

Market sample of dolphin identified

On 15th September the PNP laboratory of the Institute was informed about marketing of a dolphin in the 'poocha market' near hospital junction, Narakkal in the Vypeen Island, Cochin. The animal was chopped into several pieces by the time it could be examined, nothing being left for the identification of the species based on morphology. The skin tissue was preserved in 70% ethanol and genomic DNA was extracted. By the techniques standardized in the PNP laboratory, PCR, sequencing and sequence analysis were carried out. MtDNA control region and cytochrome b sequences were deposited in GenBank (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/) under the accession numbers EU204618 and EU204619. Phylogenetic reconstruction in *DNA Surveillance* (www.cebl.auckland.ac.nz:9000/) has unambiguously recognized the species as spinner dolphin (*Stenella longirostris*). Without the help of molecular taxonomy such a feat would have never been possible in such a condition of the specimen.

(PNP Division)