

# Stranded Danish whale dies

June 21 2010

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A fin whale is seen stranded in a shallow fjord on the western coast at Vejle on the western coast of Denmark Wednesday June 16, 2010. Officials say a fin whale is stranded in a shallow fjord on the western coast of Denmark and is fighting for its life. Marine biologist Carl Christian Kinze says the 50-foot (15-meter) whale is unable to move and could be stuck on its belly. It is not known if the animal is ill or disoriented. (AP Photo/Polfoto/Benny F. Nielsen)

(AP) -- A fin whale that was stranded in a Danish fjord for days has died and scientists were trying to pinpoint the cause, they said Monday.

A team of veterinarians, natural science experts and students have dissected most of the 58-foot (17.6-meter) whale, which died Sunday, Joachim Engel of Denmark's Natural History Museum said. Scientists will analyze its heart and other organs to establish the cause of death.

"That is what they will be trying to find out, whether it was sick. We don't know," biologist Anders Kofoed said.

The team dissected the animal on a pier in the Vejle Fjord, 135 miles (220 kilometers) west of Copenhagen, where the animal had been stranded since Wednesday.

During the examination they discovered that the 24-ton baleen whale was male and not a female, as earlier reported. It is believed to be three to four years old.

(This version corrects details given by officials, including sex and weight of whale.)

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