

## Introduction

The People's Republic of China is bordered on the north by the Russian Federation and Mongolia, on the northwest by Kazakhstan, on the west by Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan, on the south by India, Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam and the South China Sea, and on the west by the East China Sea, North Korea, South Korea and the Sea of Japan (East Sea). The country's approximately 14,500 km of coastline consists of sandy beaches, wide intertidal mudflats, salt wetlands, estuaries and some rocky shorelines, particularly to the north.

The Guangdong Nanpeng Archipelago, a RAMSAR site in the South China Sea, is an important nesting area for sea turtles, as well as a number of waterbird species, and basking (E) and whale (E) sharks are found in the waters around the islands. Numerous other RAMSAR sites along the coast of China also support a variety of marine species. Many of these sites are found at tidal mudflats along the South China and Yellow Seas where migrating birds and other marine wildlife congregate to feed and shelter.

## At Risk Wildlife

In this section, some individual wildlife species are mentioned followed by a letter in parentheses. These are species included in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species within the top three categories of risk - Vulnerable to extinction (V), Endangered (E) or Critically Endangered (CR).

Avian species – between 80,000 and 250,000 waterbirds winter or migrate through the Shandong Yellow River Delta, a RAMSAR site, which extends into the Bohai Sea. The Shuangtai Estuary and Inner Gulf of Liaodong National Nature Reserve in the northeast, also a RAMSAR site, hosts over 100,000 migrating and breeding birds of at least 106 species.

Species of special concern include the Baer's pochard (CR), Christmas frigatebird (CR), Chinese crested tern (CR), spoon-billed sandpiper (CR), white-headed duck (E), scaly-headed merganser (E), white-eared and Japanese night herons (E), red-crowned crane (E), great knot (E), spotted greenshank (E), Far Eastern curlew (E), black-faced spoonbill (E), Steller's sea eagle (V), long-tailed duck (V), lesser white-fronted goose (V), common pochard (V), swan goose (V), marbled teal (V), Chinese egret (V), lesser adjutant and oriental storks (V), short-tailed albatross (V), white-naped and hooded cranes (V), Leach's storm-petrel (V), black-legged kittiwake (V), Indian skimmer (V), Saunder's and relict gulls (V) and horned grebe (V).

Marine mammals – common, bearded, spotted and ringed seals occur in northern waters, while Steller's sea lion (E) and northern fur seal are occasional visitors in the far north. On the coastal ice of the Da Lian National Spotted Seal Nature Reserve (a RAMSAR site on Dai Liang Bay), the seals give birth, remaining in the area from November through to mid-May. Several species of whale and dolphin also frequent the area, which provides breeding grounds for them. Dugong (V) are found in nearshore areas of southern China.

The Yangtze river finless porpoise (CR) is generally found in inland waters but significant vessel traffic occurs in their river habitat, particularly in Shanghai and Jiangsu Provinces. Pacific right (CR), western grey (CR), humpback (V), sei (E), fin (E) and blue (E) whales and Indo-Pacific Humpback dolphin (V) are among the more than 30 species of cetacean recorded in Chinese waters.

Although not considered marine mammals, both crab-eating mongoose and smooth-coated otter (V) forage along the southern coast.

Marine reptiles – along the southern and south eastern coasts of China, green and hawksbill (E) turtles nest, while loggerhead (V), leatherback (local population CR) and olive ridley (V) are present in offshore or nearshore waters and may occasionally nest. The Huidong Harbour Sea Turtle National Reserve RAMSAR site may host as many as 500 green turtle nests and personnel there provide some support for young turtles in adverse weather conditions. Sea turtle protection areas, which have support facilities for rehabilitating turtles, have been established on several islands of Sansha Prefecture, however, this area is a part of the South China Sea that is highly contested between the People's Republic of China, the

Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Taiwan and Malaysia.

## **Regional Seas**

Yellow Sea

Bohai Sea (a bay within Yellow sea)

Pacific Ocean

## **Past experience**

In the 1980s two large tanker spills (Feoso Ambassador and Jacui) occurred at Qing Dao, and the Tanja Jacob spilled approximately 200 tonnes of crude oil at Hangpu Harbour. TASMAR SEA (2002) polluted the Bohai Sea off the coast of Tianjin. Small spills often occur in the Bohai Sea where four oilfields operate and, although avian mortalities have been reported there is no information on oiled wildlife response to these spills.

In the Pearl River Delta in 2004, the MSC Ilona collided with the Hyundai Advance, spilling 450 tonnes of bunker fuel. Although the area is home to a variety of birds and other marine life, no reports were issued on impacts to these animals

In 2009, three spills (Agios Dimitrios, Zoorik, and Afflatus) of significant size occurred. In 2010 a pipeline explosion released 1,500 tonnes of crude oil at the port in Dai Lan. In 2012, the Maxima spilled approximately 100 tonnes of heavy fuel oil and in 2013 the CM CGM Florida spilled oil east of Shanghai. In 2018 the tanker Sanchi burst into flames and sank after a collision with a cargo ship. The ship was carrying approximately one million barrels of ultra-light crude oil. No wildlife response was reported.

