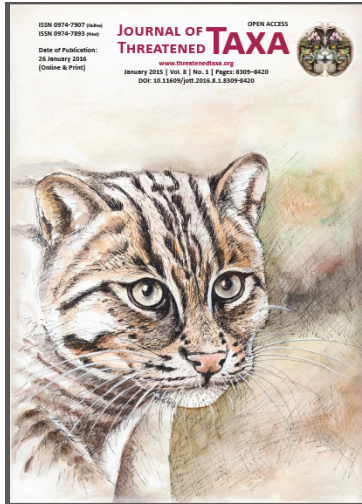


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REPLY TO RESPONSE

CHECKLIST OF MARINE MAMMALS OF KERALA - A REPLY TO KUMARRAN (2016) AND THE UPDATED CHECKLIST OF MARINE MAMMALS OF KERALA

P.O. Nameer

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CHECKLIST OF MARINE MAMMALS OF KERALA - A REPLY TO KUMARRAN (2016) AND THE UPDATED CHECKLIST OF MARINE MAMMALS OF KERALA

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At the outset let me thank K.P. Kumarran for making some critical comments on the marine mammal checklist of Kerala. I list below the answers on the doubts raised by Kumarran (2016).

The maritime limits for including species in the “Checklist of Vertebrates of Kerala” (Nameer et al. 2015) is on par with the definition for the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of a country and the biological resources (including their conservation measures), as proposed by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (Klein 2005).

The suggestion by Kumarran (2016) on the taxonomy of the Common Dolphin is a welcome one. According to Wang et al. (2014) only a single species of Common Dolphin was recognised prior to 1994; however, it was subsequently split into two species *Delphinus delphis* and *D. capensis*. The one that is known from the Indian coasts including the Kerala coast is *Delphinus capensis*. Wang et al. (2014) also opined that *Delphinus capensis tropicalis* is the subspecies of the Common Dolphin that is seen in the Indian Ocean.

Very few cetacean inventories have been undertaken in the maritime limits of India, and the majority (71%) of cetacean records from India are opportunistic in nature (Kumarran 2012). However, Kumarran (2016) claims that “Kerala being one among the well-studied regions for marine mammals” citing (Afsal et al. 2009) contradicts

his own previous conclusion published just three years back. It may be noted that Afsal et al. (2009) study based on opportunistic sightings of cetacean species was not exclusive to Kerala EEZ but has straddled different maritime limits of the country. Hence, we concur with the previous conclusion mentioned in Kumarran (2012) that there is paucity in cetacean inventories for Kerala.

The nomenclature of the marine mammals used in Nameer (2015) follows Mead & Brownell (2005), and the vernacular names were taken from various sources (Prater 1971; Sadasivan 1987; Nameer 2000; Sathasivam 2004; Menon 2008; Dinesan et al. 2010), and most of which were already in use by the local fisher folk. These were not literal translations of the English names to Malayalam as pointed out by Kumarran (2016).

The primary reference used for preparing the list of marine mammals included in Nameer (2015) was Mead & Brownell (2005) and Shoshani (2005). The list was subsequently checked using a more recent publication on marine mammals by Wilson & Mittermeier (2014). Many of the doubts and arguments raised by Kumarran (2016) seem to be based on a select set of publications hand-picked by him, the primary one being his own (Kumarran 2012). May I suggest the author to refer to some of the recent publications on the marine mammals (Deméré 2014; MacLeod 2014; Marsh 2014; Wang et al. 2014; Wilson & Mittermeier 2014), which have latest information on the marine mammal distribution.

To further support the inclusion of certain species doubts on the distribution of which were raised by Kumarran (2016), we provide the following explanations.

1. *Dugong Dugong dugon*: There is a historical record of Dugong from Malabar coasts (Blanford 1888–1891). According to Shoshani (2005), dugong is



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distributed in the coastal waters of Indian Ocean. Marsh (2014) provides a global distribution map that clearly shows the distribution of dugong from the Kerala coast.

2. Pygmy Killer Whale *Feresa attenuata*: Mead and Brownell (2005), gives the distribution of Pygmy Killer Whale as tropical waters. According to Wang et al. (2014) the Pygmy Killer Whale has cosmopolitan tropical distribution between 40°N and 35°S, including Arabian sea, and the Kerala coast, which is explicitly shown in the distribution map.

