

Stranded Whale Swims to Freedom in Russia's Far East

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Sergey Dolya / Facebook

A 13-meter-long whale that became stranded on an island in Russia's Far East has safely returned to sea, Environment Minister Sergei Donskoi [wrote](#) Friday on Facebook.

The whale beached itself on a sandbank in a river estuary on the Bolshoi Shantar island in the Sea of Okhotsk on Thursday and injured its tail struggling to break free, [receiving](#) nationwide media coverage.

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Concern mounted as the Vesti TV station [reported](#) that smaller fish had begun picking at whale's body, while blogger Sergei Dolya [wrote](#) from the scene that the incoming tide had not been high enough to free the whale.

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But Donskoi said the animal had been able to swim to the sea when the tide came in and rescuers were monitoring its progress.

“Thank you to everyone who took part and was concerned,” he wrote. “The whale is saved!”

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