

Location



Introduction

The Republic of Angola is located in south-central Africa, bordering Namibia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zambia. The Atlantic Ocean forms its west coast, which is 1,650 km long. The exclave northern province of Cabinda, separated from the mainland by the Democratic Republic of Congo, also borders the Republic of the Congo.

On the northern coast rocky shores and sandy beaches predominate with extensive wetlands, estuaries, lagoons and mangrove swamps are found in the central region and sandy beaches predominating in the south.

The climate is tropical in the north and more temperate in the south where the southward warm Angolan current and the northward cold Benguela current meet to form the Angola-Benguela front. Largely due to the Benguela current, one of the four major coastal upwelling ecosystems in the world, Angola ranks amongst the most productive ocean systems, supporting a tremendous biodiversity and biomass of zooplankton and fish. This biomass in turn supports a variety of seabirds, marine mammals and sea turtles.

In the north, rainy season usually lasts September to April, whereas in the south it comes later (November until February).

Regional Seas and Biogeography

Atlantic Ocean

LMEs: Gulf of Guinea, Benguela Current

Habitats

Angola's coastline, approximately 1650 km long, consists of sandy and rocky stretches of coastline, punctuated by numerous coastal features such as estuaries, mangroves, coastal lakes, wetlands and tidal flats. Between Rio Bero in Namibe Province and to the north of Rio Coporolo in Benguela Province are rocky shores; the rest of the coastline is predominantly sandy although there are some scattered rocky shores further north of Lobito.

- ➔ *Mangrove swamps* are found in many areas in the northern part of the Angolan coastline.
- ➔ *Seagrasses* are found along much of the country's coast.
- ➔ *Saltmarshes* occur in the south near the Namibian border.

Biodiversity Hotspots

In this section, acronyms are used for some of the most common types of hotspot: National Park (NP), Marine National Park (MNP), Marine Protected Area (MPA), IBA (Important Bird Area), Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA), Ramsar Wetland of International Importance (RAMSAR). In this section, some individual wildlife species are mentioned followed by a letter in parentheses. These are species included in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species within the top three categories of risk - Vulnerable to extinction (VU), Endangered (EN) or Critically Endangered (CR). Further details on these species, including their Latin names, can be found in Appendix 1. Other species mentioned here that are not listed in Appendix 1 have their Latin name in parentheses.

➔ Ramsar sites

In October 2021, Angola became a party to the RAMSAR Convention. Since the membership is relatively new, the country is in the early stages and is proposing to designate ten wetland areas for inclusion in the List of Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites). These cover coastal and inland wetlands, including the Quicama National Park, which is also an IBA.

➔ National Parks and ecological reserves

Iona National Park (IUCN category II) is situated in the southwest corner of Angola and constitutes the northern

tip of the Namib in a section known as the Moçâmedes Desert. The park spans 15,000 km², of which 160km is along the shoreline, and is one of the largest parks in Angola. It is also listed as an IBA. The marine biodiversity is rich in this area at the far northern reaches of the cold, highly productive Benguela Current where it meets the warmer Angola Front.

→ **IBAs**

Idem above.

At risk Wildlife

In this section, some individual wildlife species are mentioned followed by a letter in parentheses. These are species included in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species within the top three categories of risk - Vulnerable to extinction (VU), Endangered (EN) or Critically Endangered (CR). A more complete list of IUCN listed species is found in Appendix 1.

→ **At risk birds**

The two main IBAs in Angola (Iona and Quicama National Parks) include coastlines and cover habitats for endangered bird species such as the African Penguin (EN) and Cape Gannet (EN). The Iona National Park in the south of Angola, is the only site in Angola where the African penguin is found.

Quicama NP is relatively rich in globally threatened and restricted-range species, including Lesser Flamingo, Damara terns and Cape Gannets (EN), which are non-breeding visitors, the latter two in winter to inshore coastal waters. A number of waterbird species also occur in nationally significant numbers in Mussulo Bay, the lagoon and intertidal flats are important foraging areas for waders. A number of heron and egret species nest on one of the islands (Ilha dos Passaros). Cape cormorants (EN) also occur in coastal areas and numerous waterbird species have been observed in Soyo, in the northern part of Angola near the Congo river mouth.

→ **At risk reptiles**

Olive ridley (V), green (EN) and leatherback turtles (V) all nest along the beaches of Angola between September and March. Loggerhead turtles (V) and hawksbill sea turtle (CR) can be found in the waters, but they are not known to nest on Angolan beaches. Sea turtle nesting is known in the Quicama NP.

The African Soft-shelled turtle (VU) is restricted to the coastal region, entering the estuaries and lower stretches of the major rivers, including in the Cunene River mouth and extending some distance upstream in the Cuanza River. The Nile crocodile (*Crocodylus niloticus*) is widespread, apart from the southwest although occurring in the lower Cunene River.

→ **At risk mammals**

There are no Important Marine Mammal Areas yet identified along the coast of Angola, but there are threatened mammal species present in the waters, such as the African manatee (VU), fin whale (VU), sperm whale (VU), blue whale (EN), Sei whale (EN) and Atlantic humpback dolphin (CR). 28 species of cetacean have been observed in the waters off Angola.

