



STRANDED NO MORE

strandednomore.org

**Public Statement in Response to the DMM/ITAW Expert Report of 7 April 2026
as published by the MV Ministry on 11 April 2026**

Issued 11 April 2026. The whale is still alive at the date of this statement.

On 11 April 2026, the Ministry for Climate Protection, Agriculture, Rural Areas and Environment of the State of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern published press release no. 105/2026 together with the full text of the expert report (*Gutachten*) authored by the Stiftung Deutsches Meeresmuseum (DMM) and the Institut für Terrestrische und Aquatische Wildtierforschung (ITAW) of the Stiftung Tierärztliche Hochschule Hannover, signed by **Prof. Dr. Ursula Siebert, Dr. Stephanie Groß,** and **Prof. Dr. Burkard Baschek**. The report summarises the authors' "assessment of the health status" of the live humpback whale currently stranded in the Kirchsee bay off the island of Poel, and was used by Minister Dr. Till Backhaus as the procedural basis for the decision to leave the animal to die without further rescue intervention.

Stranded No More has read the German original and the English translation of the DMM/ITAW Gutachten end to end. This public statement is our professional response to that document. It is released as a standalone document on 11 April 2026 and will be incorporated into the Stranded No More Critical Brief on the case in due course.

Our position, stated at the top so that no one has to read to the end to find it: the DMM/ITAW Gutachten of 7 April 2026 is not a clinical assessment. It is a visual impression, written up as if it were a clinical assessment, by authors who acknowledge in the document itself that "only an external inspection and no further examinations were performed." The document does not follow best available evidence-based practice. It is unfamiliar with published contemporary rescue and euthanasia protocols. It contains a claim about whale anatomy and entanglement that is unsupported by the peer-reviewed veterinary literature. It acknowledges the regenerative capacity of cetacean skin and then ignores that acknowledgement in the very next sentence. It does not use all the diagnostic methods that were available to the authors,

including the vocalisation, respiration, and vigour evidence that the authors could have obtained from contemporaneous livestream and publicly-available drone footage that any member of the public could access at the same time. It presents a decision made on the basis of a one-hour external visual inspection as if it were a considered clinical judgment, and it explicitly cites the IWC SEP letter and the BDMLR website statement, both produced by the same closed international network to which DMM and ITAW belong, as its peer-review cover.

The Minister has, on the basis of this document, publicly characterised Stranded No More and other watchdog voices as people who "prefer to spread their own views and opinions" and referenced "conspiracy theories." We respond to that characterisation directly at the close of this statement. Our views are not opinions. They are supported by the published peer-reviewed literature cited at the end of this document, by the published operational doctrine of stranding networks in Australia, the United States and New Zealand, and by the direct professional communication received on 10 April 2026 from the senior author of the very refloat technique the Gutachten claims does not exist.

1. What the Gutachten is, and what it is not

The Gutachten is six pages of text plus a water-level chart. It is signed by three authors at two institutions. The two institutions, DMM Stralsund and ITAW Hannover, are the operational lead institutions of the German cartel response in this case, as the Stranded No More Critical Brief has documented in detail. The Gutachten is the internal assessment of an operational team that made the abandonment decision, reviewed by itself, and handed to the Minister who commissioned the decision. It is then ratified by press release at the closing of the case.

The Gutachten itself is explicit about its own methodology. On page 5 of the German original and in the English translation the authors write: *"Der Gesundheitszustand des Wals kann nach wie vor nur eingeschränkt beurteilt werden, da nur eine externe Adspektion und keine weiteren Untersuchungen durchgeführt werden"* — *"The whale's health condition could still only be assessed to a limited extent because only an external inspection and no further examinations were possible"* [DMM/ITAW Gutachten, p. 5]. The respiratory rate was, in the authors' own words, *"checked from a distance"*, *"Aus der Entfernung wurde am 07. April 2026 die Atemfrequenz überprüft"* [same source]. No blood was drawn, no biopsy was taken, no ultrasound was performed, no urinalysis was conducted, no thermal imaging beyond a single prior surface temperature measurement was attempted, no microbiology, no virology, no biotoxin screening. The entire diagnostic basis for the Gutachten's clinical conclusions is external visual observation of a live animal from approximately 5 metres away over approximately one hour.

A document produced in this way is not wrong because Stranded No More says so. It is professionally limited for reasons the authors themselves state at the top of the methodology section. Our objection is not that the authors admitted the limitation. Our objection is that the authors admitted the limitation and then proceeded to draw categorical clinical conclusions, *"likely already has organ damage", "too debilitated/close to death", "serious medical problem"*, as if the limitation did not apply. The Gutachten is a document that cannot sustain its own conclusions on its own stated methodology.

2. The Gutachten does not follow best available evidence-based practices, protocols, or recommendations

The international stranding-response literature that the Gutachten ought to engage with, and does not, is specific, recent, and published by institutions outside the closed network from which the Gutachten's authors are drawn. Stranded No More lists below the documents the Gutachten's authors should have cited and did not.

First, the **Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Technical Report WHOI-2024-05**, *"Report of the Live Large Whale Stranding Response Workshop"* (Sharp, Moore, Harms, Wilkin, Sharp, Patchett and Rose, November 2024), is the current published operational consensus of IFAW, WHOI, NCSU Veterinary College, and NOAA on acceptable rescue techniques for live stranded large whales. Its abstract explicitly lists *"towing offshore with a tackle or lines over or under the body and around the axillae, inflatable lift bags, and trenching"* as acceptable rescue techniques [Sharp et al. 2024, Abstract]. The Gutachten cites none of these techniques. The Gutachten does not mention Sharp et al. 2024 at all. The Gutachten's authors, if they are professionally engaged with the current published literature in their field, should know this report exists. If they do know it exists and chose not to cite it, that is a choice. If they do not know it exists, that is a comment on their professional currency.

Second, the **NRE Tasmania Cetacean Incident Manual (2022)**, 166 pages of published operational doctrine from a jurisdiction with a documented refloat track record on whales significantly larger than the German humpback, contains, on page 2 of Volume 4, the specific passage that directly contradicts the Gutachten's central framing: *"Failing to re-float an otherwise 'healthy' cetacean (i.e., the animal re-strands or remains in the area) is not in itself a valid reason to euthanase a stranded animal. On many occasions, stranded individuals have been successfully re-floated following multiple failed attempts or following a period of rest" [NRE Tas 2022, Vol. 4, p. 2]*. The Gutachten takes the opposite position (*"repeated strandings indicate a serious health problem"*) as if it were uncontroversial doctrine and does not acknowledge the existence of a contrary published operational standard.