3. Fraser's Dolphin *Lagenodelphis hosei*: Mead and Brownell (2005), gives the distribution of Fraser's Dolphin as tropical waters. According to Wang et al. (2014) this species has a distribution in the tropical oceans from 30°N and 30°S, including the Kerala coast.

4. Rough-toothed Dolphin *Steno bredanensis*: Mead and Brownell (2005), gives the distribution of Rough-toothed Dolphin as tropical waters. Wang et al. (2014) mentions the distribution of this species as tropical oceans from 40°N and 35°S, including Kerala coast.

5. Striped Dolphin *Stenella coeruleoalba*: Mead and Brownell (2005), gives the distribution of Striped Dolphin as tropical waters. Wang et al. (2014) mentions the distribution as tropical oceans from 50°N and 40°S, including Kerala coast.

6. Pantropical Spotted Dolphin *Stenella attenuata*: Mead and Brownell (2005), gives the distribution of Pantropical Spotted Dolphin as tropical waters. Wang et al. (2014) mentions the distribution as tropical oceans from 40°N and 40°S, including Kerala coast. Wang et al. (2014) had further suggested that the subspecies of Pantropical Spotted Dolphin seen in the Arabian Sea is *Stenella attenuate attenuata*.

7. Ginkgo-toothed Whale *Mesoplodon ginkgodens*: According to Mead & Brownell (2005), Ginkgo-toothed Whale is distributed in tropical waters including the Indian Ocean and Sri Lanka. MacLeod (2014) gives the distribution as warm waters of Indian oceans in southern India and Sri Lanka, including a distribution map showing its presence from the Kerala coast.

8. Minke Whale *Balaenoptera acutorostrata*: Mead and Brownell (2005), gives the distribution of Minke Whale as tropical waters. Deméré (2014) provides a distribution map showing the presence of this species from the Kerala coast.

When the most recent publications on marine mammals (Deméré 2014; MacLeod 2014; Marsh 2014; Wang et al. 2014; Wilson & Mittermeier 2014) were consulted, which the author did not have access at the

time of publication of Nameer (2015), it was found that the following additional species that were not included in Nameer (2015) are also distributed in the Kerala coasts.

1. Deraniyagala's Beaked Whale *Mesoplodon hotaula*: This species was considered as a synonym of Ginkgo-toothed Whale *Mesoplodon ginkgodens* until 2014, when molecular studies have resurrected *Mesoplodon hotaula* as a distinct species (MacLeod 2014). Its distribution is given as warmer waters of Indian Ocean from southern India and Sri Lanka. MacLeod (2014) also gives the distribution map of Deraniyagala's Beaked Whale showing its presence from the Kerala coast.

2. Blainville's Beaked Whale *Mesoplodon densirostris*: has worldwide distribution in tropical waters, and the distribution map by MacLeod (2014) shows its presence from the Kerala coast.

3. Longman's Beaked Whale *Indopacetus pacificus*: MacLeod (2014) provides a distribution map showing the presence of the species in the Kerala coast
Cuvier's Beaked Whale *Ziphius cavirostris*: MacLeod (2014) provides a distribution map showing the presence of the species in the Kerala coast.

4. Killer Whale *Orcinus orca*: According to Wang et al. (2014) Killer Whale is the most widely distributed of all cetaceans, and provides a distribution map showing the presence of the species in the Kerala coast.

5. Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin *Tursiops aduncus*: Wang et al. (2014), provides a distribution map showing the presence of the species in the Kerala coast

6. Sperm Whale *Physeter macrocephalus*: Formerly known as *Physeter catodon* (Mead & Brownell 2005), the species was subsequently synonymised with *Physeter macrocephalus* (Mesnick 2014). According to Mesnick, (2014) Sperm Whale has a cosmopolitan distribution and Mesnick (2014) provides a distribution map showing the presence of the species in the Kerala coast.

7. Dwarf Sperm Whale *Kogia sima*: McAlpine (2014) provides a distribution map showing the presence of the species in the Kerala coast.

8. Sei Whale *Balaenoptera borealis*: Deméré (2014) provides a distribution map showing the presence of the species in the Kerala coast.

