

MOLECULAR IDENTIFICATION OF EVOLUTIONARILY SIGNIFICANT GANGES RIVER DOLPHINS (*PLATANISTA GANGETICA*) USING COMPLETE MITOCHONDRIAL CYTOCHROME-*B* GENE SEQUENCES

BISWAJIT MANDAL, BASANTA KUMAR DAS*, ASIM KUMAR JANA,
SOUMYA PRASAD PANDA, PRANAYA KUMAR PARIDA AND VIKASH KUMAR

*A stranded *Platanista gangetica* carcass was molecularly identified using a 359 bp mitochondrial cytochrome-b gene fragment. DNA was extracted and sequenced, with phylogenetic analysis confirming its evolutionary placement among South Asian isolates. The generated sequence (GenBank: PQ212750) highlights the subspecies' genetic distinctiveness and conservation urgency. This study reinforces the critical need for molecular tools in species verification and emphasizes integrated strategies to conserve this evolutionarily significant freshwater cetacean endemic to the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna river system.*