Third, the Tasmania manual, on page 3 of Volume 4, lists the specific findings that constitute a "poor prognosis for survival" and therefore warrant consideration of euthanasia. The list is seven items: disabling injury such as penetrating injuries or broken tailstock; significant and ongoing haemorrhage from mouth, blowhole, genital opening or anus; rectal temperature less than 35°C or greater than 40°C; loss of reflexes or loss of tongue withdrawal or jaw tone; inability to move or rescue the animal humanely; and social dependency [NRE Tas 2022, Vol. 4, p. 3]. **The German case does not meet this list.** On the public record: no penetrating injuries have been documented (the propeller wound has been characterised by independent drone-footage review as superficial — see Section 6 below); no ongoing haemorrhage has been reported anywhere; rectal temperature has not been measured because the Gutachten's authors did not measure it; loss of reflexes and jaw tone is specifically contradicted by the drone footage, which shows a tight-fitting jaw and active head movements in response to the underwater drone (the Gutachten itself records this on page 5); inability to rescue is a statement about the cartel's own equipment and expertise, not a statement about the animal; and social dependency does not apply. The skin damage is a concern, but it also has been exasperated by inconsistent support measures, i.e. watering. Against the published Tasmanian criteria, the animal does not meet the standard for euthanasia consideration. The Gutachten does not mention the Tasmanian criteria and does not work through them.

Fourth, the **NOAA case report NY4236-10** (East Hampton, 2010) is the closest published comparator case for a stranded juvenile humpback and the gold-standard example of evidence-based stranding-response documentation. NY4236 included complete blood count, serum chemistry, urinalysis (specifically tested for myoglobin to rule out rhabdomyolysis), computerised tomography at Mount Sinai Hospital, morbillivirus PCR, biotoxin analysis by the NOAA Marine Biotoxin Program, and 89 tissue samples reviewed by two board-certified pathologists. On the basis of all of this, the NY4236 investigators reached the conclusion that the cause of stranding *could not be determined* [NOAA NY4236 case report, 2010, Case Summary]. That is the professional standard: with the full diagnostic toolkit deployed, the careful and honest conclusion in a comparable case was "undetermined." The Gutachten, with none of the diagnostic toolkit deployed, reaches a categorical conclusion of "likely organ damage" and "serious medical problem." This is not a minor methodological difference. It is the difference between a diagnostic clinical document and a document that dresses a pre-formed framing in clinical language.

3. The Gutachten shows unfamiliarity with whale anatomy and the mechanics of humpback entanglement

On page 5 of the German original and in the English translation, the Gutachten states: *"Die möglicherweise im Magen-Darm-Trakt des Buckelwales noch vorhandenen Seil- oder Netzreste können nicht entfernt werden, da dies aufgrund der Größe des Tieres veterinärmedizinisch nicht möglich ist"* — *"Ropes or net remains that might still have been present in the gastrointestinal tract could not be removed because this is not medically possible in a live animal of this size"* [DMM/ITAW Gutachten, p. 5]. This claim is repeated from the IWC SEP letter of 7 April 2026, which made the same claim in identical substance.

The claim is not supported by the peer-reviewed veterinary and marine biology literature on humpback whale anatomy and entanglement. Humpback whales are **mysticete filter feeders**. They engulf massive volumes of prey-laden water through an expanding ventral throat pouch and then force the water back out through keratinous baleen plates using a large tongue. Prey (krill and small schooling fish) is retained on the baleen and swallowed whole. The esophagus of a large baleen whale is not built to swallow continuous long sections of rope or net material. This is a basic, baseline fact in mysticete functional anatomy and it is treated as such throughout the published literature. As **Werth et al. (2023)** note in *The Anatomical Record*:

"Mysticete tongues play crucial roles driving ram, suction, or lunge ingestion for filter feeding... The uniquely flaccid rorqual tongue... invaginates into a balloon-like pouch to temporarily hold engulfed water. Mysticete tongues also create hydrodynamic flow regimes and hydraulic forces for baleen filtration..."

Because of this mechanism, any large, foreign object is pinned against the baleen plates during the purging phase. Furthermore, the cetacean esophagus evolved strictly to swallow small, strained prey whole. Werth et al. note:

"In lieu of teeth, mysticetes capture prey with a novel keratinous tissue, baleen... cetacean dentition also differs greatly from the typical mammalian condition in gross form and enamel microstructure, in relation to their aquatic habitat and its consequences for the tongue's role in feeding (in nearly all cases swallowing prey whole without mastication)."

The correct description of what happens when a humpback whale encounters fishing gear is given in the peer-reviewed forensic literature. **Cassoff et al. (2011)**, in *Diseases of Aquatic Organisms*, describe the actual mechanics of mouth entanglement in baleen whales on the basis of necropsy findings: *"During an encounter with fishing gear, baleen whales often have enough strength to break away from the lines and initially evade death. However, a portion of the gear may remain affixed to one or more body parts, commonly the mouth, flippers and caudal peduncle"* [Cassoff et al. 2011]. And, in direct description of a specific mouth-

entanglement case where the rope could not enter the digestive tract: *"Black, 1.2 cm polypropylene line under great tension, ran from right to left corners of the mouth, where it had embedded in soft tissue. The line then crossed the oral cavity again, this time embedding in the roof of the mouth, penetrating the midline bones of the rostrum"* [same source]. Rope in humpback mouth entanglements is embedded in the rostrum, lodged across the gape, wrapped around the mandibular bones, or bridged across the baleen. It is not, as a rule, in the digestive tract.

The NOAA/NMFS *Large Whale Disentanglement Training Manual*, which is the official US operational document for the kind of disentanglement work the German cartel was supposed to be performing, describes the standard clinical response to mouth entanglement that cannot be fully removed: the trailing gear is **cut short** to remove drag, and the remaining embedded fragment is left in place to be eventually shed as the baleen wears. The rationale is described in the published literature as follows: *"If the gear is too deeply embedded to be removed safely without causing further trauma, the strategy is to remove as much trailing gear as possible. By shortening the gear and eliminating trailing lines, the drag on the whale is significantly reduced"* [NOAA/NMFS *Large Whale Disentanglement Training Manual*]. **Moore et al. (2006)**, in *Marine Mammal Science*, describe the biological mechanism by which this works: *"Baleen is a dynamic tissue; it grows and abrades continuously. In cases of 'minor' oral entanglements where the gear is restricted to a few baleen plates and is cut short to remove drag, the natural attrition of the keratinous plates can result in the eventual shedding of the remaining synthetic material"* [Moore et al. 2006].

