

Cetacean strandings along the coast of İzmir Bay, Turkey

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Abstract. The present paper provides information on the stranding of cetaceans in İzmir Bay, Aegean Sea, between 1992 and 2004. The data were collected opportunistically during sightings and stranding data collection for Monk Seals. A total of 12 cetaceans, namely Bottle-nosed Dolphin, *Tursiops truncatus* (n=6), Common Dolphin, *Delphinus delphis* (n=3), – reported for the first time – and Striped Dolphin, *Stenella coeruleoalba*, (n=3) were found to be stranded.

Kurzfassung. In dieser Arbeit werden Informationen über Delphine (Cetacea) gegeben, die zwischen 1992 und 2004 in der Bucht von Izmir angestrandet gefunden wurden. Die Daten wurden im Laufe einer Untersuchung über die Mönchsrobbe, bei der die Strände der Bucht regelmäßig aufgesucht wurden, gesammelt. Im Laufe der Studie wurden 12 angestrandete Delphine gefunden, nämlich Großtümmler, *Tursiops truncatus* (n=6), Streifendelphin, *Stenella coeruleoalba* (n=3), und – als Erstnachweis – der Delphin, *Delphinus delphis* (n=3).

Key words. *Tursiops*, *Stenella*, *Delphinus*, stranding, İzmir Bay, Aegean Sea, Turkey.

Introduction

Our knowledge of the cetaceans of the eastern Mediterranean Sea including the Turkish national waters is scarce. MARCHESSAUX (1980), who published a review up to 1980, stated that 14 species were known to occur in this part of the Mediterranean Sea. More recently, NOTARBARTOLO DI SCIARA (2002) reported that eight species regularly occur in the Mediterranean Sea: Long-finned Pilot Whale, *Globicephala melas* (Traill, 1809), Fin Whale, *Balaenoptera physalus* (L., 1758), Short-beaked Common Dolphin, *Delphinus delphis* L., 1758, Risso's Dolphin, *Grampus griseus* (G. Cuvier, 1812), Sperm Whale, *Physeter macrocephalus* L., 1758, Striped Dolphin, *Stenella coeruleoalba* (Meyen, 1833), Common Bottle-nose Dolphin, *Tursiops truncatus* (Montagu, 1821), and Cuvier's Beaked Whale, *Ziphius cavirostris* G. Cuvier, 1823. FRANTSIZ et al. (2003) reported that seven of these species are permanently present and commonly observed in the Greek Seas, and these seven species – excluding *G. melas* – are included in NOTARBARTOLO DI SCIARA'S (2002) list. NOTARBARTOLO DI SCIARA (2002) further reported that Humpback Whale, *Megaptera novaeangliae* (Borowski, 1781), Harbour Porpoise, *Phocoena phocoena* (L., 1758), False Killer Whale, *Pseudorca crassidens* (Owen, 1846), Indo-pacific Hump-backed Dolphin, *Sousa chinensis* (Osbeck, 1765), and Rough-toothed Dolphin, *Steno bredanensis* (G. Cuvier in Lesson, 1828) occur occasionally in the eastern Mediterranean Sea.

Up until the mid 1990s, our knowledge of the status of the cetaceans in the Turkish Aegean Sea derived only from fishermen and sporadic observers (ÖZTÜRK 1996). With this information, ÖZTÜRK (1996) reported that *D. delphis*, *T. truncatus*, *P. macrocephalus*, *G. griseus* and *P. crassidens* occurred in the northern part, and *S.coeruleoalba*, *T.truncatus*, *D.*