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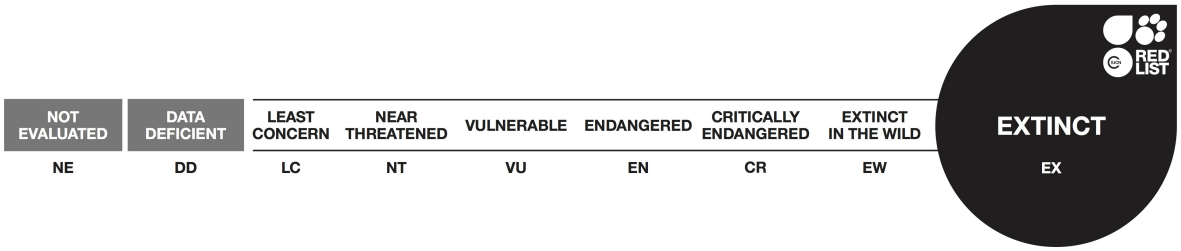
Zalophus japonicus, Japanese Sea Lion

Amended version

Assessment by: Lowry, L.



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Taxonomy

Kingdom	Phylum	Class	Order	Family
Animalia	Chordata	Mammalia	Carnivora	Otariidae

Taxon Name: *Zalophus japonicus* (Peters, 1866)

Synonym(s):

- *Zalophus californianus* ssp. *japonicus* (Peters, 1866)

Common Name(s):

- English: Japanese Sea Lion

Taxonomic Notes:

The Japanese Sea Lion has sometimes been considered a subspecies of *Zalophus californianus*, *Z. c. japonicus*. Rice (1998) argued for the retention of *Z. californianus*, *Z. japonicus*, and *Z. wollebaeki* as distinct species without providing new evidence. From studies of skull morphology Brunner (2003) argued for species status for these three taxa. In addition, Sakahira and Niimi (2007) and Wolf *et al*. (2007) provide genetic evidence that *Z. japonicus* is best considered a separate species.

Assessment Information

Red List Category & Criteria: Extinct ver 3.1

Year Published: 2017

Date Assessed: October 26, 2014

Justification:

The species is listed Extinct because there have been no documented reports of *Z. japonicus* since the late 1950s, despite extensive marine mammal research effort taking place within its former range. The last credible report was 50 to 60 individuals on Takeshima (Dokdo) (in 1951 (Rice 1998). Individual sightings reported as recently as 1974 and 1975, cannot be confirmed; confusion with escaped *Z. californianus* cannot be ruled out.

Previously Published Red List Assessments

2015 – Extinct (EX)
http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2015-2.RLTS.T41667A45230455.en

2008 – Extinct (EX)

1996 – Extinct (EX)

1996 – Extinct (EX)

1994 – Extinct (Ex)

1990 – Extinct? (Ex?)

1988 – Endangered (E)

http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2017-1.RLTS.T41667A113089431.en

1986 – Endangered (E)

Geographic Range

Range Description:

According to Rice (1998) Japanese Sea Lions formerly were known from the northwest Pacific where they occurred along the coasts of Japan, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, and Russia at Sakhalin Island and southern Kamchatka. Burkanov (pers. comm.) says that the only reliable report of Japanese Sea Lions was of an animal shot in 1949 at Moneron Island in the Sea of Japan at the southwest corner of Sakhalin Island. He concludes that they occasionally occurred in the southern Kuril Islands but not at Kamchatka as Rice (1998) had stated.

Country Occurrence:

Regionally extinct: Japan; Korea, Democratic People's Republic of; Korea, Republic of

FAO Marine Fishing Areas:

Regionally extinct: Pacific - northwest

http://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2017-1.RLTS.T41667A113089431.en

Population

Estimates of historical population size are not available. Over-harvesting by Japanese commercial fishermen caused a drastic decline in abundance in the early decades of the 20th century and commercial harvests ended in the 1940s when the population was virtually extinct (The Sixth Extinction Website 2014). The last confirmed report was of 50-60 animals on Takeshima Island (Dokdo) in 1951. Individual Sea Lions were reported in the region in 1974 and 1975 but their specific identity was not verified (Rice 1998). Most authorities, including IUCN and the Society for Marine Mammalogy, consider the Japanese Sea Lion to be Extinct.