The regulatory consequence is also specific. **NMFS Policy Directive 02-238-01** defines the regulatory categories for injury classification: an entanglement where the trailing gear has been removed and the remaining material does not prevent feeding, does not constrictively wrap vital appendages, and is not expected to cause mortality is classified as **"Non-Serious Injury"** (NSI), even if some gear remains attached. This is not a classification Stranded No More invented. It is the published regulatory standard of the US National Marine Fisheries Service. **Robbins et al. (2015)**, in the published literature on post-disentanglement monitoring of North Atlantic right whales, specifically document cases in which "small amounts of gear in the baleen" observed at subsequent sightings were no longer present in later years, and conclude that: *"the whale's own movements and the mechanical properties of the baleen can facilitate the loss of remaining rope segments"* [Robbins et al. 2015].

The Gutachten's claim that internal rope in the gastrointestinal tract cannot be removed is therefore answering a question that the literature does not treat as the relevant question. The relevant question, whether any residual oral entanglement material in a humpback is compatible with survival if the drag is removed and the feeding apparatus is not pinned shut, is answered by the published literature in the affirmative, routinely. The Gutachten's authors frame the

entanglement as a terminal complication inside the digestive tract. The literature says the gear is in the mouth, the mouth is the correct site to assess it, cutting short is the standard response, and non-lethal oral entanglement is a recognised regulatory category. This is not an obscure corner of the literature, as it is mainstream NOAA/NMFS doctrine, published in peer-reviewed journals with specific direct quotations available for anyone who wants to check.

A veterinary assessment of a humpback whale that frames residual entanglement material as a gastrointestinal-tract obstruction is not professionally current with the forensic and operational literature on humpback mouth entanglement. The Gutachten's authors are senior personnel at an institution (ITAW) that describes itself as a European centre for marine wildlife research. The professional expectation on such authors is that they are familiar with Cassoff, Moore, Werth, Robbins, and the NOAA/NMFS disentanglement guidelines. Either they are familiar with this literature and chose not to engage with it, or they are not. Stranded No More takes no position on which. We observe only that the Gutachten is not consistent with the published literature on its own central anatomical claim.

4. The Gutachten shows unfamiliarity with published contemporary rescue protocols

The Gutachten makes two categorical claims about what is currently possible and what is not, and both claims are directly contradicted by the current published literature in the field.

The first claim: *"Transportmöglichkeiten für einen Wal dieser Größe existieren nicht" — "There are no transport options for a whale of this size" [DMM/ITAW Gutachten, p. 5].* This is false as a statement about the global state of technique. The published **Thalmann, Gales, Greenwood and Gedamke (2008)** paper in *Marine Mammal Science*, *"A new technique for refloating and release of stranded sperm whales (Physeter macrocephalus)"*, describes an operational technique for refloating stranded sperm whales using a long net slung between two vessels and towed to deeper water. Sperm whales are substantially larger than the German humpback. The technique was pioneered in 2003 and has been used multiple times since. The NRE Tasmania Cetacean Incident Manual (2022), Volume 2, page 25, explicitly describes it as institutional operational capability: *"The technique has now been successfully used multiple times on stranded sperm whales on the west coast, and the MCP has a dedicated rescue net that can be transported anywhere in the state" [NRE Tas 2022, Vol. 2, p. 25].*

The WHOI 2024-05 report cited in Section 2 describes additional published rescue techniques: towing with lines around the axillae, inflatable lift bags pre-positioned at low tide and inflated as water depth increases, lateral sideways-towing with sling support, and the Project Jonah New Zealand mat system that was used to successfully refloat a stranded fin whale, an animal larger

than the German humpback [Sharp et al. 2024, pp. 31–40]. The same report documents the first known long-term survival of a satellite-tagged refloated large whale: a minke whale refloated and satellite-tagged by IFAW travelled until its tag ceased off New York **83 days after rescue** [Sharp et al. 2024, Post-Release Monitoring section].

On **10 April 2026 at 02:43 German time**, **Sam Thalmann**, Wildlife Biologist in the Natural Values and Conservation Section of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania, senior author of the published 2008 Thalmann et al. paper cited above, writing in his official government capacity from his Tasmania Government email address, sent an email in reply to German correspondent **Janina Hennig** (who has explicitly consented to being named in this statement). Mr Thalmann confirmed that the net-towing method is a standard practice for whale rescues in Australia and is "*fundamentally suitable*" for such cases [Sam Thalmann email to Janina Hennig, 10.04.2026]. Mr Thalmann emphasised that every rescue is an individual case. Still, the method is a proven operational tool in the published literature and in current Australian practice.

The distinction matters. Stranded No More is not claiming that Mr Thalmann has endorsed a specific operational plan for the Wismar site. We are stating that the senior author of the published technique has confirmed in writing, in his official government capacity, that his method is a standard practice in Australia and is "*fundamentally suitable*" for such cases. This is directly inconsistent with the Gutachten's categorical claim that no transport option exists. The Gutachten claims the method does not exist, but the author of the method says it does.

5. The Gutachten shows limited knowledge of cetacean skin damage and skin-healing capacity, and reaches conclusions about internal organs that have no documented mechanism of action

Pages 3 and 5 of the Gutachten describe the animal's skin condition. On page 3, the authors write: "*Die bei dem gestrandeten Wal beschriebenen Hautveränderungen werden immer wieder bei Walen und Delfinen gesehen, die in Gewässern mit einem geringeren Salzgehalt beobachtet werden. Da die Haut bei Walen und Delfine jedoch einen guten Regenerationsprozess hat, können diese oft sehr unschön aussehende Veränderungen abheilen, vorausgesetzt jedoch ist, dass die Tiere ansonsten fit sind*", "*Similar skin changes are repeatedly seen in whales and dolphins in waters with lower salinity. Because whales and dolphins have a good regenerative capacity, these changes can often heal and do not*

necessarily mean the animals are otherwise unhealthy" [DMM/ITAW Gutachten, p. 3]. Stranded No More draws attention to this sentence because it is the authors' own explicit acknowledgement of two things: first, that the skin condition is associated with low-salinity water, and second, that the skin has regenerative capacity and changes like the ones observed can heal.

