Endangered** when it faces an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild, based on measurements of population size and/or geographic range and their trends in the past, present and/or future.

© Thomas A. Jefferson, Puerto Vaquita (upper right) (Coto No. 094888) from the Secretaría de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARNAT), within a natural protected area subject to special management and decreed as such by the Mexican Government.



  
Collins



# SPECIES ON THE EDGE OF SURVIVAL

