

# National Marine Mammal Tissue Bank and Tissue Analysis

16 U.S.C. 1421f

Sec. 407. (a) TISSUE BANK. —

(1) IN GENERAL. — The Secretary shall make provision for the storage, preparation, examination, and archiving of marine mammal tissues. Tissues archived pursuant to this subsection shall be known as the "National Marine Mammal Tissue Bank".

(2) GUIDANCE FOR MARINE MAMMAL TISSUE COLLECTION, PREPARATION, AND ARCHIVING. — The Secretary shall, in consultation with individuals with knowledge and expertise in marine science, marine mammal science, marine mammal veterinary and husbandry practices, and marine conservation, issue guidance, after an opportunity for public review and comment, for marine mammal tissue collection, preparation, archiving, and quality control procedures, regarding—

(A) appropriate and uniform methods and standards for those activities to provide confidence in marine mammal tissue samples used for research; and

(B) documentation of procedures used for collecting, preparing, and archiving those samples.

(3) SOURCE OF TISSUE. — In addition to tissues taken during marine mammal unusual mortality events, the Tissue Bank shall incorporate tissue samples taken from other sources in the wild, including—

(A) samples from marine mammals taken incidental to commercial fishing operations;

(B) samples from marine mammals taken for subsistence purposes;

(C) biopsy samples; and

(D) any other samples properly collected.

(b) TISSUE ANALYSIS. — The Secretary shall, in consultation with the Marine Mammal Commission, the Secretary of the Interior, and individuals with knowledge and experience in marine science, marine mammal science, marine mammal veterinary and husbandry practices, and marine conservation, issue guidance, after an opportunity for public review and comment, for analyzing tissue samples (by use of the most effective and advanced diagnostic technologies and tools practicable) as a means to monitor and measure overall health trends in representative species or populations of marine mammals, including—

(1) the levels of, and if possible, the effects of, potentially harmful contaminants; and

(2) the frequency of, and if possible, the causes and effects of abnormal lesions or anomalies.

(c) DATA BASE. —

(1) IN GENERAL. — The Secretary shall maintain a central data base which provides an effective means for tracking and accessing data on marine mammals, including relevant data on marine mammal tissues collected for and maintained in the Tissue Bank.

(2) CONTENTS. — The data base established under this subsection shall include—

(A) reference data on the health of marine mammals and populations of marine mammals; and

(B) data on species of marine mammals that are subject to unusual mortality events.

(d) ACCESS. — The Secretary shall, in consultation with the Secretary of the Interior, establish criteria, after an opportunity for public review and comment, for access to—

(1) marine mammal tissues in the Tissue Bank;

(2) analyses conducted pursuant to subsection (b); and

(3) marine mammal data in the data base maintained under subsection (c);

which provide for appropriate uses of the tissues, analyses, and data by qualified scientists, including stranding network participants.