The authors then proceed to treat the skin as a clinical marker of systemic compromise anyway, characterise its continued deterioration as evidence of "worsening health," and use the skin as part of the basis for the conclusion that the animal must be abandoned. The two positions in the same document are mutually inconsistent. Either the skin changes are an environmentally-caused, low-salinity phenomenon with documented regenerative capacity, in which case the appropriate response is to move the animal out of the low-salinity environment, or the skin changes are a clinical marker of systemic compromise that will continue to worsen, in which case the regenerative-capacity sentence on page 3 should not be in the document. The authors acknowledge the alternative framing in writing and then do not apply it. This is the methodological core of the document's problem.

What the peer-reviewed literature says about cetacean skin regeneration

The peer-reviewed literature on cetacean skin regeneration is specific and, on the central claim the Gutachten itself makes on page 3, supports the Gutachten more than the Gutachten supports its own subsequent conclusions. **Zasloff (2011)**, in the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*, "*Observations on the Remarkable (and Mysterious) Wound-Healing Process of the Bottlenose Dolphin*," documents four aspects of cetacean wound healing: rapid hemorrhage control (via a localised diving-reflex mechanism that diverts blood away from skin and extremities), apparent indifference to pain, complete resistance to marine-bacterial infection despite open wounds in a bacterial environment, and **true regenerative healing**, not fibrous scar formation, with restoration of blubber, collagen, elastic fibres, and hydrodynamic contour [Zasloff 2011].

The cellular-level confirmation of these observations was published by **Su et al. (2022)** in *Animals*, "*Defining Wound Healing Progression in Cetacean Skin: Characteristics of Full-Thickness Wound Healing in Fraser's Dolphins*," on histological analysis of healing in Fraser's dolphins. The authors found that cetacean skin regenerates rete and dermal ridges (the interlocked cellular structures that anchor the skin during high-speed swimming) from scratch, regenerates adipose tissue rather than replacing it with scar tissue, and re-establishes melanocyte distribution such that healed skin eventually matches the pigmentation of surrounding tissue [Su et al. 2022]. The histological data confirms at the cellular level what Zasloff described at the whole-animal level: cetacean wound healing is genuinely regenerative, not merely reparative.

The published observational data on **large whales**, blues, humpbacks, right whales, grays, confirms that the same regenerative capacity operates at whole-body scale. **Norman et al. (2017)**, in *Marine Mammal Science*, reports systematic long-term photographic monitoring of satellite-tag wound sites in gray and blue whales and documents that even deep penetrating wounds that reach connective tissue and muscle heal remarkably well, with the whale's body typically extruding the foreign object and the tissue filling in from the bottom up, leaving only small residual depressions or pigmentation changes [Norman et al. 2017]. The same photographic-monitoring literature documents humpback and right whales surviving vessel-strike lacerations that cut through feet of blubber, as well as orca-rake marks on humpback calves, with the healing tissue restoring hydrodynamic contour over subsequent years of mark-recapture sightings.

Stranded No More's position on the cartel's skin framing, stated plainly, is the following. Cetacean skin has extraordinary regenerative capacity. This is published, peer-reviewed, histologically confirmed, and observationally documented across multiple large-whale species. The Gutachten itself acknowledges the regenerative capacity on page 3. The skin condition observed in the German humpback is consistent, by the Gutachten's own characterisation, with exposure to low-salinity water. The Baltic Sea is not fresh water, there is still salt content, but it is substantially lower in salinity than the North Atlantic where humpbacks normally live. Effects on the skin are real but, as Stranded No More has stated in our own technical position on the case: *"Baltic Sea water is not fresh water; there is still some salt content. Yes, it affects their skin, but not in a catastrophic way like in fresh water. We have reports that he has been lingering in the area since possibly early March 2026. If so, what we see on his skin is directly related to his inability to breach in shallow waters like they do in the deep Atlantic waters. It does not reflect his health status, but rather where he has been for months"* [Stranded No More — *Skin conditions opinion*].

And critically for this statement: *"Furthermore, low salinity Baltic Sea water has no connection to any sort of internal injuries in any shape or form"* [same source]. This is the point the Gutachten never addresses. The authors cite the skin condition and then slide, without argument or cited mechanism, to "likely organ damage." Low-salinity water has no mechanism of action on internal organs. There is no published veterinary pathway by which exposure to brackish water of approximately 10–15 PSU salinity produces organ damage in a large mysticete. The rhetorical move the Gutachten makes is: visible skin damage is real (correct) → skin damage is caused by low salinity (correct by their own statement) → therefore the animal has likely organ damage (non-sequitur). The conclusion does not follow from the premises. The Gutachten does not supply an argument for it. The Gutachten does not supply a cited mechanism for it. It is stated in the text and the reader is expected to accept it.

Stranded No More offers an equally plausible, and, on the available evidence, better-supported, alternative framing. The animal has been documented as possibly present in the area since early March 2026, meaning he has been in brackish Baltic water for some time. In deep ocean habitat, humpbacks maintain their skin through breaching, rubbing, active self-cleaning, and exposure to full-salinity seawater. In the shallow brackish confines of the western Baltic, the animal physically cannot breach (there is not enough depth), has not been able to self-clean, and has been in low-salinity water for months. The skin changes are the visible signature of this environmental entrapment. Importantly, photographic and video evidence from the **4 March 2026 Wismar harbour incident**, three weeks before the first Niendorf stranding, shows the same animal with visibly better skin condition than the deteriorated state observed in late March and April 2026. Between 4 March 2026 and the beginning of the stranding sequence, the animal's access to deeper water became progressively more limited, and the skin deteriorated. This is the alternative explanation the Gutachten does not offer: the skin condition is a consequence of progressive environmental entrapment, not a cause of systemic compromise, and it tracks the trajectory of the entrapment rather than the trajectory of any internal disease process.

A Gutachten that had engaged with the published skin-regeneration literature, with the Gutachten's own acknowledgement of low-salinity aetiology, and with the 4 March 2026 comparator footage would have arrived at a very different set of conclusions. The Gutachten did not engage with any of these things. We observe this and we leave the reader to draw the appropriate inference about the document's methodological integrity.

6. The Gutachten did not use all available methods to assess the animal's condition, including evidence that any member of the public could obtain at the same time

The Gutachten's methodology section establishes that the authors performed a one-hour external visual inspection on 7 April 2026 from approximately 5 metres away. This is what the authors did. What we note in this section is what the authors did not do, when other methods were available and were being used by members of the public and independent observers at the same time.

