

# TWO ENDANGERED PINK DOLPHINS RESCUED FROM SHALLOW COLOMBIA RIVER

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Two pink river dolphins, a mother and her calf, were rescued from a Colombian river where the endangered mammals were trapped in shallow water. | Photo Credit: AFP

Two pink river dolphins, a mother and her calf, were rescued from a Colombian river where the endangered mammals were trapped in shallow water, the navy said.

A navy video released on Monday shows several officers carrying the dolphins in a makeshift hammock, others checking the mammals' condition and spraying them with water.

Timing was critical. Experts moved the dolphins out of the river, quickly checked their condition on the riverbank, and released them into deeper water within 17 minutes, Erika Gomez of the Omacha Foundation, which took part in the rescue, told *AFP*.

Community members alerted authorities to the distressed dolphins in eastern Colombia's Meta River, an Orinoco tributary near the Venezuela border, last week, Gomez said. Security forces, environmental authorities and NGOs were involved in the rescue.

The freshwater mammals -- whose scientific name is *Inia geoffrensis* -- live mainly in the Amazon and Orinoco river systems. Their habitat includes parts of Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia.

The pink river dolphin, which can weigh up to 220 kilograms (485 pounds), has been classified as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature since 2018.

Fishing is the main killer of the dolphins in Colombia, according to the Alexander von Humboldt Biological Resources Research Institute.

Mercury contamination and global warming, which has altered the flow of the rivers, also threaten the dolphins.

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