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**THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSIDERING CONTEXT IN THE ASSESSMENT OF
PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS: EVIDENCE FROM RATINGS OF
DOLPHIN PERSONALITY**

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One of the tenets of personality is that an individual's distinguishing behavioral characteristics are relatively stable over time and across contexts. Both humans and animals demonstrate such consistency, at least for certain personality traits. However, the relative extent to which personality is stable is rarely addressed in studies of animal personality, the focus typically being on stability rather than its absence. Here we present data on dolphin personality that suggest dolphin behavior (and hence their personality characteristics) is influenced by context, the three contexts of concern here being interactions with the physical environment, interactions with humans, and interactions with other dolphins. Individuals differed in terms of the extent to which their behavior was rated consistently across the three contexts, suggesting that an important aspect of personality concerns the role of context in moderating individual predispositions.