

# Ocean Heroes to the Rescue

24 Feb - 5 Mar 2023

## Be an Ocean Hero at IPC Shopping Centre's Ocean Playground!

Our iconic larger-than-life balloon installation is back! This year's theme is 'Ocean Heroes to the Rescue' to raise awareness of endangered marine species, promote ocean-conservation and sustainability education efforts.

Ocean-loving kids and parents can immerse in the ocean playground made up of 85,000 pieces of biodegradable balloons. It consists of beautifully sculptured underwater landscape while featuring the world's five most endangered marine life:

- Hammerhead Shark (longest balloon animal at 5m long)
- Orca Whale (tallest balloon animal at 4m high)
- Hawksbill Sea Turtle
- Dugong
- Giant Manta Ray

The installation uses 100% biodegradable Qualatex balloons which will be properly disposed at the end to ensure it does not end up in a landfill or the ocean - in line with IPC's ongoing sustainability efforts.

We've partnered with 20 world-renowned balloon sculpture artists from Hong Kong, China, Taiwan, and Malaysia to bring this extravagant installation to life. The team was led by Malaysian Balloon Master, Joseph Ho, and Taiwan's Godfather of Balloons, Ho Kun Leong, who have worked together on multiple occasions, one being their greatest achievement when bagging Gold at the 5th World Balloon Convention in San Diego, California.

Benefits of using sustainable Qualatex balloons include:

- Latex is extracted from rubber trees in a sustainable manner for approximately 30 years.
- Rubber trees consume CO2 from the atmosphere, thereby curbing global warming.
- When no longer used for latex production, rubber trees are harvested for use as lumber.
- Qualatex latex balloons degrade at about the same speed as an oak leaf.
- Rubber tree plantations provide high quality jobs.

Here at IPC Shopping Centre, we strive to include green efforts into everyday business, such as our business operations to the in-mall events we hold. It's a small part we play in inspiring and enabling as many people as possible to live more sustainably and climate positive - from our adult shoppers to young visitors.

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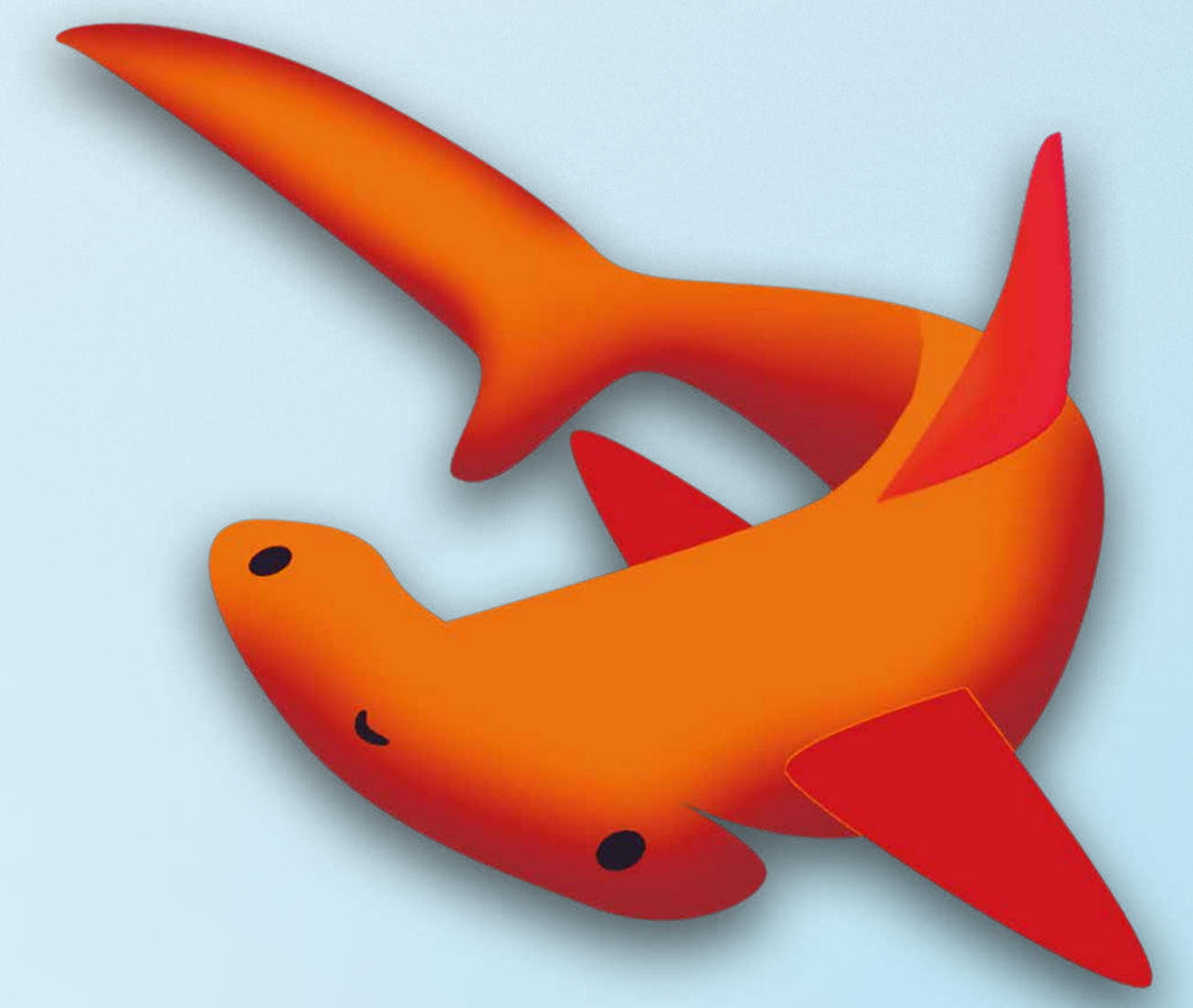