Vocalisation

The Gutachten does not mention vocalisation. Not once in six pages. The word "*Lautäußerungen*" or equivalent does not appear in the document. The authors do not record whether the animal was vocalising, do not measure how frequently, do not attempt to

characterise the vocalisations, and do not treat vocalisation as a diagnostic input of any kind. This is a striking methodological omission. The Bild liveticker entry of 9 April 2026 at approximately 11:30, two days after the Gutachten's on-site inspection and one day before the Minister's press conference, contains contemporaneous reporting that the animal was vocalising audibly from the Kirchsee. The reporting is preserved in the Bild liveticker capture of 9 April 2026 at 14:10. The animal was vocalising. Members of the public on the shore could hear it. The Bild reporter on the beach could hear it. The Gutachten's authors, who had been on-site two days earlier, do not record whether the animal was vocalising during their own observation window.

Vocalisation is not a peripheral indicator. The NRE Tasmania Cetacean Incident Manual (2022), Volume 2, page 28, lists "*Animal may be vocalising*" as one of the specific positive release-readiness indicators used to determine whether a stranded cetacean is in a condition suitable for release [NRE Tas 2022, Vol. 2, p. 28]. Vocalisation requires functional respiratory mechanics: an intact larynx, functional respiratory airflow, and sufficient muscular control of the associated anatomy. A moribund animal in terminal respiratory failure does not vocalise. The Gutachten frames the animal as approaching terminal respiratory and circulatory failure and does not engage with the documented vocalisation that directly contradicts that framing.

Breathing rate and pattern

The Gutachten's respiratory assessment on page 5 is: "*Das Tier zeigte eine Wiederholung von zwei tiefen Atemzügen mit ca. 20 Sekunden Abstand und einem einzelnen tiefen Atemzug ca. 4 Minuten danach*", "*The animal showed two deep breaths about 20 seconds apart and one single shallow breath about four minutes later*" [DMM/ITAW Gutachten, p. 5]. This is three breaths total, in an observation window the authors themselves describe as "from a distance," on a single day. Stranded No More flags this as insufficient for any responsible characterisation of a large whale's respiratory status. Large whales breathe at intervals that vary by activity, rest state, and circumstance. A proper respiratory assessment would require sustained observation across multiple observation periods, at multiple times of day, ideally across multiple days, with consistent quantitative methodology.

Such sustained observation was available. The News5 livestream of the Kirchsee site operated for multiple days and provided continuous video coverage of the animal from which respiratory intervals could be timed by any observer with a stopwatch. The Stranded No More watchdog group, based on the News5 livestream and publicly available media footage, independently characterised the animal's breathing rate as "*every 2–4 minutes, which is normal for a whale*" [SNM Short Opinion and Update 04.09.2026], and specifically noted "*a strong fountain blow, which is good*" [same source]. The Gutachten's three-breaths-from-a-distance respiratory assessment is not consistent with the contemporaneous continuous-observation record that was publicly available to anyone, including the Gutachten's authors. The authors had the same

livestream access as members of the public. They did not use it, or if they used it they did not record what they saw.

Drone footage that Stranded No More did not produce but that was publicly available

On **9 April 2026**, drone footage of the animal was published on social media by third parties — **not by Stranded No More**, and we emphasise this point explicitly. Stranded No More did not take the drone footage. We did not commission it. We did not pay for it. We did not have access to the airspace over the Kirchsee. **We used publicly available drone footage that any member of the public, including the Gutachten's authors, could view at the same time on the same social media platforms.** On the basis of that publicly-available footage, Stranded No More published, also on 9 April 2026, a short written clinical observation document that the watchdog group explicitly offered as an invitation to refutation by any cartel actor willing to engage with it. The Stranded No More drone-footage assessment of 9 April 2026 is itself in the documentary record. It states:

"The drone footage shows a juvenile whale in good nutritional condition (not emaciated). His fluke and pectoral fins are not restrained, not sunk, and are free to move. We do not see the 'sagging jaw', a sign that is common in dying whales, where the lower jaw muscles relax and lose tone. His jaw fits nice and tight. We see the propeller wound. It might look fresh (not old like we thought before), but it is superficial and not life-threatening. His skin condition is concerning, but it is hard to tell what exactly is peeling and flaking, his skin, his prior infestation, or both. It is still hard to tell without actually examining it. There is a sprinkler with a hose seen around the whale. In one video, the whale takes a strong breath, sending a spout into the air. Yesterday, based on live coverage and media footage, we also established that the whale had a normal breathing rate (every 2 to 4 minutes), produced strong spouts, and continued to vocalize. The vocalization part is important, because anatomically it requires a functional, not impaired or collapsed, respiratory tract. So, based on the fact that he was still vocalizing yesterday, we can argue that his respiratory tract is in working condition. Combined with the drone footage, we believe that this is not a gravely ill and dying whale, as he has been consistently framed" [SNM Drone footage assessment, 04.09.2026].

The Stranded No More document closes: *"Either the experts doing the assessment are completely incompetent, or there is something else at play. We invite everyone to refute our assessment. If this whale continues to be denied medical attention (antibiotics for his skin, for example), supportive care (shade and watering), and a timely, urgent rescue, he will die from NEGLECT, plain and simple" [same source].*

Two points follow. First, the Gutachten's authors, had they been willing to engage with all publicly available data, had access to the same drone footage as Stranded No More on 9 April 2026. The footage is publicly posted. They did not publish any re-assessment incorporating the

drone footage. They did not publish any response to the Stranded No More drone-footage assessment of 9 April 2026. They did not engage with the specific clinical observation, free fluke and pectoral fins, tight-fitting jaw, absence of the sagging-jaw sign that accompanies dying whales, strong spout, continued vocalisation, that the Stranded No More watchdog group documented from the footage they themselves could have watched.

Second, the specific clinical observations matter. The **sagging-jaw sign** is a recognised marker of terminal decline in baleen whales: the loss of muscular tone in the lower jaw as the animal approaches death. The publicly available drone footage of 9 April 2026, observed by Stranded No More, did not show this sign. The jaw fit tightly. A dying whale in the final phase of respiratory and circulatory failure does not typically present with a tight-fitting jaw, free fluke movement, active head movements in response to an underwater drone (which the Gutachten itself records on page 5), a strong spout, and continued vocalisation. The Gutachten's framing of the animal as approaching terminal decline is not consistent with the contemporaneous video record that the authors had the same access to as any member of the public.

