

Small Grant in Aid of Research - Final Report

The Society for Marine Mammology (SMM) project I undertook “Assessing presence and movements of Indo-Pacific humpback dolphin along South East coast of India” primarily used interview based methods. I conducted 60 interviews among different groups of artisanal fishers across Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Results of this study show that humpback dolphins are sighted in particular pockets along the Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu coasts. These findings are indeed contrary to what has been observed in the west coast of India where distribution of humpback dolphin is reported to be continuous along the coast. This project collates preliminary yet first evidence of presence and movement patterns of humpback dolphins from the south-east coast of India.

The small grant money was used to purchase an audio recorder and more importantly for travel purposes as the areas where these surveys took place were isolated without access to public transport. This project has helped me to identify areas where humpback dolphins are present throughout the year. I will concentrate on these areas for my PhD work and future long term projects. Through this project I was able to form collaborative links with researchers working on humpback dolphins along the Indian coast. Since this project was preliminary I was not able to convert these findings into a stand alone publication. However, I intend to carry on this project and publish these findings in a reputed marine mammal journal in the near future. I thank the Society of Marine Mammology for providing me this opportunity and encouraging further research in the same vein.