

IMRAN SAMAD



About me

I am an engineer-turned-biologist interested in using modern tools to understand human impacts on coastal systems and endangered species.

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Skills

- R, Python, Q-GIS, Adobe Photoshop.
- Statistical Modelling, Machine Learning and AI
- Problem solving
- Project management
- Proactivity

Hobbies

- Astronomy
- Travelling
- Chasing new experiences
- Poetry writing
- Writing songs and playing music
- Photography

Experience

1. **Associate Researcher** at the Dakshin Foundation, conducting research on elasmobranch bycatch and aiding in outreach programs (2023 – ongoing).
2. Conducting research on the patterns and mechanisms of marine megafauna bycatch in the multi-gear fisheries of India, as a part of my **PhD**.
3. **Intern** at the MEGAfauna lab with Prof Per Berggren (March 2023), working on understanding methods to study dolphin behaviour.
4. **Research Consultant** at Panthera, NY (March-December 2021) responsible for analysis of ecological data, scientific article writing and conducting workshops to explain the use of analytical tools.
5. **Blog editor** at Conservation Optimism, an initiative of the University of Oxford (December 2019 - March 2021).
6. **Research Consultant** at Ashoka Trust For Research In Ecology And The Environment (January-February 2021) responsible for collection, curation and analysis of hydrological and satellite data.
7. Conducted a research project to assess the impact of barrage operations on the Ganges river dolphin in the Ganga river as a part of my **Master's dissertation** at NCBS.
8. **Research assistant** at Nature Environment & Wildlife Society (NEWS), Kolkata (July 2017 - June 2018) responsible for execution of projects including
 - Rehabilitation of Golden Jackals from Kolkata airport.
 - Concurrent evaluation of FDA's under National Afforestation Programme.
 - Status survey of Asian Small Clawed Otters at Sundarban Tiger Reserve.
 - Assessing impact of habitat management practices at three protected areas of North Bengal.
9. **Intern** at the Darjeeling zoo (January-February 2017) working to document the free ranging winter birds of the zoo premises

Education

Course (Passing year)	Institution	University	Score
Ph.D. in Ecology, Evolution and Behaviour (2026, to be)	Indian Institute of Science	Indian Institute of Science	Currently pursuing
M.Sc. in Wildlife Biology and Conservation (2021)	National Centre for Biological Sciences	Tata Institute of Fundamental Research	3.51 (out of 4) CGPA
B. Tech. in Applied Electronics and Instrumentation (2017)	Netaji Subhash Engineering College	M.A.K.A.U.T (West Bengal)	8.10 (out of 10) CGPA
Higher Secondary (2013)	Himali Boarding School	I.S.C.	88.2%
Matriculation (2011)	Modern English School	I.C.S.E.	90.2%

