



# Seagrass-Watch E-Bulletin

**30 September 2017**

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## NEWS

### **Anchoring in eelgrass: concerns raised in South Devon (UK)**

28 September 2017, *Practical Boat Owner Magazine*

The contentious issue of anchoring in eelgrass beds has risen again – this time in Torbay, South Devon. Experts at Torquay's coastal zoo, Living Coasts, are warning that the local seahorse population could be threatened if boats drop their anchor in the wrong place. The eelgrass areas in the protected waters of Tor Bay are voluntary no anchoring zones.

The calls come after the discovery of a pregnant short-snouted seahorse inside the Torbay Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), which was designated in 2013. Both the short-snouted seahorse and the eelgrass species *Zostera*

*marina*, are protected by the UK Wildlife and Countryside Act of 2008 and the seahorse is a UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species. Living Coasts said it also had evidence of damage to the seabed, which it claims was caused by the anchors of small boats. However, many boat owners believe that anchoring in eelgrass has little impact. The Boat Owners Response Group (BORG), believes anchoring in eelgrass “causes little disturbance”. Living Coasts said some of the bay’s eelgrass seems healthy and full of life, but “some is damaged and needs to be nurtured back to health”.

more..... <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html>

*Related article*

*Boat owners warned after anchors damage priceless Devon habitat (Devon Live)*  
<http://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/boat-owners-warned-after-anchors-421990>

## **NSW Government grants Sydney Institute of Marine Science \$95,954 to restore endangered seagrass in Port Stephens (NSW, Australia)**

28 September 2017, Port Stephens Examiner

Efforts to restore seagrass in Port Stephens has been boosted by a significant state government grant. The Sydney Institute of Marine Science will receive \$95,954 through the NSW Government’s Restoration and Rehabilitation Grant Program to restore the endangered *Posidonia australis* seagrass in mooring scars across the Port’s waterways.

Traditional dump weight and chain swing mooring devices are proven to ‘scour’ seagrass beds leaving bare patches on the ocean floor. These are referred to as mooring scars. Currents and wave action on these patches cause further damage by eroding the sediment and destabilising the beds. Seagrasses are protected in NSW under the Fisheries Management Act 1994 and Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter Scot MacDonald MLC said the grant would help the marine institute use recent innovations in seagrass restoration to revegetate *Posidonia australis* in Port Stephens.

Seagrass shoots will be collected by citizen scientists following large storms. Storms cause seagrass fragments to be washed up along beaches. This method of collection will avoid damaging existing seagrass meadows while also engaging the community in restoration, the lead investigator for the project, Dr Adriana Vergés from UNSW Sydney and the marine institute, said. Aside from restoring seagrass, the aim of the project is the raise awareness about the importance of seagrass meadows and the benefits of environmentally friendly moorings.

more..... <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html>

## **Irma battered South Florida. Now at least one part of the state may be grateful (FL, USA)**

28 September 2017, Miami Herald

Sixteen days after Hurricane Irma bulldozed a path across the Florida Keys, Capt. Steven Friedman stood on the bow of his boat in Florida Bay marveling at what he saw before him. Happy, oblivious, rolling tarpon gorging on a shrimp hatch in a browning mat of dead seagrass: evidence of nature’s capacity to fight back.

In the days since Irma, scientists have worried about the storm’s toll on a bay battered by damaging events in the past two years. Just after the storm, Everglades Foundation wetland ecologist Steve Davis flew over Cape Sable and photographed vast mats of floating dead seagrass. But from the air, it was hard to tell exactly what kind, and where the grass might have come from. On the water this week, Davis found seagrass beds looking healthy, suggesting that they might have survived the storm’s powerful Category 4 winds, and the bay teeming with life.

