

Three pathogens coinfection in a dolphin

Stranded animals provide an exclusive opportunity to investigate the health and conservation *status* of free-ranging cetaceans across the globe. Based upon the scientific literature hitherto available on this topic, cetacean strandings frequently have a multifactorial aetiology, with both anthropogenic (or human-induced) and non-anthropogenic (or natural) causes playing a role in these events. An unprecedented case of *Ureaplasma*, *Photobacterium damsela* subsp. *piscicida* and *Actinomyces*-like coinfection is reported in an adult male bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) found stranded in 2014 along the Central Adriatic coast of Italy. Isolation of the three aforementioned pathogens was obtained from pleuropneumonia lesions, with a severe pyogranulomatous pneumonia and thoracic lymphadenopathy being observed at the dolphin's necropsy.

Histologically, numerous *Splendore-Hoeppli* bodies were found scattered throughout the lung. Histochemical evidence of *Actinomyces*-like organisms was observed in the pulmonary parenchyma, with a strain of *Photobacterium damsela* subsp. *piscicida* and *Ureaplasma* spp. being also recovered from the same tissue. For the latter, a genome fragment of approximately 1400 bp from the 16s rDNA was amplified and sequenced. BLAST analysis revealed 100% identity with an uncultured *Ureaplasma* spp. (JQ193826.1).

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[Coinfection by *Ureaplasma* spp., *Photobacterium damsela* and an *Actinomyces*-like microorganism in a bottlenose dolphin \(*Tursiops truncatus*\) with pleuropneumonia stranded along the Adriatic coast of Italy.](#)

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