



## **A Global Assessment of the Extinction Risk and Conservation Status of Syngnathiform Fishes**

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We here report on the first comprehensive global assessment of the conservation status and level of extinction risk of the Syngnathiform fishes, which includes the seahorses, seadragons, pipefishes, and pipehorses (family Syngnathidae), trumpetfishes (Aulostomidae), cornetfishes (Fistulariidae), ghost pipefishes (Solenostomidae), and razorfishes (Centriscidae). We used the methods and tools of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, the most widely accepted and valued approach to conservation assessment. Project Seahorse recruited volunteers, graduate students, members of the IUCN SSC Seahorse, Pipefish and Stickleback Specialist Group, and other experts to collate known information about these 295 species and assess them using the IUCN Categories and Criteria. The majority of species are Least Concern (~60%), but many others are considered Data Deficient (~32%), and we lack sufficient information to properly assess them. There are 21 species (~7%) that are Near Threatened or Vulnerable, meaning that conservation actions are needed in order to conserve healthy populations of these species. In a few dire cases, we report on species that are Endangered or Critically Endangered and require urgent measures to avoid their extinction. We expand on opportunities and next steps in syngnathid conservation in order to move species away from data deficiency and threatened statuses.

**Keywords:** Conservation and management, Ecology