Florida International University marine ecologist Jim Fourqurean said some scientists believe the bay suffers from too little circulation, allowing dead material to pile up. Cut off from historic overland flows, the shallow bay also tends to get too salty because water evaporates faster than rainfall or run-off can replenish it. “So a big hurricane that causes a big displacement of water could also be good because it will freshen up the bay,” he said. Hurricanes can also have a pruning effect on the grass by pulling out dead grass or loose blades, freeing up space and speeding up new growth. In the coming days, he and other scientists will be taking a closer look at seagrass beds that since Hurricane Andrew have been more closely monitored.

more..... <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html>

*Related article*

*After Irma, dead seagrass 'as far as the eye can see' in Florida Bay (Miami Herald)*  
<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/weather/hurricane/article173637481.html>

## **The Mediterranean Sea: incomparable wealth in steep decline**

27 September 2017, PhysOrg

Along its 46,000km coastline, the Mediterranean Sea supports around 150 million people living along its shores. The report Reviving the Economy of the Mediterranean Sea: Actions for a sustainable future, produced by WWF in association with The Boston Consulting Group (BCG), shows that the Mediterranean Sea plays a fundamental role in

the region's economy but that the sea's underlying natural asset base – which supports much of the economy and community wellbeing – is eroding.

The report maps the contribution of the sea to the region in new ways and finds that the overall value of the Mediterranean's natural assets is at least US\$5.6 trillion. This value draws on assets including productive coastlines, fisheries and seagrass. The sea's annual estimated economic output is at least US\$450 billion. The report also reveals, however, that many principal assets in the Mediterranean Sea are declining because of unsustainable exploitation and that the use of these resources is accelerating. The report focusses on the fisheries sector and the rapidly growing tourism industry and shows that the health of the Mediterranean Sea is at a turning point.

*more..... <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html>*

### ***How hurricanes such as Irma and Maria can devastate the Caribbean marine environment***

*25 September 2017, The Conversation UK*

Hurricane Irma – one of the strongest on record to hit the Caribbean – recently scoured the islands leaving catastrophic damage in its wake. And just as we began to piece together the devastating and potentially long-term impacts of Irma, Hurricane Maria has now left another path of destruction. When the world talks of the tragic and devastating consequences of severe hurricanes, the focus tends to be on the land, and the people who live in affected communities. But marine environments can be also badly affected by hurricanes, with potential long-term effects.

The force of hurricane winds, and the resultant tides and waves are so strong that both plants and animals are ripped from the sea floor leaving lifeless rubble and sediment behind. Hurricanes have a washing machine effect: they mix up coastal sediments with knock-on effects for marine life. Suspended matter left floating in the water column limits the amount of sunlight that reaches marine habitats and so reduces growth and recovery. Meanwhile in shallow coastal environments, debris, sewage and run-off continue to flow in to the sea long after the hurricane has passed. The devastation of coastal environments, particularly seagrass meadows, can also result in long-term losses of the benefits that humans receive from them, such as fisheries support or coastal protection. Damage to these ecosystem services consequently impacts human well-being, because people can no longer rely on them for their livelihood and food supply. Seagrass also stabilises sediments and protects the white sand beaches that attract so many tourists to the region.

Hurricanes have always been a part of life in tropical seas. What is alarming now, however, is the apparent increased frequency and intensity. The already poor state of the Caribbean marine environment restricts the ability of habitats such as seagrass meadows to recover from the effects of severe storms. We need a fundamental shift in how marine environments are protected to enable long-term sustainability for the food and income they provide. Many locations in the Caribbean, for example Puerto Rico, have ineffective marine protection rules and so destructive practices continue unchecked, meaning that when a disaster does occur, the environment is unable to recover. Although local actions against climate change are difficult to achieve, it is possible to manage river catchments to improve water quality, and focus on small scale immediate actions, such as implementation of marine protected areas to limit immediate and direct damage to coastal resources. Coordinated small scale actions will ultimately help enhance the resilience of the Caribbean Sea, and make sure that the environment can better recover from any future extreme events.

*more..... <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html>*

### ***Queensland Labor may break election vow and allow coal ship loading (QLD, Australia)***

*23 September 2017, The Guardian*

The Queensland Labor government has flagged breaking a 2015 election promise by allowing the loading of coal ships at sea in the Great Barrier Reef marine park. Labor vowed to ban so-called “trans-shipping” in reef waters after the United Nations’ peak scientific body raised concerns about a proposal off Hay Point near Mackay in 2014. But the Palaszczuk government on Friday released a proposal that would allow trans-shipping off Hay Point and three other “priority ports”, including Adani’s Abbot Point.

