The family Gobiidae (order Perciformes) constitutes the most diversified of all recent fish families, represented by nearly 2000 species in the world today. Gobiids, popularly called gobies, are the smallest known fishes (usually less than 10 cm in size) that live mostly in shallow marine coastal waters and around coral reefs. Presently, they occur in most parts of the world in the coastal areas of the tropics and the subtropics. The origin and early evolutionary diversification of gobies have attracted interest in recent years.

In the fossil record, gobiids occur rather abruptly at the Eocene–Oligocene boundary and are extremely scarce in the Eocene. The few known Eocene occurrences include a skeleton from the late Eocene (Priabonian) of southern England; a poorly preserved skeleton from the early middle Eocene (Lutetian) of Catalonia, Spain; a single otolith from the middle Eocene (late Lutetian) of Kutch, western India; two otoliths from the middle Eocene (Bartonian) of Java and, more recently, over 50 otoliths from the late Eocene (Priabonian) Yazoo Clay, Louisiana, USA. Here we report the globally oldest occurrence of gobiids on the basis of a large number of otoliths, numbering over 200, from the early Eocene (Ypresian) sediments at Vastan lignite mine, Surat District, Gujarat, western India. This open pit mine, located about 3 km northeast of the village Nani Naroli, Surat District (Figure 1), is managed by the Gujarat Industrial Power Corporation Limited (GIPCL). Otoliths from the same area were recently reported by one of the authors, but that assemblage came from a limited sample of borehole clays and the gobies were not discovered by then. The present collection was recovered by screenwashing dark-green shales that occur about 3 m below the base of the first (or uppermost) lignite seam exposed in the northern side of the lignite mine at Vastan (Figure 1).

This collection occurs in association with a large number of other teleost otoliths. Ongoing study suggests that ambassids form the most dominant family in this assemblage. Other associated biota comprise a diverse assemblage of rays, molluscs as well as a large number of benthic foraminifera, including the age diagnostic species *Nummulites burdigalensis*, which...
indicates a Ypresian age, probably corresponding to the Shallow Benthic Zone SB 10 or the planktonic foraminiferal zone P7 (ca. 52 Ma). Two new species encountered in the present assemblage are genus *Gobiidarum nolfi* n.sp. and genus *Gobiidarum vastani* n.sp. The latter is much more common and is represented by nearly 150 specimens (Figure 2).

Systematic Paleontology

Order Perciformes
Suborder Percidae
Family Gobiidae
Genus *Gobiidarum nolfi* n.sp.
Material: Over 50 otoliths.
Holotype: IITR/SB/251, right otolith.

Figure 2. Gobiid otoliths from Vastan lignite mine, Surat district. *a-f*. Genus *Gobiidarum nolfi* n.sp. (IITR/SB 251-256); *g-o*. Genus *Gobiidarum vastani* n.sp. (IITR/SB 257-265). Bar equals 150 µm for *a-I*, and 300 µm for *m-o*. 
Abundance of pollution indicator and pathogenic bacteria in Mumbai waters

Besides translocating commercial goods, the shipping trade inadvertently spreads many animal, plant and microbial species around the world. Ballast water pumped in from coastal waters mediates translocation of alien biota to new destinations. Wide physiological adaptability, species diversity and invidiousness of some bacteria to cause diseases in animals and plants call for investigations to decipher the deleterious effects brought about through ballast water exchange. From the ca. 12 billion tones of annual translocation of ballast water by bulk cargo ships, increasing numbers of non-indigenous organisms have become established in new locations around the world\(^1\). Despite growing concern of bioinvasion and perceptible threats of disease-causing pathogens, direct studies on translocation of bacteria through ballast are rare, as well as the extent and implicit effects of the transfer of microorganisms in ballast water are not studied. In addition to a variety of macro-bio-invaders\(^2\), many bacteria can survive long duration in the ballast tanks\(^3\). Upon ballast release, alien species/strains capable of competing with their resident counterparts become established. Therefore, concerns on locations where exchange takes place and the possible effects of alien organisms taken in during exchanges on the receiving port (including the open ocean), need critical evaluation.

With ca. 5000 ships berthing annually, the Mumbai Port is among the busy ones. Bulk cargo importing/exporting and oil-importing ships possibly exchange ca. 50