

# Dead whale ingested 64 pounds of plastic and waste

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A young sperm whale that washed ashore in Spain had 64 pounds of waste and plastic inside its stomach.

Scientists said that the garbage—mostly plastic, plus pieces of ropes and nets and other junk—found lodged in the 33-foot-long mammal's belly and intestines led to its demise.

Peritonitis, an abdominal infection, is the official cause of death of the whale found on Feb. 27 on the beach of Cabo de Palos, CNN reports. The digestive system, plugged with garbage, ruptured.

The discovery spurred authorities in Murcia, a university city in southeastern Spain, to launch a beach clean-up campaign.

"The presence of plastic in the [ocean](#) and oceans is one of the greatest threats to the conservation of wildlife throughout the world, as many animals are trapped in the trash or ingest large quantities of plastics that end up causing their death," Murcia's general director of environment, Consuelo Rosauero said in a statement.

This area isn't alone. The current best estimate is that 150 million tons of [plastic](#) currently circulate in [marine environments](#), according to the Ocean Conservancy. Another 8 million tons of plastics enter the oceans each year.

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