**The risk of extinction is real - our oceans and marine animals are facing deadly consequences due to human-led activities.**

Read on to learn more about the world's five most endangered marine life.

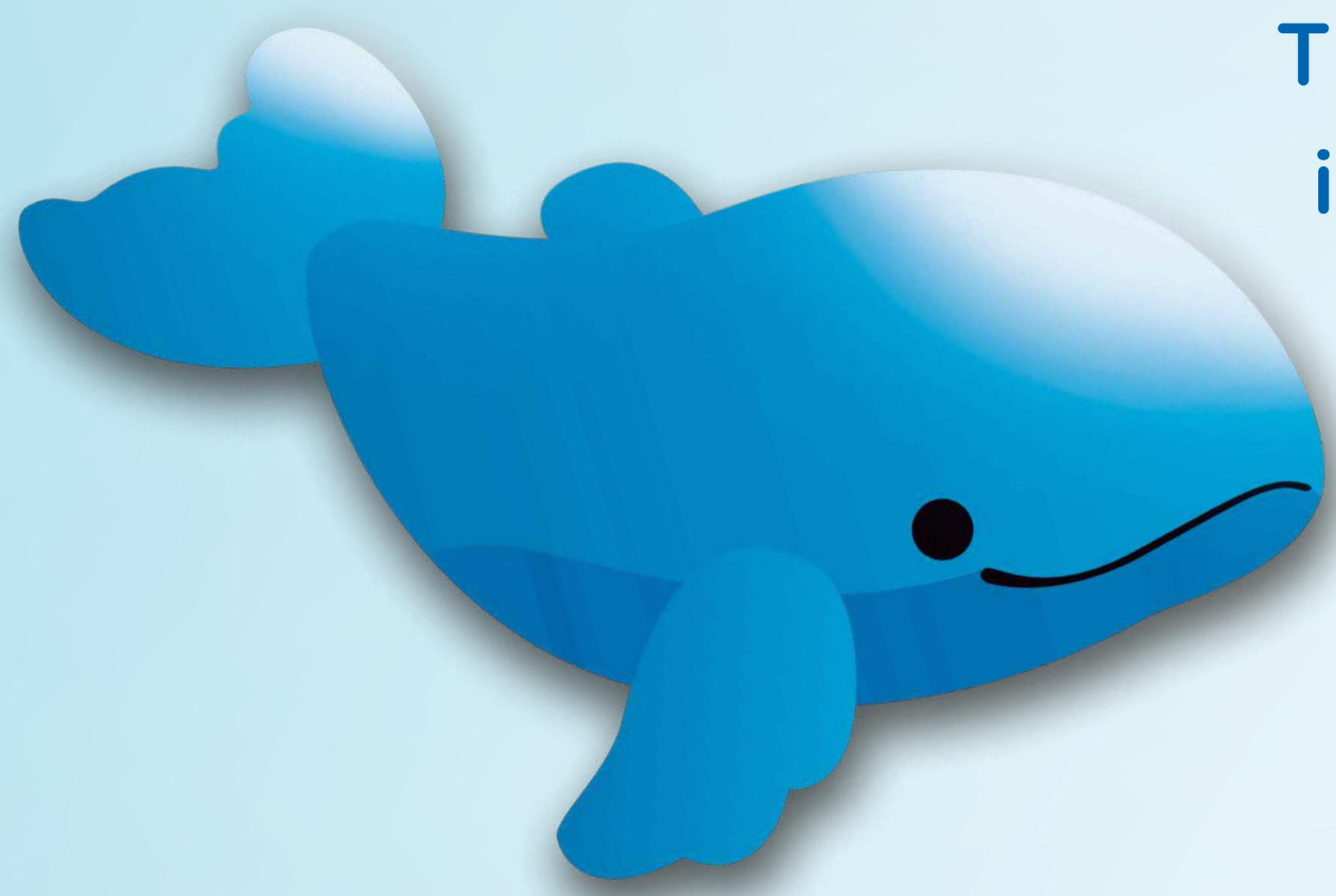
## Hammerhead Shark

The great hammerhead is a magnificent creature that plays a crucial role in maintaining a balanced ocean ecosystem as a "keystone species" by regulating the population of predatory species they prey on and removing weaker individuals that prevent the spread of weak genes. Sadly, their population has declined by over 50% in the last 70 years due to factors such as habitat degradation, bycatch deaths, and slaughter for their fins.



