



# MARINE MAMMAL COMMISSION

26 April 2016

Ms. Therese Conant  
NMFS Office of Protected Resources  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910.

Dear Ms. Conant:

The Marine Mammal Commission (the Commission) has reviewed the National Marine Fisheries Service request for information (81 Fed. Reg. 8923) on the Indus River dolphin (*Platanista gangetica minor*) for use in a 5-year review of the species' status under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended. The purpose of such reviews is to ensure that the listing classification of a species is accurate. The announcement requested information on Indus River dolphins that has become available since their original listing as endangered in January 1991.

In recognition of the need for better information on this endangered taxon, the Commission has supported the research of Dr. Gill Braulik on status assessment, conservation ecology, genetics and management options for Indus River dolphins. Her publications provide the most complete and current information for the ESA review. Of the several citations listed here, the most recent provides a comprehensive review of the status, threats, and conservation management options for the Indus River dolphin (Braulik *et al.* 2015).

Braulik, G. T., U. Noreen, M. Arshad, and R. R. Reeves. 2015. Review of status, threats, and conservation management options for the endangered Indus River blind dolphin. *Biological Conservation* 192, 30-41.

Braulik, G. T., R. Barnett, V. Odon, V. Islas-Villanueva, A. R. Hoelzel, and J. A. Graves. 2014. One species or two? Vicariance, lineage divergence and low mtDNA diversity in geographically isolated populations of South Asian river dolphin. *Journal of Mammalian Evolution*: 22:111-120.

Braulik, G. T. 2012. Conservation ecology and phylogenetics of the Indus River dolphin (*Platanista gangetica minor*). PhD thesis. Department of Biology, University of St. Andrews.

Braulik, G. T., A. P. Reichert, T. Ehsan, S. Khan, S.P. Northridge, J. S. Alexander, and R. Garstang. 2012. Habitat use by a freshwater dolphin in the low-water season. *Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems*. DOI: 10.1002/aqc.2246.

Braulik, G. T. 2006. Comprehensive status assessment of the Indus River dolphin (*Platanista gangetica minor*). *Biological Conservation* 129(4): 579-590.

This review should also consider the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List assessments of the species (*Platanista gangetica*) and of the Indus subspecies.

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Braulik, G. T., B. D. Smith, and S. Chaudhry. 2012. *Platanista gangetica ssp. minor*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2012: e.T41757A17628296.

Smith, B. D. and G. T. Braulik. 2012. *Platanista gangetica*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2012: e.T41758A17355810.

If you have difficulty finding any of these articles we will be glad to assist. If you have questions about them or any other work the authors may have completed on Indus River dolphins, we encourage you to contact them directly. I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,



Rebecca J. Lent, Ph.D.  
Executive Director