

Appendix S1. Physical evaluation of tag attachment sites in large whales.

Tag Type: Amount Tag protruding at site: Distance from whales midline:

1. Swelling around tag site?

Yes: 2 No: 1 CBD: 0	
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1a) Swelling severity

- 0) No Swelling Seen
- 1) Mild swelling seen
- 2) Moderate swelling seen (small localized area)
- 3) Extreme swelling seen (lg swelling or swelling encompassed lg area)

2. Approximate size of swelling relative to external portion of tag (if present) including antenna. (e.g.: 1/4, 1/2, 1.5x)

Approximate height, diameter CBD: 0	
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3. Shape of swelling

Uniform (round, elliptical): 2 Irregular (describe): 1 CBD: 0	
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Shape of swelling description if necessary.

4. Size since last assessment date (if applicable). (After scoring then go back and evaluate rate of change....if applicable.)

Increasing: 3 Decreasing: 2 No: 1 CBD: 0	
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5. Skin color over swelling different from surrounding area?

Yes (describe in comments): 2 No: 1 CBD: 0	
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5a. Color Severity

- 0) No coloration
- 1) Small area near tag site
- 2) Moderate area coloration change
- 3) Extreme area of coloration change

Color of swelling description if necessary.

6. Skin texture over swelling different from surrounding area?

Yes: 2 (describe in comments) No: 1 CBD: 0	
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Skin texture description if necessary.

7. Skin intact over swelling?

Yes: 2 No: 1 CBD: 0	
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8. Depression at/around tag or tag site?

Yes: 2 No: 1 CBD: 0	
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8a. Depression severity

- 0) No depression seen
- 1) Mild depression seen
- 2) Moderate depression seen (small localized area)
- 3) Extreme depression seen (lg depression or depression encompassed lg area)

9. Approximate size of depression relative to external portion of tag (if present) including antenna.

Depth, diameter CBD: 0	
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10. Depression shape

Uniform (round, elliptical): 2 Irregular (describe): 1 CBD: 0

Depression Shape Description if necessary	
11. Depression size since last assessment date (if applicable)---after scoring then go back and evaluate rate of change....if applicable	

- 3: Increasing
- 2: Decreasing
- 1: No
- 0: CBD

12. Skin color over depression different from surrounding area?

Yes (describe): 2 No: 1 CBD: 0

12a. Color severity No coloration <ul style="list-style-type: none">0) Small area near tag site1) Moderate area coloration change2) Extreme area of coloration change Depression color description if necessary.	
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13. Skin texture over depression different from surrounding area?

Yes: 2 (Describe in comments) No: 1 CBD: 0	
Depression skin texture descript if necessary.	

14. Skin intact over depression?

Yes: 2
No: 1
CBD: 0

15. Any tissue extrusion(s) from tag site?

Muscle: 5
Blubber /Skin: 3
Unknown tissue: 2
No: 1
CBD: 0

16. Any fluid from tag site?

Blood: 4
Pus: 3
Fluid: 2
None: 1
CBD: 0

17. Shape of margins of tag entry site

Irregular: 4
Smooth: 3
Other: 2
Tag in place:1—blocking of edges
CBD: 0

Description of margin shape if necessary.

18. Ectoparasites on body/tag site—Should this be separated? To tag site and then on body?

Many whole body/tag site: 3
Few at tag site/distant body: 2
No: 1
CBD: 0

19. Skin changes elsewhere on body other than directly at tag entry site

Yes: 2
No: 1
CBD: 0

Describe

Skin change description if necessary.

CND: covered by water, something inhibiting us from assessment