The plan announced by the environment and reef minister, Steven Miles, would mean stricter protections overall, with bans in the rest of reef waters and new regulation of trans-shipping under environmental protection laws. However, an environment department consultation paper inviting public comment reveals that trans-shipping would be allowed in the Great Barrier Reef marine park when it is “in association with a declared port”. And this proviso would not apply to existing operations in reef waters. These would also elude mandatory refusal applying to new proposals deemed a high risk of ships striking marine mammals or turtles, or “significant adverse effect” on threatened species or coral and seagrass through water pollution or seabed disturbance.

Australian marine conservation society campaigner Imogen Zethoven said the government was “retreating from that promise” and called on it to honour fully its election commitment. “It increases the risk of damage to seagrass meadows, home to turtles and dugongs through dredging and anchoring to establish the trans-shipping site,” she said. Miles said requiring trans-shipping operations for the first time to be licensed as an “environmentally relevant

activity” meant stricter rules for “protecting the Great Barrier Reef”. He further welcomed the views of environmental organisations, as well as industry and government agencies, in public consultation on the proposal by 20 October.  
[more..... http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html)

### **Let's focus on the good seaweed (sic) does (WA, Australia)**

18 September 2017, *The West Australian*

Although it might look horrible and smell like rotten eggs, the pile of seaweed (sic) lying on Back Beach between the City of Bunbury Surf Life Saving Club and Wyalup Rocky Point is an important biological cycle that will play a critical role in the health and long-term sustainability of our entire marine ecosystem.

The smell itself occurs when the piles of rotting seagrass are so thick that they cannot adequately aerate, resulting in the generation of hydrogen sulphide gas, or rotten egg gas. This is a completely natural consequence of anaerobic breakdown which often goes unnoticed. It is only when we have multiple storms over several months that our beaches lose a lot of sloping sand, forming a sink effect that results in excess amounts of ripped up grasses and organic debris accumulating in big piles along the shoreline and against the sand dunes. Known as wrack, most of the seagrass will normally wash back into the ocean soon after, unless severe amounts of it continue to accumulate due to the shape of the beach, or if human infrastructure acts to capture the wrack and minimise the natural circulation of it back into the ocean.

The process is also considered to be a critical element in the ecosystems' carbon cycle and the seagrass itself is a major contributor to the overall productivity of the region, acting as habitat and a food source for many small fish and invertebrates found at the bottom end of the food chain. For this reason experts agree that the answer is definitely not to remove it for the time being and allow the natural process to take its time and run its own course.

[more..... http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html)

### **Tiny fighters in sediments determine success of invasive marine plants (NSW, Australia)**

14 September 2017, *UNSW Newsroom*

Armies of microbes that are invisible to the naked eye battle it out to determine whether exotic marine plants successfully invade new territory and replace native species, UNSW-led research shows. The genetic study, which compared microbial communities in sediments associated with an invasive alga and a native seagrass in Sydney, is the first to test the idea that marine microbes play a critical role in the establishment of invasive marine species.

Microbial communities in marine sediments control ecological processes, affecting the availability of nutrients and the chemistry of the soil. Microbes associated with native species provide resistance to invasion, and microbes associated with invaders break down this resistance and may poison native plants, said the studies first author and UNSW scientist Associate Professor Paul Gribben. This has never been shown before in marine ecosystems and will transform how we think about, and manage, marine invasive species.

For the new study, the researchers compared microbial communities living in sediments in a Sydney estuary. They tested sediments associated with a native seagrass, *Zostera capricorni*, and an alga, *Caulerpa taxifolia*, which is one of the 100 most invasive species in the world. The microbial communities differed between the two samples, with the algal sediments having a higher proportion of microbes that produce sulphides, which can be extremely toxic to seagrasses, under low oxygen conditions. The researchers also found the sediments associated with the seagrass reduced algal growth, while the sediments associated with the algae had a positive effect on its growth. The results shed light on why intact, dense beds of *Zostera capricorni* are resistant to colonisation by *Caulerpa taxifolia*. However, the balance of the microbes in the soil can be disturbed when seagrass beds start to decline due to other pressures, helping the alga invade new areas.

