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This water, known as the Swatch-of-no-ground is, in fact, a thriving ground for the whales and dolphins for its unique makeup. "Situated on the south of the delta the Swatch-of-no-Ground is a trough-shaped marine valley or underwater canyon. With a flat floor that is 5 to 7 km wide, depths in the trough at the edge shelf are about 1,200m. It has been suggested that the Swatch-of-no-Ground has a seaward continuation for almost 2,000 km down the Bay of Bengal," an officer in the Bangladesh Navy explains.

But the menace that this 120-kilometre coastline, including the Swatch, poses for the marine mammals is manifold in nature. At risk is not only the survival of bottlenose, but also around 6000 Irrawaddy dolphins, which live in the estuary and consist the largest population of such dolphins in the world. Even though the fishermen do not target these animals, some get entangled in their nets, meeting painful deaths for these mammals need to breath like humans. "Besides incidental killings," says Elisabeth Fahrni Mansur of the BCDP, "toxic contamination and the use of gillnet fisheries are rampant in this part of the sea'. Another reason why the government must take urgent measures is that the prey of the cetaceans are depleting fast due to massive catch of fish fingerlings. Elisabeth and the BCDP propose a network of protected areas in the mangrove channel and deep-