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30th March – 3rd April

Acute Lead Intoxication in 5 Bottlenose Dolphins (*Tursiops truncatus*): Clinical Management.

Sánchez-Contreras, G.J.^{1*}; Biancani, B.²; Abarca, J.¹; Gavazza, A.³; Galossi, L.³; Rossi, G.³

¹ Mediterraneo Marine Park, Coast Rd. NXR9038 Bahar ic-Caghaq, Malta gscvetscience@gmail.com

² Costa Edutainment S.p.A., Via Ascoli Piceno 6, 47838 Riccione, Italy

³ School of Biosciences and Veterinary Medicine, University of Camerino, 62024 Matelica, Italy

Acute lead intoxication was diagnosed in 5 bottlenose dolphins (2 adult nursing females, their respective male calves, and a juvenile female). A nursing female and the juvenile dolphin showed sudden anorexia and gastrointestinal discomfort. Complete blood screening was performed. Due to the icteric color of the serum, lead poisoning was considered in the differential diagnosis. Results of the CBC were unremarkable and blood chemistry showed minor alterations in liver parameters and a decrease in the ALKP. Heavy metals panel revealed a high concentration of lead in all animals. Supportive treatment was implemented, and further diagnostics showed the presence of Lead pellets in the first and second stomach. One of the calves had no pellets in the stomach but the highest concentration of lead in his blood. He was considered to have received the lead indirectly through his mother's milk. Chelators were implemented to treat the intoxication among the medical plans. The management of the situation required up to 5 maneuvers a day per animal. Despite this, the three females died within the first month. At this point the calves seem to be thriving. The long term effects of the lead intoxication remain unclear and will need to be monitored.