Thus the updated marine mammal (cetacean and sirenian) list of Kerala adds to 31 species under seven families and two orders. The revised list of marine mammals of Kerala is given in Table 1. Six species of marine mammals are threatened according to the IUCN Red List, with three species each in 'Endangered'

Table 1. Checklist of marine mammals of Kerala

English name	Species name	Authority	Malayalam name	Vernacular name	IUCN	END	WPA	CITES
Order Sirenia								
Family: Dugongidae (dugongs)								
1 Dugong (Sea Cow)	<i>Dugong dugon</i>	(Muller, 1776)	കടൽപശു	Kaṭal Paśu	VU		Sch. I	App. I
Order Cetacea								
Family: Delphinidae (marine dolphins)								
2 Long-beaked Common Dolphin	<i>Delphinus capensis</i>	Linnaeus, 1758	കടൽപന്നി കടലേടി	Kaṭalpanni, Kaṭalēṭi	LC		Sch. II	App. II
3 Grey Dolphin (Risso's Dolphin)	<i>Grampus griseus</i>	(G. Cuvier, 1812)	ചാരയോർഫിൻ	Chāra Dēāṭṭhin	LC		Sch. II	App. II
4 Short-finned Pilot Whale (Pacific Pilot Whale)	<i>Globicephala macrorhynchus</i>	Gray, 1846	കുന്നിച്ചിറകൻ യോർഫിൻ	Kunnicchirakan Dēāṭṭhin	DD		Sch. II	App. II
5 Pigmy Killer Whale (Slender Blackfish)	<i>Feresa attenuata</i>	Gray, 1875	ചിന്തകൊലയാളി തിമിംഗലം	Kunnan Keāṭṭāṭṭimigalam	DD		Sch. II	App. II
6 Fraser's Dolphin (Sarawak Dolphin)	<i>Lagenodelphis hosei</i>	Fraser, 1957	ഫ്രാസെറൂടെ യോർഫിൻ	Phrāsēruṭe Dēāṭṭhin	LC		Sch. II	App. II
7 Melon-headed Dolphin (Indian Broad-beaked Dolphin)	<i>Peponocephala electra</i>	(Gray, 1846)	തലയൻ തിമിംഗലം	Talayan Timingalam	LC		Sch. II	App. II
8 False Killer Whale	<i>Pseudorca crassidens</i>	(Owen, 1846)	കപടകൊലയാളി തിമിംഗലം	Kapata Keāṭṭāṭṭimigalam	DD		Sch. II	App. II
9 Killer Whale	<i>Orcinus orca</i>	(Linnaeus, 1758)	കൊലയാളി തിമിംഗലം	Keāṭṭāṭṭimigalam	DD		Sch. II	App. II
10 Rough-toothed Dolphin	<i>Steno bredanensis</i>	(G. Cuvier in Lesson, 1828)	പരുക്കൻപല്ലൻ	Parukkan Pallan	LC		Sch. II	App. II
11 Indo-Pacific humpback Dolphin (Plumbeous Dolphin)	<i>Sousa chinensis</i>	(Osbeck, 1765)	പുനന്തേടി	Punnanēṭi	NT		Sch. II	App. II
12 Striped Dolphin	<i>Stenella coeruleoalba</i>	(Meyen, 1833)	വരയൻ	Varayan	LC		Sch. II	App. II
13 Pantropical Spotted Dolphin (Bridled Dolphin)	<i>Stenella attenuata</i>	(Gray, 1846)	പുളളിയോർഫിൻ	Puḷḷi Dēāṭṭhin	LC		Sch. II	App. II
14 Spinner Dolphin	<i>Stenella longirostris</i>	(Gray, 1828)	മെലിയന്തേടി	Meliyanēṭi	DD		Sch. II	App. II
15 Indo-Pacific Bottlenose Dolphin	<i>Tursiops aduncus</i>	(Ehrenberg, 1833)	ഇൻഡോ-പസിഫിക് കുപ്പിമുക്കൻയോർഫിൻ	Indēa-pasiphik kuppimukkan Dēāṭṭhin	DD		Sch. II	App. II
16 Bottle-nosed Dolphin	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	(Montagu, 1821)	കുപ്പിമുക്കൻയോർഫിൻ	Kuppimukkan Dēāṭṭhin	LC		Sch. II	App. II
Family: Phocoenidae (porpoises)								
17 Finless Porpoise (Indo-Pacific Finless Porpoise)	<i>Neophocaena phocaenoides</i>	(G. Cuvier, 1829)	എലിയന്തേടി	Eliyanēṭi	VU		Sch. I	App. II
Family: Physeteridae (sperm whales)								
18 Sperm Whale	<i>Physeter macrocephalus</i>	Linnaeus, 1758	എണ്ണതിമിംഗലം	Enṇa Timingalam	VU		Sch. II	App. II
Family: Kogiidae (pygmy and dwarf sperm whales)								
19 Pygmy Sperm Whale	<i>Kogia breviceps</i>	(Blainville, 1838)	കുന്നൻ എണ്ണതിമിംഗലം	Kunnan Enṇatimigalam	DD		Sch. II	App. II
20 Dwarf Sperm Whale	<i>Kogia sima</i>	(Owen, 1866)	കുറിയ എണ്ണതിമിംഗലം	Kuriya Enṇatimigalam	DD		Sch. II	App. II
Family: Ziphiidae (beaked whales)								

