

More Than 20 Endangered Whales Found Beached in Southern Chile



Santiago de Chile, May 11 (teleSUR-RHC)-- Chilean officials said that a few dozen beached sei whales were found dead along the southern coast of the Chile.

German biologist Vreni Haussermann, who led the group that found the whales, said, "They were everywhere, none were injured, so we thought they suffered from a red tide (algal bloom) or a virus".

It's not unusual to find beached whales along Chile's 2,604 miles coast. However, it's the first time sei whales have been found beached in the country, the Fisheries Service said on Friday. The International Union for Conservation of Nature has listed the creatures as endangered, after being hunted nearly to extinction during the middle of the 20th century.

The sei whale became a major target for commercial whaling after the preferred stocks of blue and fin whales had been depleted. Since 1985, the International Whaling Commission has officially halted all commercial whaling of the species. The Fisheries Service is still in the process of investigating the beaching and has yet to release official findings on the death of the whales.

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