

Whales and Dolphins in Peril in Russian Waters – WWF

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Deteriorating environmental conditions in Russian coastal waters are threatening whale and dolphin populations, the World Wildlife Fund said Tuesday.

Drift-net fishing in the Far East is jeopardizing dolphin populations, while whale breeding sites on the Far Eastern island of Sakhalin are being encroached upon, the head of the WWF's marine program said on World Whale and Dolphin Day, an annual day of awareness established in 1986.

Whales draw in pollution from the water, and off the far northeastern coast of Chukotka there is an increase in so-called stinky whales, which locals cannot eat, the WWF's Konstantin Zgurovsky told RIA Novosti.

Narwhal populations in the Arctic are being increasingly threatened by climate change, he said, adding that the number of collisions between whales and ships has also risen. In addition, he noted, whales are sensitive to signals from submarines as well as seismic bangs produced by offshore oil drilling.

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