

Small Cetaceans Necropsy and Specimen Collection Protocol

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Abstract

Cetacean populations are increasingly declining across the globe. The geographic region that includes the Yellow Sea, the East Chinese Sea, and the South China Sea it is considered a marine area with high historical levels of cetacean abundance and diversity. Cetacean stranding data can provide baseline information on species occurrence and/or diversity without costly field work. On the basis of stranding data, scientific research, conservation actions and management strategies can be conducted and developed. Compared to other countries, China does not possess yet a national cetacean stranding network which will allow to gather more effectively stranded cetacean information. In addition, the presence of a necropsy protocol that can be used by all research groups allows for a more reliable sample collection and data sharing. The aim of the current paper is to present a detailed small cetacean necropsy and specimen collection protocol drawn from valuable points of previous protocols.

Key words: necropsy, specimen collection, cetacean, protocol

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