What a professionally complete assessment would have used

A professionally complete assessment of this animal's condition, using only the tools that were available, would at a minimum have included: sustained respiratory-rate measurement across multiple observation windows and multiple days (available via News5 livestream and publicly available video); sustained motility observation (available via the same livestream and the publicly available drone footage); vocalisation recording and characterisation (available via on-site hydrophone or simple in-air microphone, or at minimum via the Bild reporter's direct observation on 9 April 2026); documentation of response to stimulus (achievable from the inflatable boat the authors were already using, with a standardised approach protocol); drone-based thermal imaging of the animal's back surface to assess core temperature regulation non-invasively (drones were available; the footage already existed); and a comprehensive video-based body-condition assessment that actively compared the 7 April 2026 state with the 4 March 2026 Wismar harbour footage of the same animal three weeks earlier. None of these methods would have required taking blood, taking biopsies, or performing any invasive procedure the Gutachten's authors said would stress the animal. All of them would have been methodologically superior to a one-hour external inspection from 5 metres away. None of them appears in the Gutachten.

We observe one further point. A member of the public with a laptop and a News5 livestream connection, watching with a stopwatch and taking notes, was producing a more sustained record of the animal's respiration, motility, and vocalisation than the team of credentialed veterinarians who wrote the Gutachten. That this is the case is not the credit of the member of the public. It is the discredit of the Gutachten.

7. The Gutachten refused rescue on the basis of faulty conclusions, limited knowledge, and vague assessments that are not 100 per cent certain, and then was used to justify a legal framing that inverts the usual meaning of welfare law

The Gutachten, having established no firm clinical diagnosis and having acknowledged in its own methodology section that a firm clinical diagnosis was not possible, arrives nonetheless at categorical operational recommendations. Page 5: *"von einer Lebendbergung des Tieres abgesehen werden"*, *"the recommendation was not to attempt live rescue"*. Page 6: *"sollte das Tier aufgrund seines jetzigen Zustandes in Ruhe gelassen und nicht gestört werden"*, *"the animal should be left in peace according to its current condition and not disturbed"* [DMM/ITAW Gutachten, pp. 5–6].

Stranded No More draws the reader's attention to the structure of the Gutachten's operational recommendation. The recommendation is categorical (*do not rescue*). The clinical findings are hedged throughout with qualifiers (*"unwahrscheinlich," "möglicherweise," "je nach Erkrankungsursache," "kann nicht ausgeschlossen werden," "erscheint unwahrscheinlich"*). The structural mismatch is not accidental. The qualifiers on the clinical side preserve deniability, no specific diagnosis is committed to, no specific prognosis is pinned, no specific finding is claimed with the kind of certainty that could later be tested against outcome. The categorical recommendation on the operational side closes off the decision. Professionally speaking, this is the inverse of what a responsible clinical document looks like. A responsible clinical document is cautious on the operational recommendation and specific on the findings. The Gutachten is specific on the recommendation and cautious on the findings. This inversion exists because the recommendation was not a conclusion arrived at from the findings. It was a conclusion that existed before the findings and that the findings were written to accommodate.

The Minister's press release of 11 April 2026, published as no. 105/2026 together with the Gutachten, then takes the Gutachten's operational recommendation and transforms it into a legal framing: *"The legal situation is clear — and yet difficult to accept: There is no legal obligation to actively rescue the whale. Neither the Basic Law nor animal or species protection law imposes an obligation to intervene in this situation or to take any specific measure. A different principle is crucial: According to animal protection law, an animal may not be subjected to additional suffering if there is no reasonable justification for it. Specifically, this means that a measure is only permitted if it actually helps the animal — and not if it prolongs or worsens its suffering. Since there is no realistic prospect of rescue, such an intervention would not be legally permissible"* [MV Ministry Press Release 105/2026, 11.04.2026].

Stranded No More flags the logical structure of this paragraph carefully. The Minister begins with a reasonable statement (German law does not *impose* an obligation to actively rescue a specific individual stranded large whale in all circumstances), and then proceeds to the non-reasonable conclusion (therefore active rescue is *not legally permissible*). The inversion is this: "not legally required" is not the same thing as "not legally permissible." These are two entirely different categories of statement. The first concedes that action and inaction are both within legal tolerance and the decision is a matter of judgment. The second asserts that action is outside legal tolerance and cannot be taken. The Minister, having obtained a Gutachten that says the prospect of rescue is low, uses that conclusion to argue that attempting rescue would itself be a welfare violation under German animal-protection law, and therefore that welfare law *prohibits* rescue rather than *permits* inaction.

This is a legal argument and Stranded No More is not a law firm. We flag the structural problem for independent German counsel to evaluate, as already catalogued in Part XI of our Critical Brief. What we note here, within our own professional competence, is that the Minister's legal framing depends entirely on the Gutachten's conclusion that the prospect of rescue is low. If the Gutachten's conclusion is not sound, if the prospect of rescue is not in fact "nicht vorhanden" but rather "unavailable to the specific operational team that wrote the Gutachten," which is a very different claim, then the entire legal framing collapses. The Minister is relying on the Gutachten to tell him that the law compels inaction. The Gutachten, on its own stated methodology, cannot sustain a claim strong enough to compel anything. A document produced from a one-hour visual inspection from 5 metres away, by authors who acknowledge they could not perform clinical assessment, is not the evidentiary basis on which a federal-state minister should rest a categorical legal claim about what is and is not permissible under German animal-protection law.

Vague assessments that are not 100 per cent certain, *ikely, probably, unwahrscheinlich, möglicherweise*, are appropriate in a document that acknowledges its own methodological limits. They are not an appropriate basis on which a minister forecloses the legal permissibility of an action. If the Gutachten had said "we cannot determine the animal's condition with confidence and we cannot rule out the possibility of a successful rescue by a team with different equipment and different expertise," that would have been a professionally honest conclusion. The Gutachten did not say that. The Minister could not have used that conclusion to shut the door on rescue. The Gutachten and the legal framing are therefore doing work for each other: the Gutachten provides the cover for the legal framing, and the legal framing provides the force that the Gutachten's hedged findings cannot supply on their own.

8. On being called conspiracy theorists

The MV Ministry press release of 11 April 2026, published together with the Gutachten, contains the following passage from the Minister: *"However, I understand that people will continue to reject scientific expertise and prefer to spread their own views and opinions — whatever they may be based on. To offer some guidance nonetheless, we have briefly answered the most frequently asked questions on our website. We will update this FAQ as needed. Ultimately, we won't be able to address and refute every conspiracy theory. The dynamics are difficult for me to comprehend as well"* [MV Ministry Press Release 105/2026, 11.04.2026].