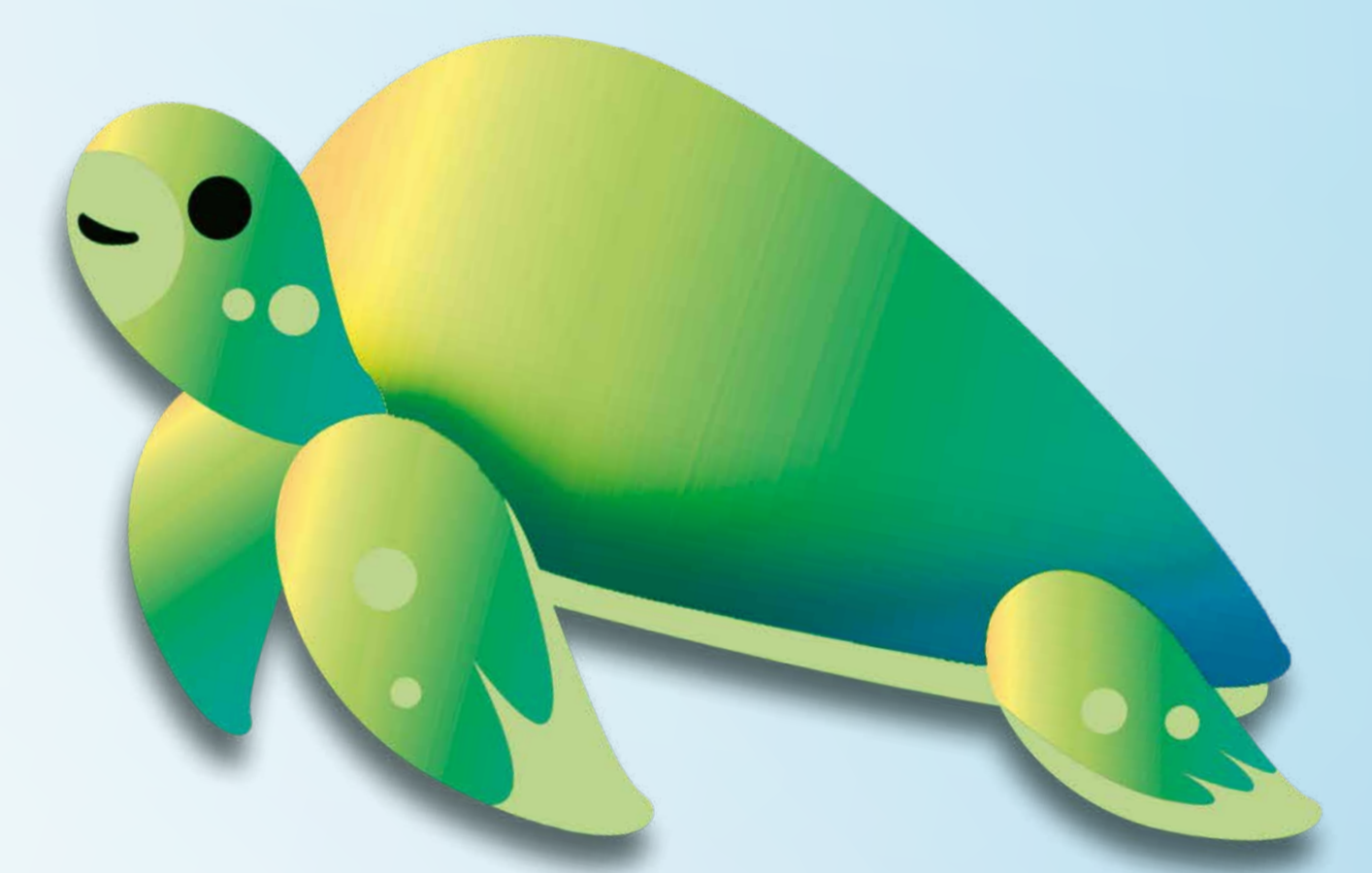
## Orca Whale

The largest member of the dolphin family, Orca whales are highly intelligent and social mammals that play a crucial role in the marine ecosystem. They help cycle nutrients from deep oceans, move carbon to deeper waters, and provide meals for up to 400 different species when they die. However, their population has been rapidly declining due to commercial hunting, habitat loss, and low food sources, resulting in low birth rates. Despite being apex predators, they also help maintain prey populations in check.



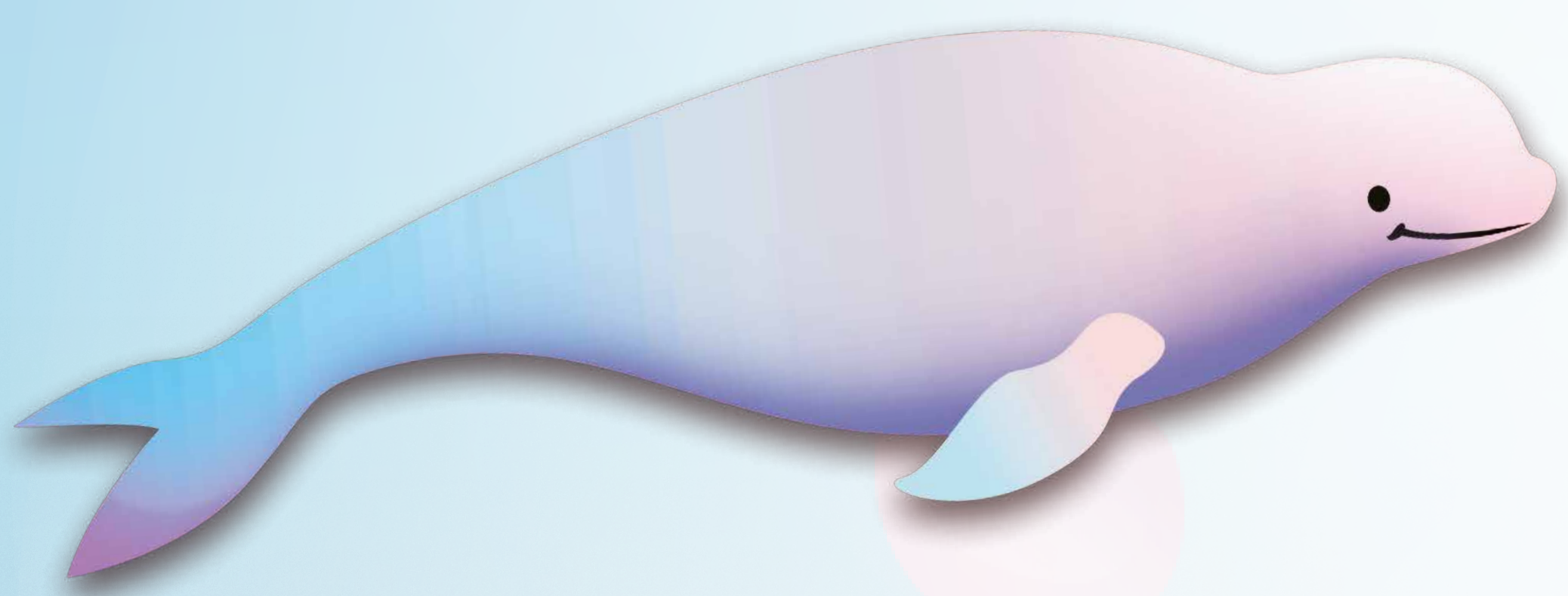
## Hawksbill Sea Turtle

Hawksbill sea turtles are critically endangered, with only 8,000 nesting females left globally. They're highly sought after for their stunning shells, eggs, and meat, making them the most endangered of all sea turtle species. Despite being hunted for thousands of years and kept illegally as pets, these turtles face further risks today from bycatch, ghost fishing, coastal development, and climate change. Nonetheless, they play a crucial role in keeping coral reefs healthy by removing sponges from the surface, providing better access for reef fish to feed.