[more..... http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html)

### **Can eelgrass in Newport Beach help fight acidity in the ocean? (CA, USA)**

08 September 2017, *OCRegister*

Researchers are using seagrass from Newport Beach and other locations across the state to see if the salt-water flowering plant can fight ocean acidity, which they say could possibly curb the effects of climate change. In Upper Newport Bay, researchers from UC Davis and UC Santa Cruz and Orange County Coastkeeper, a nonprofit environmental group, are studying whether natural and restored eelgrass beds can buffer carbon dioxide in the same way, and if an argument can be made that enhancing eelgrass habitats could reduce acidification, said Katie Nichols, the marine restoration director for Orange County Coastkeeper.

Late last month, the research team placed four sensors in and around a natural eelgrass bed near the Back Bay Science Center to help determine if the water chemistry is different, potentially better or more hospitable for organisms inside the eelgrass beds. When the sensors are retrieved later this month, they will provide readings on pH and oxygen levels and the water temperature. Sensors have also been placed along the coast near Santa Cruz, Bodega Harbor and Elkhorn Slough in Monterey Bay.

If the idea that eelgrass can fight acidification pans out, the next step would be to try to restore more seagrass beds — California has lost 90 percent of its seagrass — and maintain the current ones. The researchers' findings will be of interest to the oyster industry, since oysters and the plants often live in the same areas. Oyster shells degrade from too much acidification, affecting the companies' bottom line.

*more..... <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html>*

### **Dugong carcass washed ashore on Sibuluan Island (Malaysia)**

*08 September 2017, The Star Online*

The carcass of a young male dugong was found washed up on Sibuluan Island after it got stuck in a fishing net. Johor Health, Environment, Education and Information Committee chairman Datuk Ayub Rahmat said that the mammal was discovered by children from a nearby village on Thursday. He said that checks by the Johor Marine Park Department and MareCet Research Organisation revealed that the dugong had swelling on its body and around its mouth believed to have been caused by the net.

Ayub said that such incidents could affect the state government's plans to set up a dugong sanctuary in Johor and that he has directed all relevant agencies to speed up the gazetting process and carry out the necessary enforcement to curb the issue. He added that the area with ample seagrass - the staple food for dugongs - would become a habitat for at least 100 of the species.

*more..... <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html>*

### **Northernmost Dugong Population Threatened by US Military Base (Japan)**

*07 September 2017, Earth Island Journal*

Masako Suzuki searched for signs of dugongs in the lines of missing seagrass in the Oura Bay in Henoko, Okinawa, until the barrier of orange buoys went up, preventing her from doing that. In a process that Suzuki calls "line research," divers examine the shallow seagrass beds and trace the dugongs' eating patterns with a long rope. These days, a barrier of bright orange buoys protecting the US military construction site at Camp Schwab prevents divers and researchers like Suzuki from conducting research in the very area inhabited by the few dugongs they suspect still live in Okinawa. The new base, in fact, would pave over some of the endangered animals' last remaining habitat. The construction of a new airstrip at Camp Schwab, part of 20-year-old plan to close the Futenma Air Station on a more crowded part of the island, is viewed by the US military as key to maintaining a strong presence in East Asia. But activists have consistently fought the construction for more than two decades. At the center of that fight is the endangered dugong, which has long been a cultural icon and centuries-old symbol of heroism for Okinawans. For local activists, the dugong has become a symbol of a deeper struggle. "Okinawan people see themselves in the dugongs," says Hideki Yoshikawa, the director of the Okinawa Environmental Justice Project.