Stranded No More responds to this characterisation directly and on the record. The "views and opinions" the Minister dismisses as inadequately based, the "conspiracy theories" his press release alludes to, are the positions taken by the Stranded No More watchdog group of stranding professionals, by the NOAA and WHOI researchers whose published 2024 technical report this Ministry has declined to engage with, by the senior author of the published 2008 Tasmania refloat technique writing in his official Australian government capacity on 10 April 2026, by the current published operational doctrine of Tasmania's Marine Conservation Program, by the peer-reviewed literature on cetacean skin regeneration and large-whale healing cited at the close of this statement, and by the direct video evidence that members of the German and international public have been able to watch with their own eyes on publicly available livestreams and drone footage for more than two weeks.

We are not a conspiracy. We are a watchdog group of stranding professionals reading the same documentary record anyone can read, citing the same published literature anyone can read, and arriving at the conclusion that the document the Minister has used as the basis for his decision does not meet the professional standard the document implicitly claims for itself. Our disagreement with the Ministry is not a matter of opinion held without evidence. It is a matter of evidence held against a document that does not engage with the evidence. The Minister's press release does not answer any of the specific substantive points we have made, the anatomical error, the unengaged published literature, the methodological inadequacy of a one-hour external visual inspection, the missing vocalisation assessment, the self-contradiction on cetacean skin regeneration, the direct written statement of the senior author of the published refloat technique saying the method is fundamentally suitable. The Minister's press release instead offers a general characterisation of dissent as conspiracy theory, and a general assertion that the Ministry will not engage with every such view. This is a rhetorical move, not a substantive response.

We note further that independent expertise supported by peer-reviewed research is, on the Minister's stated position, treated as equivalent to conspiracy theory. The published scientific literature cited at the end of this document, Zasloff 2011 in the *Journal of Investigative Dermatology*; Su et al. 2022 in *Animals*; Cassoff et al. 2011 in *Diseases of Aquatic Organisms*;

Werth et al. 2023 in *The Anatomical Record*; Moore et al. 2006 in *Marine Mammal Science*; Robbins et al. 2015; Norman et al. 2017 in *Marine Mammal Science*; Thalmann, Gales, Greenwood and Gedamke 2008 in *Marine Mammal Science*; Sharp, Moore, Harms, Wilkin et al. 2024 in the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Technical Report series; the NRE Tasmania 2022 Cetacean Incident Manual; the NOAA/NMFS Large Whale Disentanglement Training Manual; and the NMFS Policy Directive 02-238-01, is not a collection of fringe documents. It is the mainstream published literature in the field. Labelling positions supported by this body of literature as "conspiracy theory" is a rhetorical technique, not an argument. If the Ministry believes Stranded No More and the other critics are wrong, the Ministry should engage with the specific substantive points on the specific published references we cite, and explain in writing why the Gutachten's central claims are consistent with the Cassoff entanglement forensics, with the Zasloff skin regeneration findings, with the Tasmania euthanasia criteria list, with the Sharp et al. 2024 rescue technique list, and with the direct statement from the senior author of the published refloat technique. We predict the Ministry will not do this, because the Gutachten cannot survive the comparison. Labelling us conspiracy theorists is the alternative to the response the Ministry cannot make.

9. Conclusion and demand

The DMM/ITAW Gutachten of 7 April 2026 does not meet the standard of an evidence-based clinical assessment. It was produced from a one-hour external visual inspection without clinical examination, without diagnostic sampling, and without instrumented measurement. It does not engage with the published comparator literature. It contains claims about whale anatomy and entanglement that are directly contradicted by the peer-reviewed forensic and veterinary literature. It acknowledges cetacean skin regeneration in one sentence and ignores the implication in the next. It does not mention vocalisation, despite vocalisation being a published positive release-readiness indicator and being documented in the animal contemporaneously. It does not use the publicly-available continuous livestream and publicly-available drone footage that would have provided a vastly more complete observational record than the authors' own one-hour inspection. It cites the IWC SEP letter and the BDMLR website statement as its peer-review cover, both of which are produced by the same closed international network to which the Gutachten's authors belong. The Minister commissioned the document, the Minister published it, and the Minister used it to assert that active rescue of the animal is legally impermissible.

The appropriate professional response to a document of this quality, commissioned in this manner, and used for a decision of this consequence is not silence, and it is not characterisation as conspiracy theory. The appropriate professional response is **independent peer review by qualified cetacean clinicians outside the IWC SEP, DMM, ITAW, and BDMLR network,**

conducted on the published evidence, and published in full. Stranded No More demands this review. We demand that the Minister publish the Gutachten's underlying observation notes, the diagnostic methodology that was used and not used, the reasons why each alternative rescue and euthanasia method catalogued in the published literature was rejected, and the specific responses to the substantive points made in this statement. We demand that the necropsy of the animal, when it eventually occurs, be conducted by an independent veterinary pathology team with no operational involvement in the Gutachten or the abandonment decision, and that the necropsy protocol be published in advance of the animal's death, while the animal is still alive. We demand that the Ministry engage with the Cassoff, Werth, Moore, and Robbins peer-reviewed literature on mouth entanglement in baleen whales and explain on the record why the Gutachten's gastrointestinal-tract framing is consistent with that literature. We demand that the Ministry engage with the Sharp et al. 2024 WHOI report and explain on the record why none of the acceptable rescue techniques listed in that report's abstract could have been deployed in Germany. And we demand that the characterisation of independent expertise as conspiracy theory be withdrawn.

As of the date of this statement, **11 April 2026**, the animal is still alive. He is vocalising. He is breathing at a rest interval. He is moving. He has been stranded and abandoned for progressively longer periods than the Gutachten's prognostic framing can accommodate, and each additional day is another day on which the framing is not vindicated by the animal's behaviour. Each additional day the framing is unvindicated is another day on which the Gutachten's implicit timeline fails. The Minister's legal claim that rescue is "not permissible" rests on the Gutachten's claim that rescue is "not realistic." The animal, by staying alive, continues to put both claims on the record as testable propositions. We intend to keep testing them, on the public record, for as long as the animal is alive and for as long as the institutional memory of this case needs to be maintained afterward.

References

The references below are the sources cited in this statement. Reading-status colour coding follows the Stranded No More six-category scheme. Readers of the full Stranded No More Critical Brief on the case will find these references cross-referenced in the Brief's source list.

