

Press Release

TAMIL NADU TO IMPLEMENT PROJECT DOLPHIN TO SAVE DOLPHINS IN TAMIL NADU

Government of Tamil Nadu issued orders on 06.11.2023 to implement Project Dolphin under the Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats of the Government of India.

More than 9 species of Marine Dolphins are found in the Coastal Waters of Tamil Nadu. Major habitats of the dolphins are found in the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve. Last year, 7 Dolphins were successfully rescued and released back to the sea at Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve. Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve is an area of high productivity with rich marine biodiversity including marine mammals such as dugongs etc.,

Dolphins play an important role in keeping the marine environment in balance. Dolphins around the world face various natural and human-induced threats which include hunting, entanglement in fishing nets, overfishing, climate change, ship strikes, tourism activities, toxic contamination, noise pollution, oil and gas development and habitat degradation.

The conservation of dolphins and their aquatic habitat through use of modern technology by engaging with fishermen and other ocean dependent population is proposed under the project. This will be helpful in improving the population of Dolphin species and protection of their habitat at the same time improving livelihood of the local communities. Under the project a number of activities will be undertaken to handle challenges for saving critically endangered species. The project will focus on following activities:-

- 1) Strengthening of protection activities through better patrolling anti-poaching activities and strengthening of the surveillance and patrolling teams with modern equipment and technology.
- 2) Rescue and rehabilitation activities through strengthening of veterinary services, patrolling and training etc.
- 3) Dolphin habitat improvement through restoration of coastal ecosystem like mangroves, corals, sea grass etc.
- 4) Removal of ghost nets and reduction of pollution in coastal areas.
- 5) Enhancing awareness through celebration of “National Dolphin Day” with the involvement of local community and educational Institutions including launch of ‘Dolphin Scholarship’.
- 6) Encouragement of local community through incentives and awards.
- 7) Launch of Dolphin scholarship programme and enhance understanding of their habitats etc. promoting eco-tourism and creating livelihood opportunities as a substitute to the conventional fishing practices.
- 8) Symposium, seminars, meetings etc. for better learning and understanding of this endangered species.

Project Dolphin will strengthen the marine ecology and overall health of marine Environment. The Scheme shall be implemented at a cost of Rs.8.13 crore.

Additional Chief Secretary to Government
Environment, Climate Change and Forests Department

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