The African Manatee (VU) occurs in Angola around mangroves along the lower sections of large rivers in northern Angola. The species occurs in lower reaches of rivers as far south as the Cuanza and Longa rivers, including Mussulo Bay, as well as in the transboundary Congo River, where it moves between Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo along the lower part of the Congo River and the river mouth.

The only pinniped known to breed in Angola is the Afro-Australian fur seal, with several large colonies in the southern part of the country, in the island of Tigres.

Past experience with oil spill and potential risks

Angola is the second largest oil producer in Africa, coming mainly from offshore fields off the coast of Cabinda and deep water fields in the lower Congo basin. However Angola has experienced few major oil spills. In 1991 the ABT Summer spilled 260,000 tonnes of oil after an on board explosion off the coast of Angola. In 1999/2000, oil leaking from fields off the Cabinda province coast resulted in damage to the local fishing industry. No significant oiled wildlife response has been mounted in Angola to date.

International and Regional Treaties and Agreements

→ **Oil spill and HNS Response**

- CLC Convention 69
- CLC Protocol 76
- CLC Protocol 92
- FUND Protocol 76
- FUND Protocol 92
- FUND Protocol 2003
- LLMC Convention 76
- LLMC Protocol 96
- OPRC Convention 90
- HNS Convention 96
- HNS PROT 2010
- OPRC_HNS 2000
- BUNKERS CONVENTION 01

➔ **Marine Biodiversity Protection**

- GI-WACAF (The Global Initiative for West, Central and Southern Africa)

Oil Spill Response and HNS Spill Response

➔ **National Contingency Plan?**

The National Contingency Plan against oil Spills on the Sea was approved by the Council of Ministers in 2008. Contingency plans are required from operating oil companies, who have also developed a mutual assistance agreement to share their oil spill response resources. Joint sensitivity mapping for oil spills has been carried out by participating companies in this mutual agreement.

➔ **Role of Competent National Authorities**

The competent national authority for oil spill response is the Ministério dos Recursos Minerais, Petróleo e Gás (MIREMPET) and the Ministry of Environment (MINAMB).

Oiled Wildlife Preparedness and Response

➔ **Formal guidelines?**

Wildlife protection is part of the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan, there is no reference of a dedicated national oiled wildlife response plan.

➔ **Response objectives and strategy**

No reference.

➔ **Euthanasia or rehabilitation?**

It is likely that rehabilitation would be allowed in Angola, permits for rehabilitation/euthanasia would be required at both national and regional level.

➔ **Impact assessment**

No reference.

➔ **Notification and early response**

No reference.

➔ **Wildlife responders**

Organisations that may get involved in a wildlife response include the Kissama Foundation, EcoAngola, Otchiva and BioConserv. Oil operator personnel in Cabinda may also play a role, as they have been conducting sea turtle monitoring for a number of years, assisting with hatching and nest relocation.

➔ **Cooperation between stakeholders**

The Kitabanga project is a collaborative effort between the Department of Biology at the Agostinho Neto University and the Kissama Foundation, working to protect and conserve sea turtle populations along the Angolan coast. The project involves university students and volunteers from local communities and conducts monitoring of turtles and their nests at 14 locations along the coast, from Soyo in the North to Baia das Pipas in the south.

→ Permanent facilities

Some small stockpiles of oiled wildlife response equipment may be available through oil operators.

→ Current processes

Oil spill response exercises are regularly held under the framework of the National Oil Spill Contingency Plan, or by individual oil operators, some of which incorporate wildlife response. An incident management exercise was held in Luanda in May 2023 which included wildlife response as one of its objectives.

Documentation and references

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General references

ITOPF country profile for Angola

GI-WACAF country profile for Angola

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Appendix 1

→ At risk birds

Common name / Latin name / IUCN Red List Category (CR,EN,VU) / Resident-Migratory (season) / Breeding-Nesting-Pupping (season)

African penguin / *Spheniscus demersus* / EN / Resident (southern Angola) / Breeding (year round)

Cape gannet / *Morus capensis* / EN / Migratory (spring and autumn) / Non-breeding

Cape cormorant / *Phalacrocorax capensis* / EN / Migratory (spring and autumn) / Non-breeding

Sperm whale / *Physeter macrocephalus* / VU / Migratory /

Blue whale / *Balaenoptera musculus* / EN / Migratory /

Sei whale / *Balaenoptera borealis* / EN / Migratory /

Atlantic humpback dolphin / *Sousa teuszii* / CR / Migratory /

Hawksbill turtle / *Eretmochelys imbricata* / CR / Migratory (forages offshore) /

Green turtle / *Chelonia mydas* / EN / Resident/migratory (forages offshore) /

Loggerhead turtle / *Caretta caretta* / VU / Migratory (forages offshore) /

Leatherback turtle / *Dermochelys coriacea* / VU / Resident/migratory (forages offshore) /

Olive Ridley turtle / *Lepidochelys olivacea* / VU / Resident/migratory (forages offshore) /

African shoftshell turtle / *Trionyx triunguis* / VU / Unknown /

→ At risk reptiles

Common name / Latin name / IUCN Red List Category (CR,EN,VU) / Resident-Migratory (season) / Breeding-Nesting-Pupping (season)

→ At risk mammals

Common name / Latin name / IUCN Red List Category (CR,EN,VU) / Resident-Migratory (season) / Breeding-Nesting-Pupping (season)