In legends, dugongs save people by warning them about impending disasters, and in modern children's books, the creatures defend children from bullies. In one of the most popular folktales, a dugong saves a fisherman from a tsunami after the man frees the dugong from a net. In the evening, the dugong comes to the fisherman in a dream, warning him of an impending tsunami. After attempting, in vain, to alert his village, the fisherman and his family flee to the mountains, where they are the only ones to survive the wave. Today, the animal is a symbol of resistance to the US military bases. For example, the dugong itself listed as the primary plaintiff in a lawsuit against the US Department of Defense. An anti-base construction flyer distributed by activists includes the story of a cartoon dugong named C-Chan who fears its home will disappear if the new airstrip is built. And Okinawans campaigning against the military bases do so under the aegis of organizations with names like Save the Dugong Campaign Center, Dugong No Sato, and Association to Protect the Northernmost Dugong.

Despite one reported sighting in March 2017, there has been no confirmed evidence of the dugong's presence in Okinawa since April 2015, when researchers like Suzuki were last able to conduct line research where the dugongs live. Okinawans fear that the construction of the new airstrip in the Oura Bay will seal the fate of the world's northernmost dugong population. In order to build the airstrip, the military will pour dirt and crushed cement over two and a half acres of the bay, destroying the beds of seagrass that dugongs depend on to survive. "Construction itself will damage seagrass beds and decrease carrying capacity of dugongs in Okinawa," explains Toshio Kasuya, author of the book *Small Cetaceans of Japan: Exploitation and Biology*. "Operation of the base will scare the animals and decrease the opportunities of communication between habitats south and north of the base."

In August, the 9th Circuit US Court of Appeals affirmed the right of conservation groups and Okinawan citizens to sue the US military to more extensively consider the impacts of the new airstrip in Okinawa. The US-based nonprofit Center for Biological Diversity, which brought the lawsuit, issued a press release about the decision, stating that the court of appeals found that "the fact that the case related to a project in another country did not give the government license to ignore the requirements of US law." This decision is a new victory for those who want to stop the construction in the Oura Bay.

*more..... <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html>*

## **Increasing effective decision-making for coastal marine ecosystems (QLD, Australia)**

07 September 2017, *Science Daily*

Marine restoration, rather than protection, might be the most cost-effective solution for coastal marine ecosystems suffering from human activities, a new study has found. The University of Queensland and the Australian Research Council Centre for Excellence in Environmental Decisions study examined how to best benefit coastal marine ecosystems on limited conservation budgets, to help managers better understand the trade-offs. UQ Development Fellow Dr Megan Saunders said the researchers developed a model comparing scenarios of restoration versus protection, on land, or in the sea, for coastal marine ecosystems.

Dr Saunders said conventional wisdom was that the most effective conservation actions to benefit coastal marine ecosystems involved implementing marine protected areas, or alternatively reducing land-based threats. However, the model, based on seagrass meadows and adjacent catchments in Southeast Queensland, found that contrary to conventional wisdom, and despite high costs, marine restoration may be the most cost-effective way over decades to maximise the extent of marine ecosystems under particular circumstances. This assumes that there is suitable habitat available for restoration (such as planting seagrass transplants); clearly, if suitable habitat does not exist, for example due to poor water quality, then other actions would take priority. Dr Saunders said the researchers had developed some simple rules to guide decision-making for whether restoration or protection should occur in either marine or terrestrial environments to best benefit marine ecosystems.

[more..... http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html)

## **Experts analyse dugong carcass samples, photos (QLD, Australia)**

04 September 2017, *Gladstone Observer*

Experts will weigh in on what killed a dugong in Gladstone, after a carcass was removed from the rocks near Spinnaker Park Beach today. The Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service confirmed rangers took photos and samples of the carcass, which was Gladstone's first dugong stranding this year. A department spokesperson said they were waiting for expert advice on the samples and photos to determine what caused the killed the marine mammal.

A Gladstone resident told The Observer via Facebook he spotted the dugong "floating near the six knot sign at the entrance to Auckland Creek" on Sunday afternoon and reported it to fisheries officers. It's one of five dugong strandings reported on Queensland's east coast this year.

