



Photo: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission under NOAA Research Permit #20556-01
 North Atlantic right whale #2791 swimming with her calf off the coast of Florida.

The solution: go slow

Slower vessel speeds reduce all of these environmental impacts fast. Slowing down can significantly reduce vessel strike risk, underwater noise pollution, and GHG emissions, and also help save fuel.

Speed restrictions of 10 knots have been implemented in critical whale habitat areas at key times for larger vessels, but compliance remains low. Increased levels of enforcement, compliance, and inclusion of vessels less than 65 ft in length are urgently needed to truly reduce this threat.

10%

global ship speed reduction could reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions by around 13%

10%

reduction in ship speeds decreases the amount of noise pollution created worldwide by approximately 40%

10%

reduction in shipping speeds lowers the overall risk of collisions with whales by as much as 50%

See, report, and save whales

Download and use the Whale Alert app. Whale Alert puts the power to save whales, dolphins, manatees, and other marine species in your hands.



Visit rightwhales.org to stay involved and get the latest news on North Atlantic right whales.

▶ see how at ifaw.org

Go slow, whales below



Cover photo: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission team members measure a deceased one-month-old North Atlantic right whale calf that beached in St. Augustine, Florida. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, NOAA Fisheries permit #18786



How slowing down can save whales

Global impact

- ▶ Shipping and boating routes are like roads and highways; they concentrate marine traffic around the world. Some routes go through or along critical habitat areas for whales and other marine species, putting them at risk of vessel strikes, noise-related disturbance, and stress. Commercial shipping also contributes significantly to carbon emissions.
- ▶ World shipping trade represents a \$14 trillion industry and is responsible for carrying about 90% of world trade, reaching all corners of the globe.
- ▶ The global recreational boating market represents a \$29 billion industry estimated to reach over \$35 billion by 2027.

Environmental impact

Vessel strikes

- ▶ Collisions between vessels and marine mammals are recognized as a serious welfare and conservation concern for whale populations globally. Most collisions involve large whales, but all species can be affected. They are often fatal, either immediately or within days of the impact.
- ▶ Collisions with recreational boats can cause severe damage to the boat, putting passengers at risk; serious and even fatal injuries to passengers have occurred.
- ▶ For some species, such as the critically endangered North Atlantic right whale, whose core habitat lies within the busy waters along the East Coast of the US and Canada, the mortality rate is particularly high. Visit rightwhales.org to learn more about the impacts of vessel strikes on right whales.



A North Atlantic right whale swims through ship traffic.

Photo: © New England Aquarium, taken under permit authorized by NOAA

Noise pollution

- ▶ The underwater world is a symphony of sound. Sound is essential to the survival of marine life, but human-made ocean noise is threatening this fragile world.
- ▶ Increasing noise from shipping and boats, oil and gas exploration, naval sonar, and construction are drowning out the ocean's natural sounds, affecting the ability of marine life to communicate, feed, breed, and survive. In the Pacific Ocean alone, shipping noise has doubled every decade over the last 40 years. With no agreed international standards to regulate it, ocean noise pollution is increasing, causing physical stress and disorientation, masking communication signals, and displacing prey for marine species, leading to death in severe instances.

Greenhouse gas emissions

- ▶ Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are a primary driver of climate change and disproportionately impact our ocean. From changes in water temperatures to ocean acidification, the effects of climate change are decreasing the diversity and abundance of marine species across the globe.
- ▶ The international shipping industry accounts for almost 3% of total global GHG emissions and these emissions are projected to increase by 90–130% by 2050.

Don't let this happen to you



Florida

- ▶ 54-ft Jarrett Bay
- ▶ Total loss: \$1.2 million
- ▶ Calf killed, mother injured



South Carolina

- ▶ 30-ft Pursuit
- ▶ \$150,000 in damages
- ▶ Uncertain if whale survived



Georgia

- ▶ 43-ft Grand Banks
- ▶ Damages unconfirmed (est. \$10,000)
- ▶ Whale killed