

More than 400 dead dolphins on north Peru coast

February 3 2014



A dolphin carcass lies on the beach at Puerto Eten in Lambayeque, Peru, Saturday, Jan. 4, 2014. More than 400 dead dolphins were found last month on the Pacific Ocean beaches where twice that amount were encountered in 2012, Peruvian officials said Monday. Authorities never established the cause of death in 2012. They are doing autopsies now on the dolphins found in January in the Lambayeque region. (AP Photo/Str)

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Technician Jaime de la Cruz of Peru's IMARPE marine life agency said about 220 dead dolphins were found the last week of January, the rest during the previous three weeks.

De la Cruz said autopsy results are expected in two weeks. Exams will focus on lungs, kidneys and livers.

Autopsies of some of the more than 870 dolphins found in 2012 were inconclusive. Speculation ranged from biotoxins in the sea to seismic testing to an unknown ailment.

Yuri Hooker, director of the marine biology unit at Cayetano Heredia University told The Associated Press that in other parts of the world dolphin deaths generally are caused by environmental contamination when the sea mammals eat fish or other smaller species filled with toxins. Hooker said others die after ingesting discarded plastics floating in the sea.

The [marine biologist](#) said that in Peru determining the death of [dolphins](#) is "complicated" because government laboratories only have three or four of the world's 100 or so reagents, or substances or compounds, that can be used for determining the animals' cause of [death](#).

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