## **Response: the role of the authorities**

The China Maritime Safety Administration (MSA) of the Ministry of Transport is the competent national authority overseeing oil spill response. Headquartered in Beijing, the MSA has 14 subordinate bureaus and approximately 100 local branches covering the coast and Yangtze River. In addition, vessels carrying bulk hazardous or polluting liquids must have a contract with an approved ship pollution response organisation (SRPO).

In 2018 the country initiated the State Oceanic Administration (SOA), which oversees the work of Gulf Chiefs from the local branches and is responsible for reducing land-based sources of marine pollution. Other national agencies which might be involved include the Maritime Safety Administration, the National Marine Environmental Monitoring Centre, China Rescue and Salvage of the Ministry of Transport, and the Ministry of Emergency Management.

The Minister of Ecology and Environment (MEE) would also likely be involved in any wildlife response.

## **Oiled wildlife response**

### Formal guidelines?

There are no formal guidelines or national oiled wildlife response plan, however as part of the China National Offshore Oil Corporation (CNOOC)'s Offshore Environmental Services, Ltd (COES), there has been some effort to stockpile wildlife response equipment, which is stored in at least one of their centres.

### Response objectives and strategy

There is no pre-defined strategy or objectives for an oiled wildlife response.

### Euthanasia or rehabilitation?

It is likely the rehabilitation would be allowed, however no facilities nor expertise in oiled wildlife care exist within the country.

### Impact assessment

The Key Laboratories of Environmental Change and National Disaster and of Environmental Simulation and Pollution Control at the Beijing Normal University would likely be involved in an impact assessment, as would the Chinese Academy of Sciences' Key Laboratory of Animal Ecology and Conservation Biology and the Academy's Avian Ecology Group. Other Universities which may assist include the Marine College, Shandong University, Wei Hai and the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Various NGOs such as the China Bird Watching Network and the China Ornithological Society may be

able to assist with avian impact assessment. The China Sea Turtle Conservation Alliance may be able to assist in with marine turtle impact assessment.

#### Notification and early response

The MSA will likely notify the National Marine Environmental Monitoring Centre and the MEE which would likely work with the Gulf Chiefs on any wildlife response.

#### **Wildlife responders**

There are few wildlife response organisations in China and there are restrictions on international NGO activities within the country such that they can only establish offices in the country if the head of the office is a resident Chinese national. Thus any major response to oiled wildlife requiring outside expertise would necessitate obtaining government permission.

The China Sea Turtle Conservation Alliance established in 2018, lists 90 member organisations including the Fisheries Departments of many provinces, the National Aquatic Wildlife Conservation Alliance and a number of universities and colleges, along with NGOs and other groups. While the primary focus of this alliance is reducing the illegal trade and returning confiscated turtles to the wild, it may be able to assist with response to oiled turtles.

The China Bird Watching Network and the China Ornithological Society may be able to provide local information and support on avian species. The Beijing Raptor Centre, a partnership between the Beijing Normal University, the Beijing Forestry Bureau and the International Fund for Animal Welfare may be able to assist with avian care, however the staff has no experience with marine birds.

The Global Environmental Institute's China entity launched a Marine Conservation programme in 2018 whose aim is to apply science-based research to improve marine conservation policies in China and may be advanced enough on this project to provide support for a marine wildlife response.

#### **Cooperation between stakeholders**

The China Sea Turtle Conservation Alliance is an alliance of stakeholders in sea turtle conservation which already brings together government entities and NGOs.

China is a signatory to the Action Plan for the Protection, Management and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment of the Northwest Pacific Region (NOWPAP) along with Japan, the Republic of Korea and the Russian Federation. It is also signatory to the Regional Programme for the Prevention and Management of Marine Pollution in the East Asian Seas along with Cambodia, the Republic of Korea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Vietnam and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) Regional Programme for the Management of Pollution in East Asian Sea with Cambodia, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea and Vietnam.

#### **Permanent facilities**

There are no permanent facilities for oiled wildlife rehabilitation or other marine wildlife rehabilitation.

#### **Current processes**

N/A

#### **Documentation and references**

General references

General references

ITOPF Country Profile (2013)

Birdlife International Country Profile

RAMSAR Country Profile

Sea Alarm East Asia Regional Response Profile v.07 rev 2020



# CHINA (PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC)

*Country Wildlife Response Profiles  
A Summary of oiled wildlife response  
arrangements and resources worldwide*

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