

## Are Humans to Blame for Beached Whales?

Some recent research by marine scientists, from the University of California at Santa Cruz, has proved that dolphins and whales being stranded is more to do with us than we thought. Cetaceans (such as dolphins and whales) are being startled by low frequency sonar, created by humans, which causes them to panic and use up thirty percent more energy than usual. This results in them becoming exhausted and washing up on beaches.

Tests, on bottle-nosed dolphins and a curie's beaked whale, have shown that even when the sonar stops they will continue swimming at a higher energy consumption than usual for as much as two hours.

They have conducted the tests by first measuring oxygen consumption and fin beat patterns before exposing them to 20 minutes of loud sonar.



Then based on the fin beat patterns the marine scientists calculated that the energy consumption of the cetaceans had risen by thirty point five percent. They then continued their energetic fin beats for a further two hours after the sonar had stopped.

This research shows that humans are, at least, part of the cause for the beaching of dolphins and whales.

Danny, Year 7.