



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
Only IAS Academy by Grandson of "Per. unthalaivar Kamarajar"

Study finds 6327 gangetic dolphins in four states

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Context

The first estimate of Gangetic dolphins, the only riverine dolphins in India, has found 6,327 of them in the Ganga and its tributaries.

A press report by the Environment Ministry on Monday, World Wildlife Day, said there were 6,324 Ganges river dolphins, and three Indus river dolphins (a related species).

Gangetic Dolphins

The highest number of dolphins was reported from **Uttar Pradesh, followed by Bihar, West Bengal, and Assam.**

Ganga River Dolphin (*Platanista gangetica*) commonly known as **Susu** is **endemic to the Indian sub-continent.**

Also known as the **Tiger of the Ganga.**

It has **long thin snout**, rounded belly, stocky body, and large flippers.

Its slit similar to a blowhole on top of its head, acting as a nostril.

Females are larger than males and give birth to one calf **every two to three years**



National Board for Wildlife (NBWL):

It is constituted by the Central Government under Section 5A of the **Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972** in 2022.

It **replaced the Indian Board for Wildlife**, which was formed in 1952.

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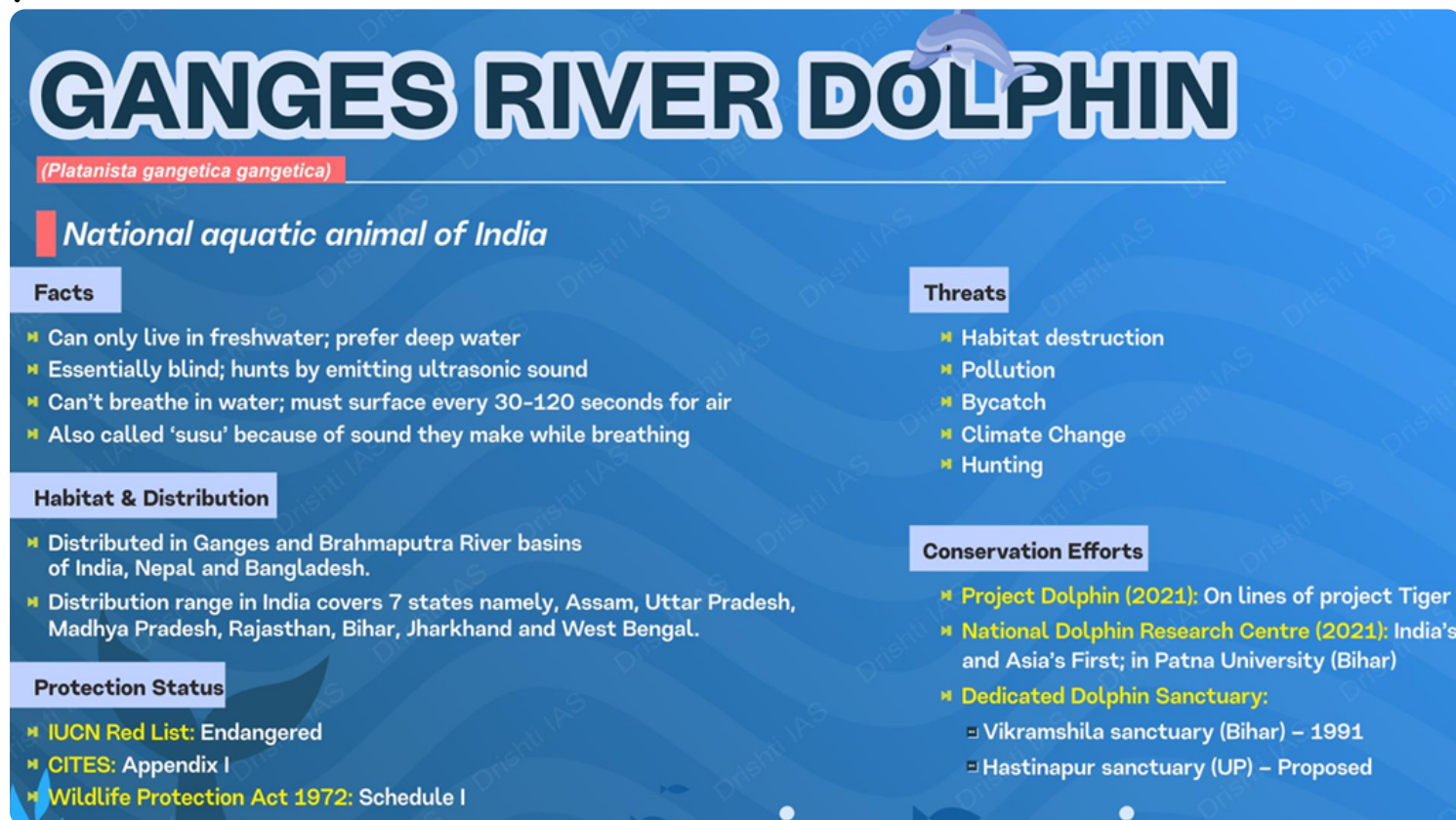
It is a 47-member committee, **headed by the Prime Minister** and the Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change as vice chairperson.

NBWL is **India's top-level advisory body to the government on matters pertaining to wildlife conservation**, particularly within Protected Areas (PAs).

It is responsible for guiding the government's decisions on matters related to wildlife conservation and issuing approvals for projects in PAs.

The WLPA mandates that, **without the approval/recommendation of the NBWL**, construction of tourist lodges, alteration of the boundaries of PAs, destruction or diversion of wildlife habitat, and de-notification of Tiger Reserves **cannot be done**.

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GANGES RIVER DOLPHIN
(Platanista gangetica gangetica)

National aquatic animal of India

Facts

- Can only live in freshwater; prefer deep water
- Essentially blind; hunts by emitting ultrasonic sound
- Can't breathe in water; must surface every 30-120 seconds for air
- Also called 'susu' because of sound they make while breathing

Habitat & Distribution

- Distributed in Ganges and Brahmaputra River basins of India, Nepal and Bangladesh.
- Distribution range in India covers 7 states namely, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

Protection Status

- IUCN Red List:** Endangered
- CITES:** Appendix I
- Wildlife Protection Act 1972:** Schedule I

Threats

- Habitat destruction
- Pollution
- Bycatch
- Climate Change
- Hunting

Conservation Efforts

- Project Dolphin (2021):** On lines of project Tiger
- National Dolphin Research Centre (2021):** India's and Asia's First; in Patna University (Bihar)
- Dedicated Dolphin Sanctuary:**
 - Vikramshila sanctuary (Bihar) – 1991
 - Hastinapur sanctuary (UP) – Proposed

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