Publications

Scientific articles

- **Samad, I.**, Patil, H., Cantor M., Farine D. R., Sutaria, D. & Shanker, K. (in review). Human activities drive novel behaviours and transitions in dolphins. *Conservation Biology*. <https://doi.org/10.1101/2025.07.10.663819>
- **Samad, I.**, Sutaria, D., Farine D. R., Shanker, K. & Cantor M. (in review). Integrated deep learning and geo-referencing for flexible drone-based animal tracking. *Methods in Ecology & Evolution*. <https://doi.org/10.1101/2025.02.05.636599>
- **Samad, I.**, Sutaria, D., Shanker, K. (in review). Species rich but data poor: leveraging distribution modelling techniques to map cetacean occurrence around South Asian waters. *Biodiversity & Conservation*. <https://doi.org/10.1101/2024.12.27.630491>
- Patil, H., **Samad, I.**, Shanker, K. (in review). Understanding sustainability in nearshore fisheries by exploring their drivers and dynamics in Malvan, Sindhudurg. *Regional Studies in Marine Science*.
- Dunkley, K., Cantor, M., ... **Samad, I.**, et al. (in review). Cues and signals in animal interspecies cooperation. *Animal Behaviour*.
- Petchiappan, A., Swaminathan, A., **Samad, I.**, Namboothri, N. & Shanker, K. (in review). To drift or not to drift: post-nesting migrations of leatherback sea turtles in the Indian Ocean. *Endangered Species Research*.
- **Samad, I.**, Patil, H., Tamarapalli, S.C.P., Sutaria, D., Hines, E., Shanker, K. (2025). Drivers of elasmobranch catch are site and fishery specific: Insights from a comparative assessment of fisheries across the east and west coasts of India. *Ocean & Coastal Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2025.107849>
- Pakpien S., Vinitpornsawan S., **Samad I.**, Sharma S., Barbee R., Harihar A. & Kumhom P. (2025). A low-density yet stable population of Indochinese tigers (*Panthera tigris corbetti*) may be the key to recovery in a half-empty landscape in eastern Thailand. *Biological Conservation*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2025.111043>
- Bora, G., **Samad, I.**, Dsouza, S. & Shanker, K. (2024). Sharks and Rays of Malvan. Dakshin Foundation. <https://shorturl.at/KFuko>
- Lahkar, D., Ahmed, M.F., Begum, R.H., Das, S.K., **Samad, I.**, Goodrich, J.M. & Harihar, A. (2024). Rapid recovery of tigers (*Panthera tigris*) in a post-conflict landscape: implications of immediate and sustained conservation efforts. *Biological Conservation*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2024.110837>
- Suksavate, S., Dumsrisuk, Y., Indarabut, P., Godfrey, A., Saosoong, S., Harihar, A., **Samad, I.**, Sukmasuang, R. & Duengkae, P. (2022) Spatial and temporal habitat use by the main prey species of Tigers in two protected areas of Thailand's southern Western Forest Complex. *The Environment and Natural Resources Journal*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.32526/enrj/20/202200046>
- Rana, D., **Samad, I.** & Rastogi, S. (2022). To a charismatic rescue: Designing a blueprint to steer Fishing Cat conservation for safeguarding Indian wetlands. *Journal of Nature Conservation*, 126225. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jnc.2022.126225>
- **Samad, I.**, Kelkar, N. & Krishnaswamy, J. (2022). Life at the borderline: Responses of Ganges river dolphins to dry-season flow regulation of river and canal habitats by the Farakka barrage. *Aquatic Conservation: Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems*, 32(2), 294– 308. <https://doi.org/10.1002/aqc.3763>

Popular articles

- Samad, I., (2024). Taking a closer look at dolphin-fisher interactions, The Pod.
- Samad, I., (2024). [Local problems require local solutions for conserving endangered marine species](#), SoSF.
- Samad, I., (2024). [Part of the platter: What does dolphin decision-making have to do with the fish on your plate?](#), Current Conservation.
- Samad, I., (2023). [The many facets of fisheries in Visakhapatnam](#), SoSF.
- Samad, I., (2023). [\(Partially\) becoming a fisher for research](#), SoSF.
- Samad, I., (2022). [Imaginary borders and their very real effects](#), Roundglass Sustain.
- Samad, I., (2020). [An Elephant and a Whale Walk Into a Bar](#), Sanctuary Asia.
- Rana, D., & Samad, I., (2020). [Two Tales of a Cat](#), Nature in Focus.
- Samad, I., (2020). Old species in a new age: Fathoming animals in a modified world, VNC India
- Samad, I., (2020). [From Porpoise Detectors to 'Hawkeyes', How Technology Empowers Ecology](#), NDTV gadgets
- Samad, I., (2020). [The Dolphin man of Bengal](#), Conservation Optimism
- Samad, I., (2020). [Can today guide us to a better tomorrow?](#), Conservation Optimism

