


Eco

International Whaling Commission Annual Meeting

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<http://savedolphins.eii.org>

Japan To Propose IWC End Commercial Whaling Moratorium

The government of Japan has repeatedly violated the International Whaling Commission's (IWC's) moratorium on commercial whaling, which was approved by vote of the IWC in 1982 and went into effect during the Southern Ocean whaling season of 1986-87.

Under pressure from the United States and other countries, at that time Japan ostensibly switched from whaling commercially to "scientific research whaling", under provisions of the IWC Convention that allows nations to issue permits to kill whales

for scientific purposes.

Of course, it is widely understood, and even admitted from time to time by Japanese representatives, that the so-called "research whaling" is really just a means to maintain the Japanese whaling industry until the moratorium ends or Japan chooses to leave the IWC. Thousands of whales have been killed by Japan since 1986 for "science", with little to show in terms of published papers about Japan's "research" findings.

Last year, Japan's Parliament passed legislation announcing

Japan's intention in the future to move to commercial whaling and further signaled the intent of the Japanese government to subsidize the building of a new factory ship to replace the aging factory ship (only one is now operating) that sustains the Antarctic "research whaling".

Japan's government issues permits to kill whales in the North Pacific, also disguised as "research whaling". Harpoon vessels deliver the dead whales to shore-based factories to be butchered into meat and

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Will Japan End Whaling Before the 2020 Olympics?

In 2020, Tokyo will be hosting the summer Olympics. The world will focus on Japan, and Japan will have an extraordinary opportunity, on the world stage, to restore prestige.

Now is the perfect time to end Japan's killing of whales and dolphins, particularly in light of Japan's hosting the Olympics in two years. Such action would be beneficial to Japan and enhance Japan's international reputation.

On that world stage, the slaughter of innocent whales and dolphins, anathema to most of the world's people and governments, would

send a jarring note of Japan's unwillingness to cooperate with world bodies like the World Court and the IWC. This need not be the case.

The Olympics are all about cooperation and celebration. The slaughter of whales and dolphins practiced by Japan is anything but. Does Japan really need such negative marks on its national reputation?

We are told that in antiquity that Greek warriors laid down their arms and ceased wars in order to join in the Olympic competitions, upon which our modern Olympics are based. It is time for Japan to lay down

its harpoons and spikes used to kill whales and dolphins, and join the rest of the world in ending the exploitation of these intelligent and remarkable beings. Country after country, some having longer "traditions" of whale and dolphin hunting than Japan, have ceased such activities.

The Sept. 1st beginning of

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Whaling Industry Cannot Be Trusted

Japan is proposing to open up commercial whaling once again on the high seas. But to say that the global whaling industry is corrupt is an understatement.

Icelandic whalers recently killed a protected blue whale, or maybe it was a “hybrid” which looked an awful lot like a blue whale, while ostensibly focused on “only” killing minke and endangered fin whales in the North Atlantic.

So, Iceland’s whaling industry fails to follow its own self-imposed rules and is willing to kill protected species when encountered.

This is not an unusual occurrence in whaling history.

In 1994, DNA testing of whale meat bought in markets in Japan discovered that humpback whale meat was being sold. Humpback whales were completely protected by the IWC back in 1966 as they neared extinction worldwide.

Japan’s government claimed the humpback meat on the market had been in frozen storage since before 1966 and only now was being offered to consumers! Again, the killing of humpback whales violated Japan’s own quotas for its so-called “research whaling.” Other species identified by DNA included endangered fin whale (protected since 1989). Reference:

<https://www.nytimes.com/1994/09/13/science/dna-tests-find-meat-of-endangered-whales-for-sale-in-japan.html>

After the fall of the Soviet Union, scientists from Russia and the US worked together, in 2012, to document extensive illegal whaling by the former USSR, including continual violations of IWC regulations in Antarctica, from 1947 to the 1970s. Researchers discovered that the Soviet whalers had falsified their compliance reports to the IWC. For example, the Soviet Union shockingly caught an estimated 338,336 whales in Antarctica, of which only 185,778 were reported to the IWC. <https://www.afsc.noaa.gov/quarterly/ond2012/divrptsNMML2.htm>

In the North Pacific, Soviet whalers killed an estimated 190,183 whales (and possibly 195,183, as several years had no data), while only reporting a catch of 169,615 to the IWC. This was at least 20,000 whales short of the real catch. Large numbers of female sperm whales were killed, but falsely reported as larger and more robust male sperm whales.

Other violations also occurred, including the killing of protected species, captures of undersized (e.g. immature) whales, and the killing of females accompanied by calves.

A Soviet scientist complained to Soviet Fisheries Minister Aleksandr Ishkov that his grandchildren might live in a world without whales. Ishkov famously replied: “Your grandchildren? Your grandchildren aren’t the ones who can remove me from my job.”

