

DOLPHIN RESEARCH JOINT ISSUE

The subject of Dolphin Research was chosen to represent 40 years of diplomatic relations with Portugal on the Israel-Portugal Joint Issue. Both countries undertake advance research into dolphins and they are extremely communicative mammals symbolizing good relations.

According to Tzipora Rimon, Israeli Ambassador to Portugal, the diplomatic relations between Israel and the Portuguese Republic developed in stages.

An Israeli consulate was first opened in Lisbon in the late 1950s. After the Carnation Revolution in Portugal in April 1974, this was upgraded to a general consulate and in 1977, to an embassy, the highest indication of full diplomatic relations. Since then the two countries have benefitted from friendly and collaborative relations in many fields.

The Jewish people have ancient ties to Portugal, but the Portuguese Jewish community experienced dramatic changes beginning in the early 15th century: expulsion, forced conversion, and the Inquisition. In 1989, a formal apology from the Portuguese people was issued to the Jews and in 1996, the Decree of Expulsion was nullified on the 500th anniversary of its issuance.

During WWII, many Jews passed through Portugal, mostly immigrating to other countries and later also to Israel.

Israel recognized four Portuguese “Righteous Gentiles.” The most well-known is Aristides de Sousa Mendes, who issued visas to thousands of Jews while serving as the Portuguese consul-general in Bordeaux, France during the Holocaust. An Israeli stamp was issued in his honor in 1998.

Dolphin Research

The study of coastal dolphins is a relatively young field of research that has developed in both Portugal and Israel in recent decades. In both countries, the coastal dolphin population exists alongside fishing activity and at times dolphins are caught by fishing equipment, causing them injury and even death.

Bottlenose dolphins are top predators of the coastal marine environment in both countries. They are considered to be a sentinel species for a healthy sea, both in the broad sense of the health of the system as well as in the narrow sense of human health, as consumers of food products from the sea.

The Common Bottlenose Dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) belongs to the family Delphinidae and is most commonly found in tropical to temperate oceans, mainly in the shallow waters of the continental shelf, where water depths are up to 200 meters. Mature dolphins range from 2-4 meters in length and weigh between 150–650 kgs. Dolphins tend to live in groups of up to 12 members, although a number of groups may join together to create a larger super-group of 100 or more dolphins. The two main factors that contribute to group size are food availability and danger from predators.

Dr. Aviad Scheinin, PhD. Dolphin & Sea Center Manager, Israeli Marine Mammals Research & Assistance Center The Morris Kahn Marine Research Center - Top Predators Project manager, University of Haifa, Israel.

The stamps were issued on 4 April 2017, in sheets of ten with five tabs. They were printed using the offset method by Cartor Security Printing of France.