[more..... http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html)

## **Traditional owner says indigenous groups need more resources to manage dugongs and turtles (QLD, Australia)**

04 September 2017, *The Cairns Post*

A traditional owner says indigenous groups should keep stock of how many sea turtles and dugongs are taken from the wild, but they need more resources to do it. There has been a renewed call for stronger protection of the endangered marine species from traditional hunting, with crossbench senators Derryn Hinch and Cory Bernardi expressing interest in banning the practice in Australia's coastal waters.

The Turnbull Government, which was previously looking to introduce new legislation to protect the sea creatures from being overhunted, shelved a draft Bill in favour of adding more indigenous rangers. Senator Hinch, who visited Cairns this week for a fact-finding mission about the controversial issue, wants to gather more parliamentary support to force the federal government to take stronger action.

Gavin Singleton, the Traditional Use Marine Resources Agreement (TUMRA) co-ordinator for the Yirrganydji saltwater clan, whose sea country stretches north from Cairns to Port Douglas, believed there should be a requirement for indigenous groups to keep records of how many animals were taking from the wild, in order to ensure sustainable management of the species. Neither state nor federal governments have any idea about how many turtles and dugongs are slaughtered by traditional hunters. But we don't have many resources. We've only got two dedicated rangers, Mr Singleton said. He said many traditional owners wanted to better manage the traditional take of animals from the marine park.

[more..... http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html)

## **Signs of Growth for Joemma Beach Eelgrass Restoration (WN, USA)**

01 Septebmer 2017, *Keypennews*

Teams of scientists from the Aquatic Division of the Washington State Department of Natural Resources took advantage of this summer's minus tides to conduct continuing research on large-scale efforts to re-establish native eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) in the waters off Joemma Beach State Park.

In 2015, two areas at Joemma Beach were transplanted with native eelgrass harvested from healthy donor sites near Rocky Bay and the Nisqually Delta. Two years later, monitoring showed an increase in shoot density up to five times the number of shoots transplanted. In 2016, a third transplant method was applied by the environmental consulting firm Hart Crowser that consisted of weaving donor eelgrass shoots into burlap strips secured with long staples into the substrate below the water surface. The burlap strip method attempts to emulate an intact eelgrass rhizome mat to resolve challenges presented by burrowing shrimp, however with the burlap there is also more surface for algae to grow and compete with eelgrass for nutrients, light and space.

Native eelgrass is the predominant seagrass in Puget Sound, yet it remains nearly absent from the submerged shorelines along the Key Peninsula. A recently released report by DNR on the Puget Sound seagrass monitoring program for 2015 demonstrated that while some areas of Puget Sound enjoy vibrant expansion of eelgrass meadows, other less fortunate areas in the Sound are in serious decline, suggesting eelgrass ecosystems present very localized challenges to restoration. DNR aquatic scientists are simultaneously studying potential causes of this relative absence as they continue working toward the goal set in 2011 by the Puget Sound Partnership targeting a 20 percent Soundwide increase in eelgrass by the year 2020.

[more..... http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html](http://www.seagrasswatch.org/news.html)

## CONFERENCES

### **Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation 24th Biennial Conference (CERF2017) (Providence, Rhode Island, USA, 5-9 November 2017)**

Theme: Coastal Science at the Inflection Point: Celebrating Successes & Learning from Challenges

The CERF 2017 scientific program offers four days of, timely, exciting and diverse information on a vast array of estuarine and coastal subjects. Presentations will examine new findings within CERF's traditional science, education and management disciplines and encourage interaction among coastal and estuarine scientists and managers. Additionally, the Scientific Program Committee plans to convene special sessions and workshops that promote intellectually stimulating discussions. Join us and over a thousand of your colleagues to network, celebrate our work, learn from each other and grow within our amazing profession.

for more information, visit <http://www.erf.org/cerf-2017-biennial-conference>

### **The 13th International Seagrass Biology Workshop (ISBW13) and World Seagrass Conference (June 2018, Singapore)**

Theme: Under pressure – Seagrass science and conservation in stressful environments

The International Seagrass Biology Workshop (ISBW) is the only international meeting specifically tailored to seagrass scientists, professionals and students. The International Seagrass Biology Workshop (ISBW) provides a good opportunity for the scientists working on various aspects of seagrass ecosystems to come together and discuss their latest findings. The ISBW13 will be held in June 2018 at the National University of Singapore, Singapore, organized by National University of Singapore, National Parks Board, and DHI Water & Environment, Singapore.