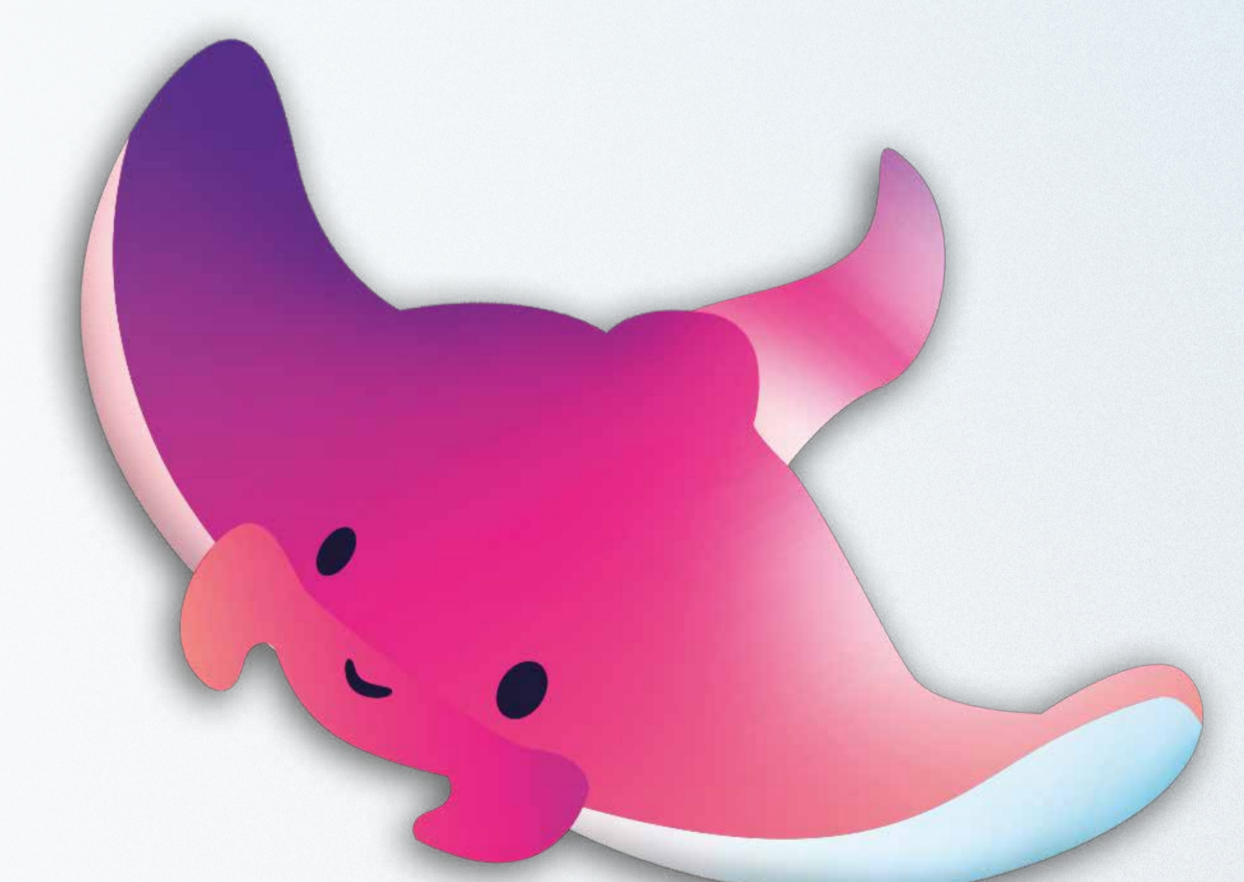
## Dugong

Dugongs are on the brink of extinction, with just a few hundred left in the waters due to seagrass habitat loss caused by coastal development and water pollution. This leads to insufficient food intake for them to breed normally, resulting in low birth rates. These solitary mammals play a crucial ecological role in supporting marine biodiversity by encouraging the health and resilience of seagrass meadows through grazing. This supports various other marine species, providing critical support to fisheries enterprises, economic opportunities, and food security to coastal communities.



