

# DUGONG

- India has many species of marine mammals, Dugongs are one of these that have a unique appearance. They have flippers and a tail, long sensitive bristles with small eyes.
- There is a myth associated with them, wherein they were the animals based on whom the myth of mermaids or sea sirens originated. In fact, they belong to the Order Sirenia along with Manatees which are not found in India.

## DESCRIPTION

Scientific Name: *Dugong dugon*

Length: 2-4 m

Habitat: Marine

Distribution: Found in across the oceans

Lifespan: Upto 70 years



## Adaptations

- Dugongs are secretive shy mammals with poor eyesight but excellent hearing.
- The external ear opening is small, but their internal ear is large ensuring they can hear well both over and underwater.

## FUN FACT

What do dugongs eat?  
Dugongs are the only herbivorous marine mammals in Indian waters. They graze on seagrass and can close their nostrils to avoid inhaling clay and mud.

## THREATS

Boat-hits, caught in fishing nets, bycatch, developmental activities at coastlines, loss of sea grass habitats, and climate crisis

## IUCN

Vulnerable

