

## Vaquita porpoise global population down to only 10

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According to the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC), Vaquita porpoise found in the Gulf of California in Mexico, is nearing extinction.



[Ref: DTE]

- The **population of the species** declined 98% in two decades.

#### About Vaquita Porpoise:

- The **vaquita** (*Phocoena sinus*) is the **world's smallest cetacean**.
- Its name means "**little cow**" in Spanish.
- It is only found in the **northern Gulf of California**, the Sea of Cortez, Mexico.

#### What are porpoises?

- Porpoises are among the smallest members of the **cetacean family** (whales, porpoises and dolphins).
- They are only **distant relatives of dolphins**.
- There are only **seven species of porpoise**; the most popular being the widely distributed harbour porpoise.

#### Characteristics of Vaquita:

- It has a **small body with a triangular dorsal fin**, a rounded head, and no distinguished beak.
- The coloration is mostly grey with a **darker back** and a **white ventral field**.
- **Prominent black patches** surround its lips and eyes.
- **Dorsal fin height** is greater in males than in females.
- It only measures up to **five feet in size**.
  - This makes them one of the **smallest species in the porpoise family**.
- **Threat:** The population has been declining due to **bycatch in gillnets** set to catch shrimp and fish.

#### Conservation Status:

- **IUCN Red List:** Critically Endangered

- **CITES:** Appendix I