

# Media release: World first as marine mammal experts migrate to Perth for international conference

Have you ever wondered what a whale thinks, sought to understand a sea lion, pondered a porpoise, or had dolphins dive through your dreamtime? Do you want to know how our finned friends are faring in a changing sea?

For the first time in the international Society for Marine Mammalogy's 50+ year history, the world's marine mammal experts will convene in Australia to tackle these issues and more.

Perth will play host, with over 1,300 attendees from 80 nations gathering to discuss the latest innovations and research from around our blue planet.

"We are thrilled to bring this meeting to Perth, where we'll workshop how best to blend western science with Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and quantify the winners and losers in the face of human activity in our rivers and seas", said Dr Krista Nicholson, of the Local Organising Committee.

The conference theme is "Culture and Conservation: Fishing for Change", shining a light on two key areas; the interplay between marine mammal and human cultures and conservation, and marine mammal interactions with fishing gear, the biggest threat to extinction they face.

"This conference is a timely opportunity to "check the pulse" of marine mammals and the waterways we share. We'll cherish the successes, like rebounding whale populations, and we'll face up to the losses, like our desire to catch a fish or share a seafood platter injuring and killing these iconic animals on a daily basis", said Dr Simon Allen, another member of the committee.

"We look forward to welcoming all interested parties for a weekend of workshops, followed by a week full of talks, videos, posters, knowledge sharing and some new events, like the Film Festival", said Prof. Simon Goldsworthy, the President of the Society for Marine Mammalogy.

The 25th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals will take place at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre from the 11-15<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

## **Media contacts:**

Vanessa Pirotta

On behalf of the Society for Marine Mammalogy and the Local Organising Committee, Delphine Chabanne, Daniella Hanf, Krista Nicholson and Simon Allen.

Email: [communications@marinemammalscience.org](mailto:communications@marinemammalscience.org)