Grants and Awards

- Awarded a **Conservation Leadership Program grant** for conserving endangered guitarfish species in Malvan, Maharashtra in June 2025.
- Awarded a follow-up **Rufford Small Grant** for understanding dolphin mortality patterns and supporting their community-based conservation in March 2025.
- Awarded a **Rufford Small Grant** for studying dolphin-human interactions and supporting community-based conservation in November 2023.
- Awarded the **Miriam Rothschild Travel Bursary** by the SCCS 2023 to intern at Newcastle University in the UK.
- Awarded the Save our **Seas Foundation Small Grant** to conduct my PhD research work on elasmobranch bycatch in 2023.
- Awarded a **Conservation Leadership Program Travel grant** to attend the above course.
- Awarded the **Prime Minister's Research Fellowship** to support my PhD work in 2022.
- Awarded a **Conservation Leadership Program grant** for work pertaining to the survival of the last remaining Ganges river dolphins in the sub-Himalayan, transboundary rivers of India and Nepal in 2021.
- Awarded '**Outstanding talk**' in the student presentations category at the SCCS-Bangalore Conference, 2020.
- Awarded an **IdeaWild equipment grant** to work on the Ganges river dolphin as part of my master's dissertation, 2019.
- Secured a **Tata Institute studentship** to pursue master's degree in Wildlife biology and conservation at the National Centre for Biological Sciences, 2018.

Conferences

- Presented a talk on estimating Humpback dolphin mortality in Goa at the **Society for Marine Mammalogy Conference**, November 2024.
- Conducted a workshop on Species Distribution Modelling at the **Student Conference on Conservation Science**, Bangalore in October 2024.
- Presented a talk on mitigating elasmobranch bycatch at the **European Conference on Conservation Biology**, 2024.
- Presented a talk on understanding elasmobranch bycatch in India at the **Indian Wildlife Ecology Conference**, 2024.
- Presented a poster on mapping cetacean mortality at The **European Cetacean Society Conference**, 2024.
- Presented a talk on understanding cetacean mortality at the **Marine Mammal Consortium of India**, 2023.
- Presented a poster on developing and testing methods to understand fisheries patterns in south Maharashtra at The **Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation (ATBC) conference**, 2023.
- Presented a talk on understanding temporal patterns of cetacean mortality in Goa, at the **SCCS-Cambridge Conference**, 2023.
- Attended a course on '**Open, Reproducible, and Transparent Science in Ecology**' in Norway, organised by The University of Bergen with GBIF Norway in November 2022.
- Presented master's research on the Ganges river dolphin at the **Society of Marine Mammalogy conference**, 2022.

Teaching and Outreach

- **Conducted a workshop** on Q-GIS and data management practices at the Dakshin Foundation, June 2025.
- Spoke in an **open webinar** organised by the MMNI network about analysing drone video footage to extract animal tracks, March 2025.
- **Conducted a workshop** on using drones to study cetaceans at the University of Kerala, October 2024.
- Spoke on research and conservation of cetaceans in India on a **public wildlife week event** organised by the Aghnashini Nature Foundation, October 2024.
- **Conducted a workshop** on the use of Species Distribution Models at the Student Conference on Conservation Science, Bangalore in October, 2024.

- **Taught a course** on Ecology and Evolution to the students of Kurseong, Darjeeling. (2023-2025).
- Conducted an **ecology awareness campaign** organised by the National Centre for Biological Sciences on Earth day, 2022.
- Spoke on the importance of grassroot conservation in an **open public event** online, organised by the Conservation Optimism – India team, 2021.
- **Presented work** on the impacts of barrage operations on the hydrology of Ganga river, and river dolphins to local NGOs at Murshidabad, West Bengal in a session organised by the Wildlife Conservation Trust, 2021.
- **Developed a website** to interactively showcase the distribution of cetaceans all over the world (<https://www.wheremycetaceans.co.in>)
- Spoke on the impacts of human activities on wildlife in a **public talk** organised by Nature Environment and Wildlife Society on World Wildlife day, 2021.

References

- [Prof Kartik Shanker](#), Professor at Centre for Ecological Sciences, Indian Institute of Science. Relationship: Current supervisor. kshanker@iisc.ac.in
- [Dr Dipani Sutaria](#), Pew Fellow and Independent Researcher. Relationship: Current co-supervisor. dipani.sutaria@jcu.edu.au
- [Dr Abishek Harihar](#), Deputy Director, Tiger Program, Panthera. Relationship: Direct Line Manager. aharihar@panthera.org

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