#### **More information:**

To get important updates on ISBW13, register your interest here: <https://goo.gl/forms/T1lhDGhEx71m0tcj1>  
Follow on Facebook @ISBW13 and Twitter #ISBW13

## SEAGRASS-WATCH on YouTube

**Seagrass: Pastures of the sea** <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66Y5vqswj20> or  
<http://www.seagrasswatch.org/seagrass.html>

Presentation on what seagrasses are and why they are important (over 46,397 views to date)

## Seagrass & other matters

**World Seagrass Association** <http://wsa.seagrassonline.org>

Keep up to date on what's happening with the around the world from the WSA. The World Seagrass Association is a global network of scientists and coastal managers committed to research, protection and management of the world's seagrasses. WSA members come from many countries and include leading scientists in marine and seagrass biology. The association supports training and information exchange and raises global awareness of seagrass science and environmental management issues.

**World Seagrass Association on Twitter** [@Seagrass\\_WSA](https://twitter.com/Seagrass_WSA)

Everything seagrass related. World Seagrass Association official account. Follow to stay up-to-date with global seagrass info. Moderator: LM Nordlund

**Dugong & Seagrass Research Toolkit** <http://www.conservation.tools/>

Dugongs and seagrass are under threat from human activities. By using this Toolkit you should be able to gather information to:  
understand better the status of dugongs, seagrass and communities at your research site;  
understand threats to dugongs and seagrasses and help find solutions to those threats;

understand the communities that value or may affect dugongs and seagrasses.

The toolkit will guide you to the techniques and tools most suitable to your team capacity, budget and timeline. By using the toolkit, you will also be helping to standardise data sets and methods across different countries and sites, allowing for better comparison of global dugong and seagrass conservation status.

The Toolkit is designed for use by marine natural resource managers and decision-makers (government and non-government) and for dugong and seagrass researchers. The Toolkit will assist organisations to assess funding proposals by describing the scope of work, choice of techniques and tools, and budget.

### **Seagrass IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) activities and plans for 2018**

Seagrasses are included in work of the IUCN Species Survival Commission. As of 2010, all seagrasses and their threat status are listed on the IUCN Red List of Species [www.iucnredlist.org/search](http://www.iucnredlist.org/search)

The Seagrass Species Specialist Group is comprised of 70 seagrass scientists from around the world, working on seagrass status and conservation, all of whom volunteered to participate and contribute their time at ISBW11 in China (2014).

At ISBW12 in Wales, the Seagrass Specialist Group met and discussed recent changes in species Red List status as well as the various changes in species names proposed in the literature. Also at ISBW12, Brooke Sullivan (University of Melbourne, Australia & University of Washington, USA) was nominated to take over as the Seagrass Red List Authority who will lead the effort to review seagrass species' Red Listing status. The seagrasses of the world are due for a new Red List assessment.

Since IUCN maintains the internationally accepted list of seagrass species names, the Seagrass Species Specialist Group will continue discussions of seagrass nomenclature (species and genera level). At ISBW13, the hope is to achieve agreement on an updated seagrass species list which will become available at the IUCN Red List website.

The hope is to continue Seagrass Species Specialist Group work at ISBW13 in Singapore with time for everyone to contribute ideas and potential changes as well as information on the status of seagrasses in their areas of study. The SSSG members and other interested seagrass scientists are encouraged to bring a brief description of their seagrass conservation activities so these can be passed on to contribute to an IUCN update on global environmental status.

*Fred Short*

*IUCN Seagrass Species Specialist Group, Chair.*

## **FROM HQ**

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**Virtual Herbarium** <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/herbarium.html>

**Future sampling dates** <http://www.seagrasswatch.org/sampling.html>

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Seagrass-Watch E- Bulletin is compiled by Len McKenzie & Rudi Yoshida.