

Vaquita porpoise

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In news— Recently, the United States Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) has said that Vaquita porpoise, found in the Gulf of California in Mexico, is nearing extinction.

About Vaquita porpoise-

- It is the **world's smallest cetacean and the most endangered marine mammal.**
- It has the **smallest range of any whale, dolphin or porpoise**, and **only lives in a small 1,500 square-mile area in Mexico's upper Gulf of California**, near the town of San Felipe.
- It has a **rounded head and black patches** around its mouth and eyes and **measures up to five feet in size.**
- It has a small body with an unusually tall, triangular dorsal fin, a rounded head, and no distinguished beak.
- Sexual dimorphism is apparent in body size, with mature females being longer than males and having larger heads and wider flippers.
- Dorsal fin height is greater in males than in females.
- As per CEC, the population of the species declined 98 per cent in two decades and around 570 animals were recorded in 1999 and this fell to 10 animals in 2019.
- The steep **decline in abundance is primarily due to bycatch in gillnets from the illegal totoaba fishery.**
- It has been listed under the IUCN Red List as '**Critically endangered**'.

About Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)-

- It is a collaborative body working for the environmental, economic and social linkages between Canada, Mexico and the United States to conserve, protect and enhance the North American environment.

- It was established to implement the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), the environmental side of the North American Free Trade Agreement.
- The CEC's mission is to facilitate cooperation and public participation to foster conservation, protection and enhancement of the North American environment for the benefit of present and future generations, in the context of increasing economic, trade and social links among Canada, Mexico and the United States.