

53 dead fur seals wash up on Australian beach

January 17 2012



This file photo shows a baby fur seal on a beach near Dunedin, in 2011. More than 50 dead New Zealand fur seals have been found washed up on a beach in South Australia in unexplained circumstances, environmental officials said on Tuesday.

More than 50 dead New Zealand fur seals have been found washed up on a beach in South Australia in unexplained circumstances, according to environmental officials.

The discovery was made on Sunday in the remote Lincoln National Park with three of the seals taken to the University of Adelaide where post-mortem examinations were carried out Tuesday.

The South Australia Department of Environment and Natural Resources said 51 of the [protected species](#) were [juveniles](#) and two were considered

young adults.

"Our scientists conducted autopsies on the three [seal pups](#) but they are quite badly decomposed and the results were inconclusive," a university spokesman said.

"They can't rule out people doing the wrong thing or foul play but they're leaning towards there potentially being some kind of infection."

The [carcasses](#) would be sent for further tests, he added.

New Zealand fur seals, generally considered docile, are found along Australia's southern coast and the coast of New Zealand's South Island.

The spokesman said there were some rocky outcrops off the Lincoln National Park coast that the seals used for breeding.

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