

Protecting the Giants of the Sea: The Global Challenge of Whale Ship Strikes

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- Ship-whale collisions are one of the main threats to the survival of these majestic marine mammals, and the urgency to address the issue is more evident than ever. Recent studies, including research published in *Science*, and the work of the [World Sustainability Foundation](#) and the [Friend of the Sea](#) programme, offer an in-depth view of the global risk and possible solutions.

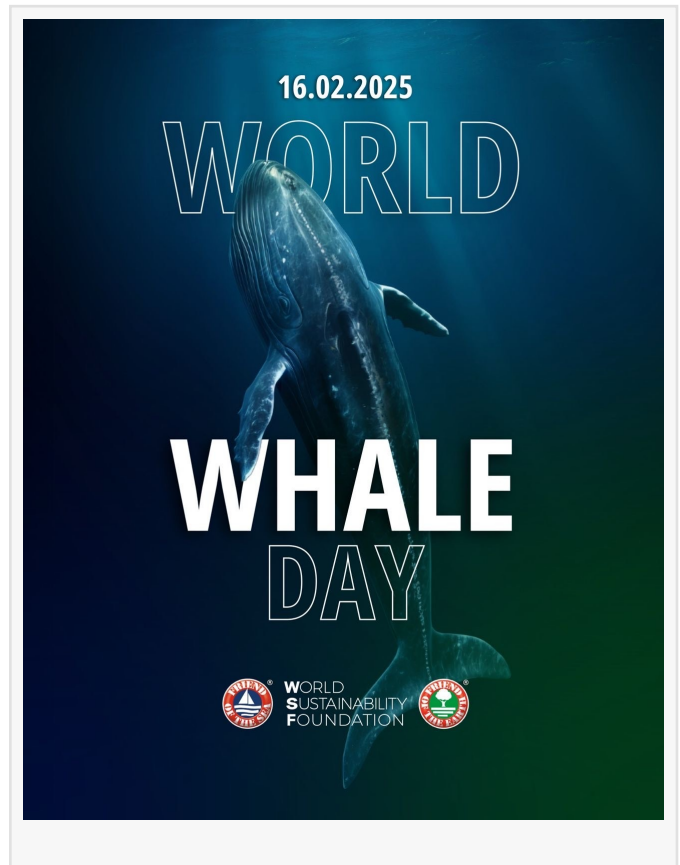
Mapping the Dangers

According to a study published in *Science*, 92% of cetacean habitats overlap with global shipping routes. The data, based on mapping over 435,000 whale locations and the routes of nearly 176,000 ships, highlight that less than 7% of at-risk areas adopt mitigation strategies. Ship speed, often exceeding 20 knots, is a key factor: reducing it below 13 knots could significantly reduce the risk of collisions.

These data intertwine with the research of the World Sustainability Foundation, which has analysed the impact of collisions in Important Marine Mammals Areas (IMMA), with a particular focus on the Mediterranean Sea. Here, species such as the fin whale and the sperm whale face high risks, exacerbated by the intensity of maritime traffic.

The Global Scope of the Problem

The problem is not limited to the Mediterranean. The study published in *Science* has identified high-risk areas in the North Atlantic, where the right whale is particularly vulnerable due to its slowness, and in the Pacific, where shipping routes intersect with the migratory paths of various whale species. Collisions endanger cetaceans' lives and can have significant economic and operational impacts on shipping companies due to ship damage and potential risks to the crew.



Solutions at Hand

The proposed interventions are reducing ship speeds, rerouting routes, and using advanced technologies to detect cetaceans, such as infrared cameras and automated observation systems. Friend of the Sea also promotes the “Whale-Safe” certification, which recognizes maritime operators who adopt sustainable practices to prevent collisions.

A crucial aspect is the need for greater public awareness. A survey conducted by the World Sustainability Foundation revealed that 50% of the public is unaware of the severity of the problem. Paolo Bray, founder of Friend of the Sea, emphasises: “Only through widespread understanding of the issue can we hope to mobilise the resources and support needed to implement effective solutions.”

The Importance of Collaboration

The challenge of ship-whale collisions requires a global and coordinated response. Studies indicate that implementing management strategies in just 2.6% of the ocean surface could protect major hotspots. The World Sustainability Foundation invites governments, shipping companies, and the public to collaborate to turn these recommendations into concrete actions.

A Commitment to the Future

Protecting cetaceans is a matter of biodiversity conservation, maritime safety, and global responsibility. The giants of the sea, already decimated by centuries of hunting, now face a new threat that we can mitigate through science, innovation, and collective commitment. As demonstrated by the support of the Italian Shipping & Logistics Agency (ISLA) for the Friend of the Sea study, every step towards protecting the oceans is an investment in our future.

Through collaboration and the implementation of preventive measures, we can ensure that whales continue to roam the oceans and play their vital role in marine ecosystems.

The complete copy of the World Sustainability Foundation study (Whale Ship Strikes Dossier 2024) is available at the page: [Whale Ship Strike Dossier](#)

For more info visit [Save the Whales](#)

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