## Giant Manta Ray

The giant manta ray, with a wingspan of up to 29 feet, faces its biggest threat from commercial fishing, both as a target and as bycatch. Their gills are particularly valued and traded internationally. Despite having the biggest brains of any fish and being capable of learning and recognizing themselves in the mirror, this magnificent species is at risk. Like other marine animals, giant manta rays play a vital role in controlling plankton abundance and diversity, regulating nutrient cycling, and creating an ecological connection between the surface ocean and the deep sea through their feeding and diving behaviour.



Information sourced from:  
<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/>



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**We hope this read inspires you to care for these magnificent sea creatures, and know that their risk of extinction may be reversed if we start taking proactive steps to conserve our oceans and marine animals.**

If you wish to learn more or support ocean-conservation organisations and their efforts, here are a few locally-active non-governmental organisations or initiatives for you to touch base with:



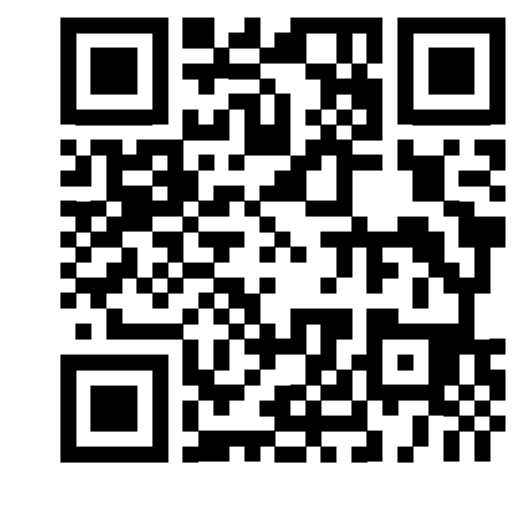
**Dugong & Seagrass Conservation Project**  
<https://www.dugongconservation.org/>



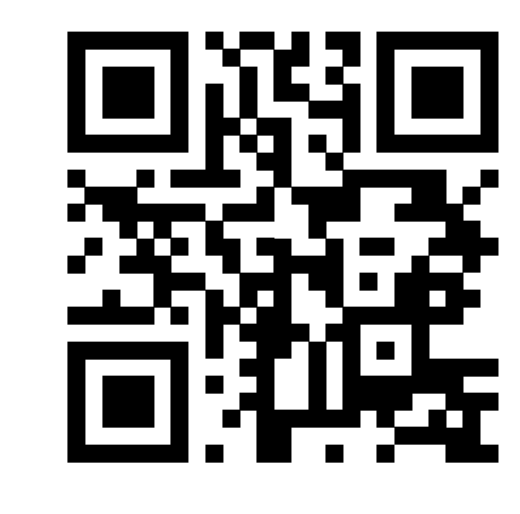
**Department of Marine Science, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM)**  
<https://www.iium.edu.my/kulliyah/kos/marine-science>



**The MareCet Research Organisation**  
<https://www.marecet.org/>



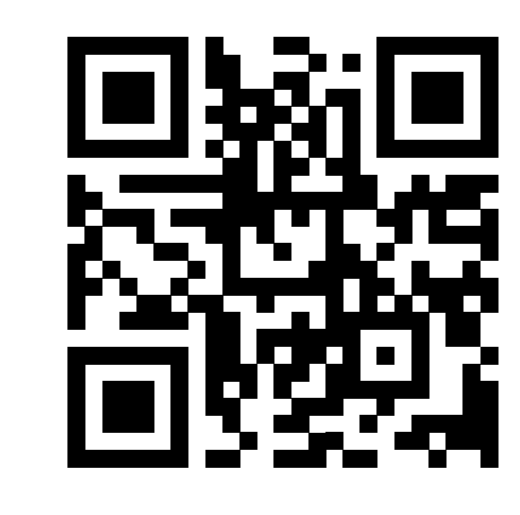
**Reef Check Malaysia**  
<https://www.reefcheck.org.my/>



**Sea Turtle Research Unit, Institute of Oceanography and Environment, University Malaysia Terengganu (UMT)**  
<https://seatru.umt.edu.my/>



**Turtle Conservation Society of Malaysia**  
<https://www.turtleconservationsociety.org.my/>



**World Wide Fund for Nature Inc. (WWF) Malaysia**  
<https://www.wwf.org.my/>