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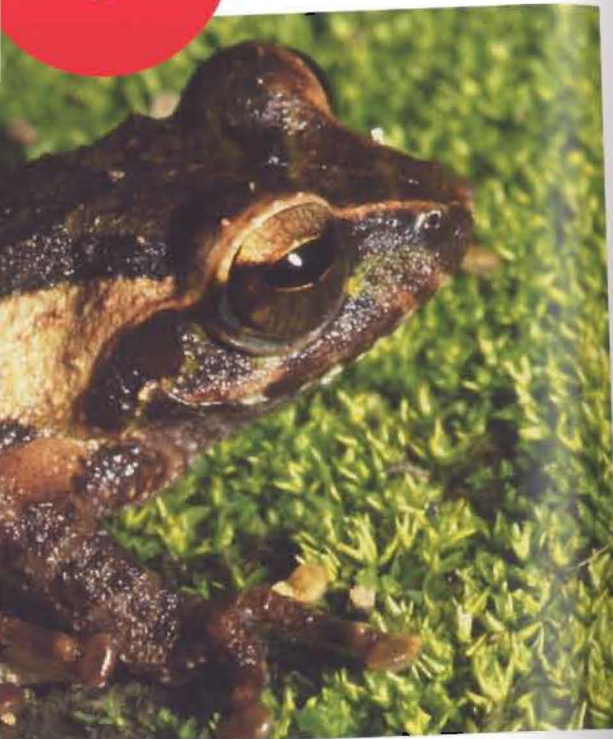
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A species is Endangered when it faces a very high risk of extinction in the wild, based on measurements of population size and/or geographic range and their trends in the past, present and/or future.

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The Vaquita, *Phocoena sinus*, is listed as 'Critically Endangered' on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. This small porpoise is restricted to the upper Gulf of California, Mexico, and has the unfortunate distinction of being the world's most threatened cetacean species.

With a population estimated at only around 150, the Vaquita is undergoing a disastrous decline. The upper Gulf of California is intensively fished, and as a result the most serious threat to the Vaquita is entanglement in gill nets.


Since 2008, the Government of Mexico has established the Vaquita Refuge as a net-free fishing zone, and reduced the level of fishing effort in other areas through a combination of economic measures. Compensation for fishing permit holders who retire their permits or switch to other Vaquita-safe fishing methods, and improved enforcement to regulate illegal fishing have so far reduced the gill net fishing effort by about a third. However, given the perilous status of the Vaquita, stronger measures are needed to ensure that all gill nets are removed from the entire range of the species.



A species is Critically Endangered when it faces an extremely high risk of extinction in the wild, based on measurements of population size and/or geographic range and their trends in the past, present and/or future.

© Thomas A. Jefferson, Puerto Vaquita Insular Reserve (Circulo No. 2964888) under the Secretariat of Mexico Aquifers & Recreational Natural Resources (SEMARNAT), within a natural protected area subject to special management and decreed as such by the Mexican Government.




Collins

The book cover features a collage of four images: a sea turtle swimming in blue water (top left), a close-up of an elephant's face (top right), a bee on a yellow flower (bottom left), and a black and orange frog on a green leaf (bottom right).

SPECIES ON THE EDGE OF SURVIVAL