

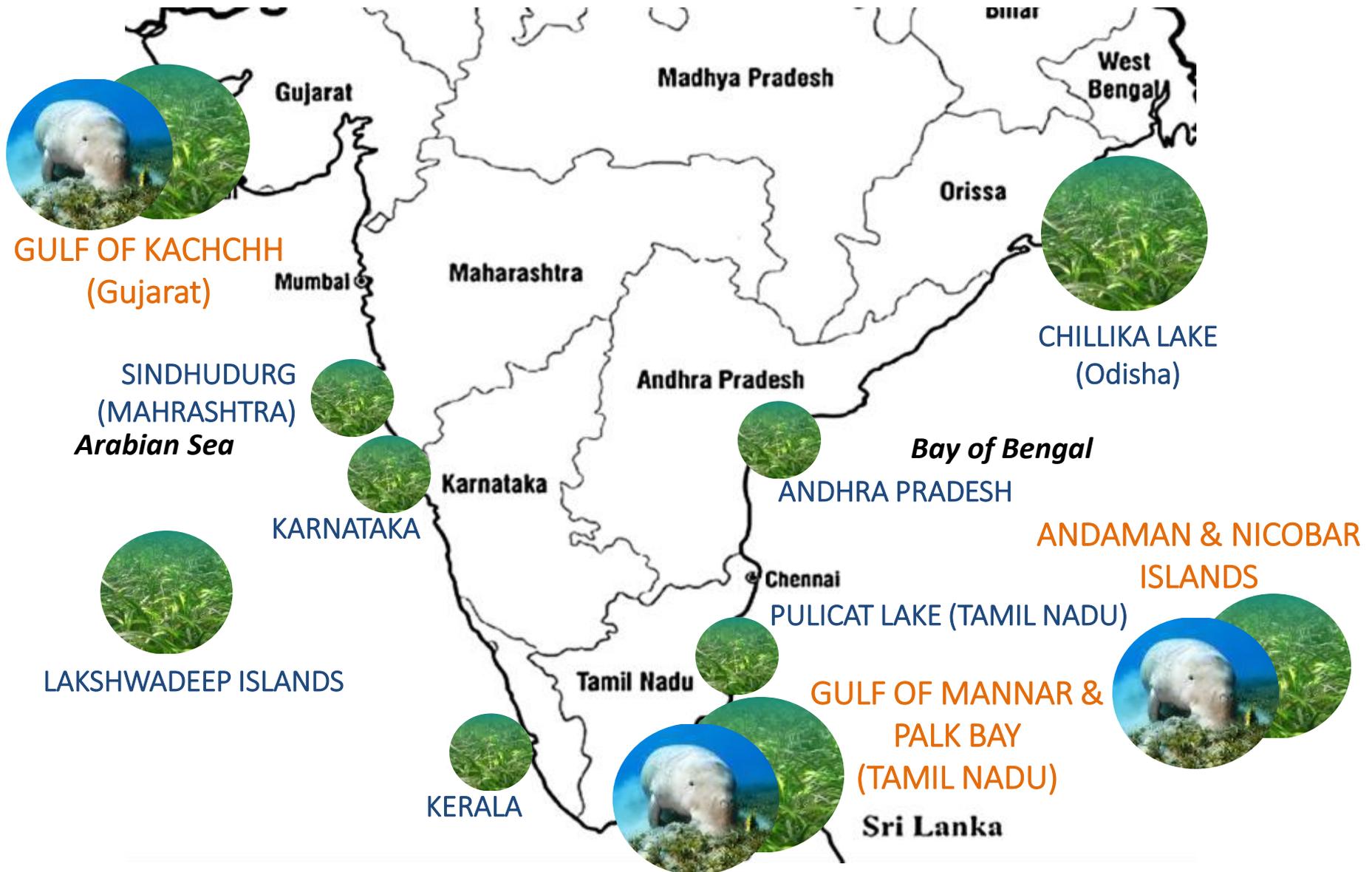


PROTECTING DUGONG & SEAGRASS IN INDIA

Nisha D'Souza
IUCN India Country Office
E: DSouzaN@iucn.org



WHERE ARE THEY FOUND?



COMMITMENTS TO CONSERVATION

- **Dugongs** are protected under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife (Protection) Act (1972)
- Majority of areas with dugong presence are within MPAs
- India is party to the CMS MoU on Dugongs
- A National Level Task Force for Dugong Conservation has been established and a National Conservation Action Plan for Dugongs and their habitats in India has been drafted
- **Seagrass** ecosystems in India are classified as Ecologically Sensitive Areas under the Coastal Regulation Zone Act 1986 (amendment)
- Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change has allocated USD 3,500,000 for a dugong recovery program over the next 5 years worth, led by WII.



SITE-SPECIFIC GAPS

	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	Lakshadweep Islands	Gulf of Mannar	Palk Bay	Gulf of Kachchh
Ecological data	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Threat-level data	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>
Socio-economic data	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>
Monitoring	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	✓	✓	<i>Some</i>
Restoration efforts	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗
Protection status (MPA)	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Building conservation capacity	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	✓	✓	<i>Some</i>
Community engagement	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	✗
Awareness programmes	<i>Some</i>	<i>Some</i>	✓	✓	<i>Some</i>

WHERE WE SEE OURSELVES GOING

Scientific Research to Support Conservation Efforts & Policy

- Consolidate all knowledge/information on a single database for analysis, to establish the state of seagrass & identify further research needs
- Design and strengthen monitoring programmes
- Document & quantify threats to dugongs & seagrass

Communication & Collaboration

- Strengthen cross-sectoral coordination & partnerships between all seagrass stakeholders/users
- Increase awareness and education amongst community & public
- Share success stories!
- Increase contributions to global databases & dialogues

Conservation Capacity

- Develop integrated marine field-based programmes in national institutions
- Develop capacities of forest staff, marine coastguard & communities for research, management & monitoring

AN OCEAN OF OPPORUNITY

- **(Aichi Target 11)** By 2020, 10% of the coastal and marine areas to be brought under area-based conservation measures.
- **(SDG 14)** Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for food and livelihood security
- **(India Nationally Determined Contribution, UNFCCC)** Create an additional carbon sink of 2.5–3 GtCO₂e through additional green cover by 2030
- Lots of funding available! GCF, GEF, ADB, World Bank, Green India Mission, private sector



THANKS!

