



## Commentary on Coram et al. (2021) on the use of Facebook to understand marine mammal stranding issues in Southeast Asia

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### Abstract

We reviewed Coram et al. (Biodivers Conserv 30:2341–2359, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10531-021-02196-6>), a paper that highlights the use of social media data to understand marine litter and marine mammals in Southeast Asia. While we commend its intent, we find that the methodology used and conclusions drawn portray an incomplete and inaccurate perception of how strandings, stranding response, and analysis of stranding data have been conducted in the region. By focusing on investigative results revealed by a very limited search of one social media platform (Facebook), using only English keywords, and insufficient ground-truthing, Coram et al. (2021) have, unintentionally, given the perception that Southeast Asian scientists have not conducted even the bare minimum of investigation required to better understand the issue of marine litter and its impact on marine mammals. In this commentary we provide a more accurate account of strandings research in Asia and include recommendations to improve future studies using social media to assess conservation issues.

**Keywords** Social media · Data mining · Asia · Whales · Dolphins · Strandings · Plastics

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This article belongs to the Topical Collection: Biodiversity appreciation and engagement.

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