English name	Species name	Authority	Malayalam name	Vernacular name	IUCN	END	WPA	CITES
21 Ginkgo-toothed Beaked Whale	<i>Mesoplodon ginkgodens</i>	Nishiwaki and Kamiya, 1958	ജിങ്കോതീമിശിമലം	Jinkēa Timiṅgalaṁ	DD		Sch. II	App. II
22 Blainville's Beaked Whale	<i>Mesoplodon densirostris</i>	(Blainville, 1817)	ബ്ലൈൻവില്ലിയുടെ ചുണ്ടൻതീമിശിമലം	Blainvilleyute Chunṭan Timiṅgalaṁ	DD		Sch. II	App. II
23 Deraniyagala's Beaked Whale	<i>Mesoplodon hataula</i>	Deraniyagala, 1963	ഡെരാനിയഗലയുടെ ചുണ്ടൻതീമിശിമലം	Deraniyagalayute Chunṭan Timiṅgalaṁ	NE		Sch. II	App. II
24 Longman's Beaked Whale	<i>Indopacetus pacificus</i>	(Longman, 1926)	ലോങ്ഗ്മാൻറെ ചുണ്ടൻതീമിശിമലം	Leānīmāntre Chunṭan Timiṅgalaṁ	DD		Sch. II	App. II
25 Cuvier's Beaked Whale	<i>Ziphius cavirostris</i>	G. Cuvier, 1823	കുറിയുടെ ചുണ്ടൻതീമിശിമലം	Kuviyarute Chunṭan Timiṅgalaṁ	LC		Sch. II	App. II
Family: Balaenopteridae (rorquals)								
26 Minke Whale (Lesser Rorqual)	<i>Balaenoptera acutorostrata</i>	Lacepede, 1804	ചെറുതീമിശിമലം	Cheru Timiṅgalaṁ	LC		Sch. II	App. I
27 Sei Whale	<i>Balaenoptera borealis</i>	Lesson, 1828	ചാദര തീമിശിമലം	Chāra Timiṅgalaṁ	EN		Sch. II	App. I
28 Bryde's Whale (Tropical Whale)	<i>Balaenoptera edeni</i>	Anderson, 1879	ബ്രൈഡൻറെ തീമിശിമലം	Braidaṅṅe Timiṅgalaṁ	DD		Sch. II	App. I
29 Blue Whale	<i>Balaenoptera musculus</i>	(Linnaeus, 1758)	നീല തീമിശിമലം	Nīla Timiṅgalaṁ	EN		Sch. II	App. I
30 Fin Whale (Common Rorqual)	<i>Balaenoptera physalus</i>	(Linnaeus, 1758)	ചിറകൻ തീമിശിമലം	Chirakan Timiṅgalaṁ	EN		Sch. II	App. I
31 Humpback Whale	<i>Megaptera novaeangliae</i>	(Borowski, 1781)	കൂനൻ തീമിശിമലം	Kūnan Timiṅgalaṁ	LC		Sch. II	App. I

and 'Vulnerable' categories. Close to 40% of marine mammals distributed in the Kerala coast come under the 'Data Deficient' category.

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