

Stranded whales transported to survival in N.Zealand

August 21 2010



This photo, taken on August 20 by the New Zealand Department of Conservation, shows two dead pilot whales as people tending to other whales at Karikari beach in the far north of New Zealand. Thirteen of the whales that survived the stranding were transported nearly a kilometre to calm waters and refloated on Saturday, according to conservation officials.

Thirteen pilot whales that survived a mass stranding in the far north of New Zealand were transported nearly a kilometre to calm waters and refloated on Saturday, conservation officials said.

Another 45 whales died after they beached themselves in [stormy weather](#) on Friday.

[Weather conditions](#) hampered initial rescue efforts and the whales were cared for on the beach overnight before being transported to a more

sheltered bay.

The department of conservation said they towed a female whale out to sea ahead of the other 12 in the hope she would lead them away from the shore.

By evening, about half the whales had headed out to sea while the remainder stayed near the bay and were being monitored by conservation staff in case they attempted to go ashore again.

A team of more than 70 from the Department of Conservation, Project Jonah and Whale Rescue were involved in the [rescue mission](#).

Kimberly Muncaster of Project Jonah said the surviving whales were in a "fairly poor condition".

Whale beachings are not uncommon along the [New Zealand](#) coast and more than 100 pilot whales died in a stranding in the South Island last December.

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