



## REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

# MINISTRY OF FISHERIES AND MARINE RESOURCES

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### PRESS RELEASE

#### SUBJECT: MULLET WASH-UP AND JELLYFISH

On Sunday, 13 February 2022, many dead or dying mullets were observed in the Walvis Bay lagoon area.

Satellite images show algal blooms along the central Namibian coast and water temperatures around 25°C, as is usual for this time of the year, because of weakened south-westerly winds and consequently no active upwelling taking place, leading to local warming of the water as well as the intrusion of warmer oceanic water into the coastal areas, which are favourable for algal blooms (phytoplankton).

Algal blooms can be toxic, but even non-toxic species strip the water column of oxygen when decaying and can lead to low oxygen events that are sometimes exacerbated by sulphur eruptions. Low oxygen conditions are presumed to have trapped the fish in the lagoon and along the coast, causing them to die and wash out when the water level drops during low tide.

Furthermore, for the past few days, a high number of Jellyfish were observed in the Swakopmund Mole and on the beaches between Swakopmund and Walvis Bay.

The warm oceanic water presently along the central coast transports many jelly fish which are then trapped in bays like the Mole or wash up on the beaches. When humans get in touch with the tentacles of these live jelly fish while swimming, the jelly inflicts a painful sting on the skin which can be sore but it is not harmful. Rubbing the area will increase and prolong the burning sensation and should be avoided.

The Ministry is busy conducting water analysis to identify the phytoplankton species present in the Walvis Bay lagoon and harbour areas and determine whether they are toxic or not. The public is therefore cautioned against consuming the washed-out mullets, until the cause of death is established.

Issued by:

  
Annely Haiphene  
Executive Director

