

Comparison between the decay and decomposition states and processes of the stranded carcasses of Narrow-ridged finless porpoise (*Neophocaena asiaeorientalis*) for cetacean taphonomy

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Taphonomy is the scientific field studied the process for carcasses from biosphere to lithosphere. Many works on the taphonomy of cetacean paid attention to deep-sea whale skeletons on the seabed or drifting carcasses in the sea. However, they may not be major places of death for cetaceans, as we know many cetaceans stranded and died on the beach. So, each stranded porpoises were compared with, and some of these carcasses were carried out follow-up of decay and decomposition process.

The target species was Narrow-ridged finless porpoise (*Neophocaena asiaeorientalis*), and the study area was the beach at the Atsumi Peninsula, Aichi Prefecture, Japan.

In result, the states and the processes of carcasses on the beach are different to in the sand. The carcasses on the beach were left the projecting parts: pectoral fins, caudal fin and skull connected by blubber. In the follow-up, the decay and decomposition process proceeds from the trunk mainly. On the other hand, the bodies in the sand were difficult to decompose the trunk.

We considered these differences occurred by specific cetacean blubber.

These phenomena suggested that we need to pay more attention to stranded carcasses, considering which parts of the cetacean body remain as fossils. (199 words)