

Brief introduction on the PESUT MAHAKAM (Irrawaddy dolphin, *Orcaella brevirostris*)



Status:

- Protected by Indonesian law (UU. No 5 tahun 1990)
- Critically Endangered (IUCN)
- CITES Appendix I
- Symbol species of East Kalimantan Province

The pesut Mahakam is a freshwater dolphin..

There are 7 recognized dolphin species with freshwater populations inhabiting rivers in South(east) Asia and South America

Sungai Ganges, Indus



Sungai Amazon, Orinoco



Ayeyarwady, Mekong, Mahakam



Sungai Yangtze



Biology

- **Size/weight:** Adult pesut are c. 2 - 2,7 m long, and weigh between 90 -150 kg, whereas the male is larger than the female. Newborn calves are c. 90 cm - 1m long and weigh c. 10 - 12 kg.
- **Swimming speed:** Pesut often swims at a speed of 5 km/hour, but occasionally may swim at a maximum speed of 20 km/jam.
- **Social system:** Pesut usually lives in groups with between 3-10 individuals but sometimes pesut may swim alone or even in groups up to 30 individuals during the mating season



Behaviors



- Milling, feeding, moving up or down stream, play, interacting
- Occasionally, pesut may perform a salto and jump high up in the air.
- When they play they may perform fin or tail waves, spy-hop, spitting water to each other.



Pesut can spit water from its mouth to confuse and trap fish. It is also being done by males to impress and attract females..



According to fishermen in the Mahakam, Pesut often helps to chase fish inside the nets set up near the river shores. In Myanmar fishermen even work together with the Irrawaddy dolphins there to catch fish in larger quantities than without the dolphins.