



PROJECT SEAHORSE

advancing marine conservation

Partner with Project Seahorse to save seahorses and the seas

Project Seahorse is a leader in marine conservation, making discoveries and collaborating globally to take effective action for seahorses and their seas. We envision a world in which marine ecosystems are healthy and well-managed. Our vision embraces the need to reconcile conservation and human dependency on the ocean.

Project Seahorse seeks allies, partners and donors for our projects and our program. We are an award-winning team that achieves a huge amount, using innovation and strategy. We have a rich slate of projects ready to go as soon as resources allow. Your engagement and contributions could make all the difference. We would be delighted to explore ideas with you. This document offers some examples of where we are poised to leap forward once resources are available.

Our approach is best summarised as pragmatic idealism. We are evidence-based but quick to deploy new information, rather than aspiring to perfect knowledge. Our research is intimately linked to our practical conservation action in a tight feedback loop. We often take the view that “we know enough” and just plunge in to management and policy, explicitly highlighting our uncertainties and adapting as new knowledge becomes available (often through those same initiatives). We pride ourselves on being responsive, nimble and quick to grasp opportunities that are within our reach and scope. We collaborate with partners and communities, using seahorses to focus efforts on finding marine conservation solutions.

We offer opportunities to influence the fate of marine life by collaborating with our team of ocean optimists and marine advocates. Project Seahorse paints a very broad canvas intellectually and programmatically, from fundamental biology and protected area planning to fisheries management and United Nations policy. We are proud of having made measurable differences to wild species and spaces in all these domains. We feed our many outputs directly into community empowerment, management, and policy... and then ensure that our contributions are mobilised for action.

Project Seahorse has a specific goal of securing healthy populations of seahorses – and healthy seas – in the western Pacific and Indian Oceans, where the pressures are greatest. Our reach is, however, global and we are involved in scores of countries on six continents. We are putting great efforts into growing collegiate capacity in countries that are homes to seahorses, pipefishes and seadragons. This is done through mentorship, advice and collaboration. The more people who engage, the faster and farther our voyage to a healthier ocean.

We invite you to partner with us on our adventure and our successes.
We are seriously effective, in large part thanks to our donors. Join us.



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Mobilising the global expert group for seahorses to effect change



We have a marvellous opportunity to lever big change in the nature and scale of conservation efforts for seahorses, pipefishes, and seadragons (family Syngnathidae). We seek funds to tap into the tremendous potential of the designated global expert group for about 320 syngnathid species and their vulnerable coastal and freshwater habitats. Such support will advance work on these amazing fishes all over the world.

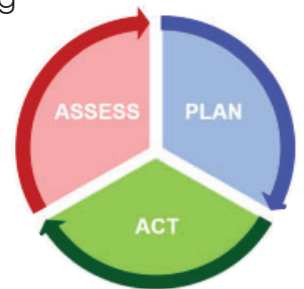
Project Seahorse was appointed as the core of the **IUCN SSC Specialist Group for Seahorses, Pipefish and Seadragons** (SPS SG), and the Director of Project Seahorse is the SPS SG Chair. The IUCN is a union of about 1,450 conservation organizations, including 91 state members and 120 governmental agencies. Within the IUCN, SSC is an evidence-based network of more than 10,500 experts globally who are charged with leading on species conservation. The IUCN has designated the SPS SG as the global authority on these fishes, which are found in 130 countries.



Our Specialist Group comprises 40 experts from 21 countries/territories across six continents and has a mandate to **advance long-term conservation of the world's syngnathid fishes**. We work with scientists, conservationists, governments and other groups to ensure that wild populations are healthy and well-managed. We assess, we plan, we act, we network and we communicate... in an integrated set of initiatives.

Our role is to illuminate and alleviate threats to wild populations of syngnathid fishes and their ocean habitats.

Our work ranges from conducting global conservation assessments of threatened species (for the IUCN Red List) to creating new marine protected areas to promoting fisheries reforms. Our **Assess, Plan, Act, Connect** cycle of activity enables us to generate and apply knowledge then evaluate our work. We empower local partners, act with great efficiency, and successfully implement conservation efforts for highly threatened species.



The strength of the SPS SG is tremendously important. The IUCN has adopted Resolution 95 - Conservation of seahorses, pipefishes and seadragons (family Syngnathidae) – as a matter of global policy, driving the agenda for all IUCN member organizations for the next four years at least. **This Resolution sets an ambitious agenda for IUCN action that ranges from habitat protection through fisheries and aquaculture to trade regulation...** and highlights the role of our Specialist Group in making it all happen.



Locations of SPS SG members. Covers all 40 members

The potential and capacity of the SPS SG is limited only by resources. SPS SG members are poised to act individually and collectively to apply new research techniques (e.g. eDNA) to find syngnathids, to promote compliance and enforcement of existing regulations, to support wild populations with rapid action when threats arise, to limit the use of destructive fishing gears, to tackle illegal wildlife trade and so much more. The IUCN reputation for sage advice and sound practice opens doors around the world.

Now that we have both an IUCN Resolution and a conservation strategy, our Specialist Group requires dedicated funding to maximize its effectiveness in protecting seahorses and their relatives. **Our greatest need is a full-time program officer who will act as a strategic catalyst** for the 40 SPS SG members – **bringing great minds together to achieve great conservation gains, and supporting them to act.** We also need funds for action, assessment and communication.

With funding, the SPS SG will meet the following objectives, by co-ordinating its membership:

- Roll out the new IUCN SPS SG strategic plan, providing technical advice and guidance to members and front-line conservationists
- Develop an emergency rapid action capacity to respond to new and urgent pressures, such as plans to damage vital habitats
- Lead, encourage and support IUCN Members to implement Resolution 95, for syngnathid conservation
- Act as the global resource for knowledge of syngnathid species, centrally supporting colleagues and collaborators around the world
- Reassess conservation status for threatened and Data Deficient species to discern change and update our understanding of pressures and opportunities
- Provide materials and support to individuals and groups – including IUCN Members – that can multiply our messages
- Share stories about our species and their conservation needs through online and traditional communications channels
- Raise the profile of the IUCN SPS SG and its work with resource managers and government agencies so they regard us as a resource

Budget items

- Program officer salary and benefits
- Communication costs including videos and infographics
- Meeting for SPS SG members, in person, for the first time since 2017
- Rapid Action costs to respond to crises

**institutional overheads to be applied on top, as appropriate*

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Our vision is a world in which marine ecosystems are healthy and well-managed

This vision embraces the need to reconcile conservation and human dependency on the ocean.

Our mission statement has three elements:

1. Project Seahorse is an interdisciplinary and international organization committed to conservation and sustainable use of the world's coastal marine ecosystems.
2. We engage in connected research and management at scales ranging from community initiatives to international accords.
3. Collaborating with partners and communities, we use seahorses to focus our efforts in finding marine conservation solutions.



A schematic diagram of the many layers at which we engage in marine conservation research, management and policy. Project Seahorse has made research contributions and achieved measurable impacts in life history and ecology, marine protected areas, subsistence fisheries management, community development, national law, international trade, global policy, and public outreach. Together, these initiatives advance marine conservation.



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