Habitat and Ecology **(see Appendix for additional information)**

Very little information exists on the biology of Japanese Sea Lions but it is assumed that they were generally similar to California Sea Lions. It is said that male Japanese Sea Lions were dark grey and weighed 450-560 kg, reaching lengths of 2.3 to 2.5 m. Females were smaller at about 1.6 m long with a lighter colour than the males. Their rookeries were on open sandy beaches and they preferred to rest in caves (Red Data Book 1994, Shimane Prefecture 2004).

Systems: Terrestrial, Marine

Use and Trade

Japanese Sea Lions were harvested for their skins, whiskers, internal organs, and oil, and were also captured for the circus trade. The species is now Extinct.

Threats **(see Appendix for additional information)**

Japanese Sea Lions were harvested for their skins, whiskers, internal organs, and oil, and were also captured for the circus trade. Those takes, in combination with persecution by fishermen and perhaps shooting by soldiers, likely caused their extinction (Wikipedia 2014).

Conservation Actions

Japanese Sea Lions are likely to now be Extinct. However, South and North Korea, Russia, and China have indicated that they will collaborate on bringing back the Japanese Sea Lion in the Sea of Japan. That effort would involve searching Russian and Chinese waters and if animals are found some would be taken to the Sea of Japan. If not, California Sea Lions might be translocated from the United States (The Extinction Website 2014).

Credits

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Disclaimer

External Resources

For Images and External Links to Additional Information, please see the Red List website.

Appendix

Habitats

(http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes)

Habitat	Season	Suitability	Major Importance?
13. Marine Coastal/Supratidal -> 13.1. Marine Coastal/Supratidal - Sea Cliffs and Rocky Offshore Islands	-	Suitable	Yes
12. Marine Intertidal -> 12.2. Marine Intertidal - Sandy Shoreline and/or Beaches, Sand Bars, Spits, Etc	-	Suitable	Yes
12. Marine Intertidal -> 12.1. Marine Intertidal - Rocky Shoreline	-	Suitable	Yes
10. Marine Oceanic -> 10.1. Marine Oceanic - Epipelagic (0-200m)	-	Suitable	Yes
9. Marine Neritic -> 9.1. Marine Neritic - Pelagic	-	Suitable	Yes

Threats

(http://www.iucnredlist.org/technical-documents/classification-schemes)

Threat	Timing	Scope	Severity	Impact Score
5. Biological resource use -> 5.4. Fishing & harvesting aquatic resources -> 5.4.2. Intentional use: (large scale) [harvest]	Past, unlikely to return	Whole (>90%)	Very rapid declines	Past impact
	Stresses:	2. Species Stresses -> 2.1. Species mortality		
5. Biological resource use -> 5.4. Fishing & harvesting aquatic resources -> 5.4.5. Persecution/control	Past, unlikely to return	Majority (50-90%)	Rapid declines	Past impact
	Stresses:	2. Species Stresses -> 2.1. Species mortality		

Additional Data Fields

Distribution
Lower elevation limit (m): 0
Upper elevation limit (m): 10
Lower depth limit (m): 500
Upper depth limit (m): 0
Habitats and Ecology
Movement patterns: Unknown
Congregatory: Congregatory (and dispersive)

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Amended

Amended reason: Dodko, an alternate name for Takeshima Island has been added to the distribution and rationale sections of this assessment.

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The IUCN Red List Partnership

The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™ is produced and managed by the IUCN Global Species Programme, the IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) and The IUCN Red List Partnership.

The IUCN Red List Partners are: Arizona State University; BirdLife International; Botanic Gardens Conservation International; Conservation International; NatureServe; Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew; Sapienza University of Rome; Texas A&M University; and Zoological Society of London.