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Indus River Dolphin

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Indus River Dolphin

Recently, Punjab's wildlife preservation wing has batted for conservation of Indus river dolphins and also their natural habitat.

- The Indus river dolphin was declared the **State aquatic animal of Punjab in 2019**.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - **Scientific Name:** Platanista gangetica minor
 - According to a recent study of South Asian river dolphins, Indus and Ganges River dolphins are not one, but two separate species. Currently, they are classified as **two subspecies under Platanista gangetica**.
 - Like other **freshwater dolphins** (such as Ganges river dolphins), the Indus river dolphin is an important indicator of the health of a river.
 - Other dolphins found in Indian waters include: **Ganges River Dolphins, Irrawaddy dolphins**.
- **Habitat:**
 - They can only be found in the lower parts of the **Indus River in Pakistan** and in **River Beas, a tributary of the Indus River** in Punjab, India.
- **Threats:**
 - **Biological Resource Use:** Fishing & harvesting aquatic resources.
 - **Natural System Modifications:** Dams & water management/use.
 - **Pollution:** Domestic & urban waste water, Industrial & military effluents, Agricultural & forestry effluents.
- **Conservation Status:**
 - **International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN):** Endangered.
 - **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES):** Appendix I
 - **Indian Wildlife (Protection), Act 1972:** Schedule I
- **Steps Taken:**
 - **Enumeration of freshwater dolphins** is being undertaken as a nationwide project of the Central Government.
 - **Project Dolphin:** Announced on the eve of Independence Day in the year 2020, it will be on the lines of **Project Tiger**, which has helped increase the tiger population.