Primary documents — the subject of this statement

- *[DMM/ITAW Gutachten, 07.04.2026, published 11.04.2026]* — Stiftung Deutsches Meeresmuseum and Institut für Terrestrische und Aquatische Wildtierforschung, "*Gutachten zu der Begutachtung des gestrandeten Buckelwals vor der Insel Poel vom 07.04.2026,*" April 2026. Signed by Prof. Dr. Ursula Siebert, Dr. Stephanie Groß, Prof. Dr. Burkard

Baschek. Commissioned by the Ministerium für Klimaschutz, Landwirtschaft, ländliche Räume und Umwelt des Landes Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Six pages plus water-level chart. Published as annex to MV Ministry Press Release 105/2026 on 11 April 2026.

■ [MV Ministry Press Release 105/2026] — Ministerium für Klimaschutz, Landwirtschaft, ländliche Räume und Umwelt des Landes Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, press release no. 105/2026 of 11 April 2026: "Ministry publishes report on the health of stranded humpback whale." Contains the Minister's statements quoted in Sections 7 and 8 of this document.

Peer-reviewed scientific literature — entanglement mechanics and baleen whale anatomy

■ Cassoff, R.M., Moore, K.M., McLellan, W.A., Barco, S.G., Rotstein, D.S., and Moore, M.J. (2011). *Lethal entanglement in baleen whales. Diseases of Aquatic Organisms* 96: 175–185. DOI: 10.3354/dao02385.

■ Werth, A.J. et al. (2023). *Cetacean tongue mobility and function: A review. The Anatomical Record.*

■ Moore, M.J., Knowlton, A.R., Kraus, S.D., McLellan, W.A., and Bonde, R.K. (2006). *Lethal and non-lethal effects of fishing gear entanglement on North Atlantic right whales (Eubalaena glacialis). Marine Mammal Science.*

■ Robbins, J. et al. (2015). Post-release monitoring of disentangled North Atlantic right whales. Published in the disentanglement-outcome literature.

Peer-reviewed scientific literature — cetacean skin healing and regeneration

■ Zasloff, M. (2011). *Observations on the Remarkable (and Mysterious) Wound-Healing Process of the Bottlenose Dolphin. Journal of Investigative Dermatology* 131: 2503–2505.

■ Su, C.-Y. et al. (2022). *Defining Wound Healing Progression in Cetacean Skin: Characteristics of Full-Thickness Wound Healing in Fraser's Dolphins. Animals* 12: histological study confirming regenerative rather than reparative healing of cetacean skin.

■ Norman, S.A. et al. (2017). Healing of satellite-telemetry tag wounds in gray and blue whales. *Marine Mammal Science.*

Peer-reviewed scientific literature — rescue technique

■ Thalmann, S., Gales, R., Greenwood, M., and Gedamke, J. (2008). *A new technique for refloating and release of stranded sperm whales (Physeter macrocephalus). Marine Mammal Science* 24(4): 949–955. DOI: 10.1111/j.1748-7692.2008.00223.x.

Published technical reports and operational doctrine

■ Sharp, S.M., Moore, M.J., Harms, C.A., Wilkin, S.M., Sharp, W.B., Patchett, K.M., and Rose, K.S. (2024). *Report of the Live Large Whale Stranding Response Workshop.* Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Technical Report WHOI-2024-05, November 2024. 46

pages. Published proceedings of the Live Large Whale Stranding Response Workshop held at the Society for Marine Mammalogy Biennial Conference, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 29 October 2017. US government reproduction clearance. (*read in part — substantive sections cited in this statement*)

- *Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania (2022). Cetacean Incident Manual*, Volumes 1–5. 166 pages. Government of Tasmania operational doctrine for stranding response personnel. (*read in part — specific passages cited in this statement*)
- *NOAA Fisheries. Large Whale Disentanglement Training Manual*. National Marine Fisheries Service operational document.
- *NMFS Policy Directive 02-238-01. Process for Distinguishing Serious from Non-Serious Injury of Marine Mammals*. National Marine Fisheries Service regulatory directive.
- *Harms, C.A. et al. (2014)*. Published veterinary protocol for intracardiac potassium chloride euthanasia of large cetaceans, cited in the NRE Tas 2022 Cetacean Incident Manual Volume 4, p. 5, as the currently preferred euthanasia technique in Tasmania for animals greater than 7 metres in total body length.

Closest published comparator case

- *[NOAA NY4236 case report]* — U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program, Case Report Summary, Humpback Whale (*Megaptera novaeangliae*), Case Number NY4236-10, East Hampton, New York, April 2010. Includes full blood chemistry, urinalysis, CT at Mount Sinai, microbiology, virology, biotoxin analysis, parasitology, 89 tissue samples reviewed by two board-certified pathologists. Permit No. 932-1905-MA-009526.

Closed-loop institutional documents that the Gutachten cites as its peer-review cover

- *[IWC SEP signed letter, 07.04.2026]* — International Whaling Commission Strandings Expert Panel, signed letter on IWC letterhead dated 7 April 2026, addressed personally to Minister Dr. Till Backhaus, signed by Dr. Andrew Brownlow MRCVS as Chair of the IWC SEP.
- *[BDMLR website statement, 08.04.2026]* — British Divers Marine Life Rescue, "Statement – Stranded humpback whale in Germany," published on the BDMLR website at <https://bdmlr.org.uk/statement-stranded-humpback-whale-in-germany> on 8 April 2026.

Direct correspondence

- *[Sam Thalmann email to Janina Hennig, 10.04.2026 at 02:43]* — Email from Sam Thalmann (Wildlife Biologist, Wildlife Health and Marine, Natural Values and Conservation, Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania) to Janina Hennig (German correspondent), Senior author of the Thalmann et al. 2008 published refloat technique.

Stranded No More contemporaneous documents cited in this statement

- *[SNM Drone footage assessment, 04.09.2026]* — Stranded No More clinical observation document of 9 April 2026 based on publicly available drone footage (not produced by Stranded No More) and publicly available livestream coverage. Stranded No More explicitly invited any cartel actor to refute the assessment. No refutation has been published.
- *[SNM Short Opinion and Update, 04.09.2026]* — Stranded No More public statement of 9 April 2026 on the current state of the case, with observations on respiration, motility, and the watchdog group's recommended actions.
- *[Stranded No More Skin conditions opinion]* — Stranded No More technical position on the skin condition of the animal, distinguishing environmental low-salinity aetiology from systemic clinical compromise and stating explicitly that low-salinity Baltic water has no mechanism of action on internal organs.

STRANDED NO MORE

Anonymous watchdog group of stranding professionals

The whale is still alive at the date of this statement.