

Rescued sperm whale dies in Indonesia

July 30 2012



Image provided by the Jakarta Animal Aid Network shows rescuers trying to free a sperm whale (C) stuck in shallow waters at Pakis Jaya beach in West Java on July 27. The whale, which was rescued and returned to sea after being stranded for four days, has died, a rescuer said Monday.

A sperm whale that was rescued and returned to sea after being stranded for four days in shallow waters off the coast of West Java in Indonesia has died, a rescuer said Monday.

Fishermen found the 11-metre (36-foot) whale in waters near the beach in Muara Gembong Sunday evening, "dozens of miles" from the Pakis Jaya beach where it had been stranded, said Benvika, a rescuer from the Jakarta Animal Aid Network.

"We sent a team to check the reports. They arrived early this morning and confirmed that the whale was dead and it was the same as the one we rescued," he told AFP.

"We suspect it was exhausted and hungry and was unable to withstand the strong currents and big waves," he added.

Rescuers and navy divers on Saturday helped the whale return to the sea, pulling it with a tugboat into 20-metre-[deep waters](#) before releasing it.

"It was in stable condition when we released it. Its breathing rhythm was 40 to 45 seconds, close to the normal breathing rhythm of 60 to 70 seconds. It was also moving well," Benvika, who like many [Indonesians](#) goes by one name, said.

"We tried our best to save it," he added.

Navy divers and [rescuers](#) had helped the whale back to sea after several failed efforts, hampered by local residents who paid half a US dollar each for boat rides close to the animal.

Some onlookers had jumped onto the whale, causing wounds to its body, and a few fishermen had tried to crudely pull the animal back to sea, also hurting it in the process.

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