

## More on news

- The centre is being set up on banks of Ganges, as per recommendation of a steering committee constituted for implementation of **Project Dolphin**.
- As per the committee, **Bihar had a natural advantage** as it accounted for **50% of the world's river dolphin population**.
- It was first time proposed in 2011.

## About Gangetic Dolphin

**Protection status:**

- The Gangetic River dolphin is **India's national aquatic animal** (declared in 2009).
- It is **one of four freshwater dolphin species in the world**. The other three are:
  - 'Baiji' in Yangtze River in China (Functionally extinct since 2006)
  - 'Boto' in Amazon River
  - 'Bhulan' in Indus River in Pakistan
- Habitat:** The **Gangetic Dolphin is endemic to the Indian sub-continent** and has a fairly extensive distribution range. It is found in the **Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems of India and Bangladesh**, while a few individuals survive in the **Karnali, and the Sapta Kosi Rivers in Nepal**.
- Characteristics:**
  - Reliable indicator** of the **health of the entire river ecosystem**.
  - It is **blind** and **finds its way and prey** in river waters through **echolocation**.
    - ✓ Echolocation is a technique used by bats, dolphins and other animals to **determine the location of objects using reflected sound**.
  - Usually found in **turbulent waters**, where there are **enough fish for them to feed on**.
  - Live in a zone where there is **little or no current, helping them save energy**.
  - If they **sense danger**, they can **dive into deep waters**. They swim from the **no-current zone to the edges to hunt for fish** and return.
  - Being a **mammal**, the Ganges River dolphin **cannot breathe in water** and **must surface every 30-120 seconds**. Because of the **sound it produces when breathing**, the animal is popularly referred to as '**Souns/Susu/Sushuk/Seho**'.
  - Generally, **Females are larger than males** and give birth once every two to three years to only one calf.
- Conservation measures:**
  - National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) implemented Ganges River Dolphin Conservation Action Plan 2010-2020.
  - Project Dolphin**

