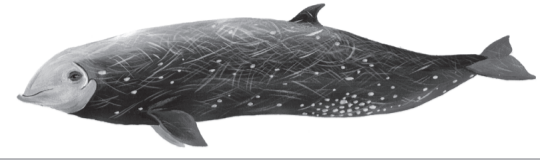


OUR ENVIRONMENT OUR HERITAGE

OCCURENCE OF STRANDING CETACEAN EVENTS IN SAMOA



DEFINITION OF CETACEAN STRANDING

Stranding of a cetacean (whales & dolphins) refers to an animal that has run aground or left in a helpless position on shore. Stranding can include:

- Live animal(s) that have run aground and are unable to return unassisted to and in the water or to its natural habitat
- Dead animal(s) that have been washed up on the beach, shore or is still floating in the water.

WHY DO WHALES AND DOLPHINS STRAND?

It is not well understood why whales and dolphins strand especially if they are healthy animals. However, there are many "theories" both natural and human related to explain this phenomenon.

- Ingestion of marine debris eg, plastic
- injuries from boat strikes & entanglement in fishing gears
- Disease & viral infections
- Following prey ashore
- Social bonds
- Magnetic field anomalies
- Acoustic testing
- Biotoxins eg, dinoflagellates

SAMOA NATIONAL STRANDING COMMITTEE

The Samoa National Stranding Committee was established in 2006 in an effort to rescue live stranded animals where possible. The Committee is made up of members from various government organizations, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, private sector and the community. This committee is also the Network that provides:

- A mechanism that enables quick reporting of cetacean stranding
- Trained response team
- Data collection
- Logistical support and equipments for rescuing

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO REPORT STRANDINGS?

Stranding of whales and dolphins provide us with the opportunity to collect scientific data at no cost "cheaply". We are able to collect information on: Occurrence of Stranding, Species, sex, age and number of stranded animals

- Distribution/occurrence
- Diet
- Possible cause of stranding
- Connection with other population in the world.



UPOLU ISLAND

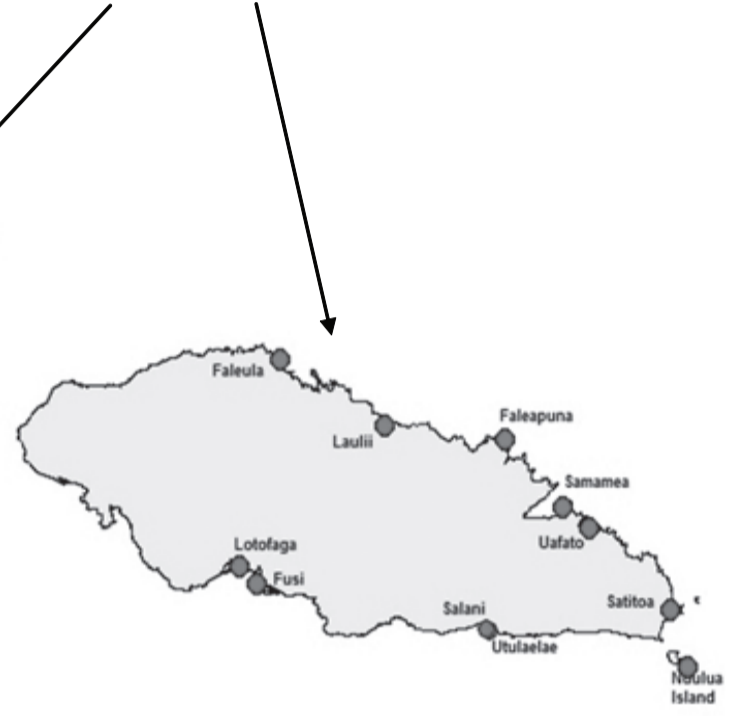
There have more reports of strandings on Upolu which could suggest that more people are aware of who to contact.

- 1997/1998** - short-finned pilot were stranded around the wharf area.
- 199?** - Unknown whale species was found stranded on Nuulua island. The skull was collected & is displayed at the National Museum
- 2002** - Sperm whale around sand bank at Laulii
- 2005** - Dwarf sperm whale (new record) at Lotofaga
- 2005** - Unknown whale, most likely a beaked whale
- 2008** - Melon-headed whale at Faleapuna-Falefa
- 2008** - Sperm whale around sand bank (North Coast)
- 2009** - Unknown whale at Samamea
- 2010** - 3 Cuvier's beaked whale stranded on the southeast coast - 1 was released back to sea alive and 2 died -1 whale died at Utulaelae and the other 400m away - Salani



OCCURRENCE OF STRANDING

Stranding events are mainly reported to Division of Environment & Conservation or the Fisheries Division by the communities.



SAVAII ISLAND

Very few reporting of stranding. It is most likely because the people do not know who to report the strandings to. However, the following have been reported on Savaii.

- 2000** Fishermen found dead whale at Asau. Most likely humpback whale
- 2005** Found a block of blubber from either whale/dolphin at Saasaai
- 2010** Cuvier's beaked whale at Fusi, Safotulafai



For more information contact our Division of Environment and Conservation - DBS Building - Floor 5 telephone 23800