Reference:

<https://psmag.com/social-justice/the-senseless-environment-crime-of-the-20th-century-russia-whaling-67774>

In a word, far from shore and prying eyes, commercial whalers do not resist killing any whales that surface in their path, falsifying records and making lame and false excuses when they have been occasionally caught. This is a primary reason why calls for allowing a “controlled” commercial harvest of whales under “scientific management” and quotas is a fool’s paradise.

The whaling industry kills, and it does not care what it kills. It has no ethics, no moral compass, nor any compassion for the great beings it preys upon.



Japan Olympics

(Cont. from Front Page)

another season of dolphin hunting has already begun. In December, the Japanese whaling fleet still plans to set sail for Antarctic waters. Will the Japan government take action now to end the hunting?

A gesture of international cooperation and goodwill by Japan towards whales and dolphins would have immense global value.

Japan Moratorium (Cont. from Front Page)

other products. See:

<http://savedolphins.eii.org/news/entry/japans-bizarre-and-sad-new-whaling-laws>

According to Kyodo News: "Japan is set to propose resuming commercial whaling of some species at a meeting of the International Whaling Commission in September as a ruling party endorsed the government plan..." Reference: <https://mainichi.jp/english/articles/20180627/p2g/00m/0bu/019000c>

Reportedly, some in Japan are pressuring the government to leave the IWC, something the Japanese delegation to the IWC has repeatedly threatened in meetings. The Kyodo report notes that "(o)f the IWC's 88 members, 40 support whaling while the remaining 48 are against the practice, according to Japan's Fisheries Agency."

The pro-whaling nations include Iceland and Norway, which filed formal objections to the moratorium and therefore, under the IWC rules, are not bound by those rules and can conduct commercial whaling. Much of the catch is sold to Japan, a violation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Japan has also lined up a number of small countries in the Caribbean and Africa that agree to support Japan's position at the IWC in return for foreign aid and often outright bribery of delegates.

Reference: ***Japan Offered Bribes, Prostitutes To International Whaling Commission To Get OK To Keep Killing Whales***

<https://www.businessinsider.com/japan-offers-bribes-prostitutes-to-international-whaling-commission-2010-6>

However, IWC procedures require a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the IWC member nations in order to make any changes to the moratorium as well as other major decisions. Japan is apparently also proposing lowering this voting requirement to a simple majority, but that would require opening up the entire IWC Convention to revision, which would require unanimous consent by all member nations.

The government of Australia has already announced opposition to Japan's proposed squelching of the whaling moratorium, and other pro-whale conservation countries in the European Union and South America are also expected to object.

It was revealed that Japan's most recent "research whaling" season in Antarctica, from December 8th, 2017 to Feb. 28th, 2018, filled the Japanese quota of 333 minke whales with 122 pregnant whales. Reference: <http://savedolphins.eii.org/news/entry/japan-whaling-program-discovered-pregnant-whales-easier-to-kill>

Japan's research whaling has been deemed a violation of the IWC Convention by the

International Court of Justice in the Hague, which Japan ignores.

Furthermore, whale meat prices in Japan are dropping, down 40% from ten years ago, according to a recent report in Nikkei Newspaper, with whale meat increasingly rejected by Japanese consumers. The sale of whale meat from the "research" whaling scheme is meant to help cover costs, but the Japan taxpayers wind up paying a substantial amount of the annual whaling cruise expenses. Much of the whale meat will be frozen in storage or consigned to pet food, school lunch programs, and jerky, because of the lack of a market. Reference: <https://www.nikkei.com/article/DGXMZO32235790W8A620C1QM8000/>

Japan has also vigorously opposed a proposal by Latin American nations and South Africa to establish a whale sanctuary in the South Atlantic Ocean, barring any whaling. Japan currently also ignores the whale sanctuary established by a $\frac{3}{4}$ vote of the IWC in Antarctic waters.



Norway Running Out of Whales?

Norway has increased the numbers of whales who can be killed each year by the country's whaling fleets. While this is tragic news, it hides a deeper, more hopeful truth: that this antiquated industry could be heading towards taking its final breaths, and final whale lives. https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/mar/07/norway-boosts-whaling-quota-international-opposition?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

Oslo announced the 28% increase in the annual whaling quotas amid some very telling statistics for the industry. In 2017, there were only 11 whaling vessels operating – down by nearly half from the year before, and down from 350 in 1950. Whaling quotas, which were set at 999 last year, have been far from filled in recent years: 2015 saw 660 slaughtered, and in last year only 432 succumbed to the harpoons.

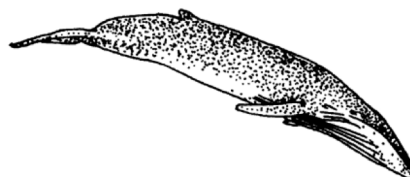
Much of the world agrees that even one whale killed is too many. Whales have the intrinsic right to be alive and to not be harmed by human beings; yet Norway's whalers violate these rights, since the Norwegian government does not choose to recognize whale protections invoked by the International Whaling Commission. The global moratorium on whaling, which went into effect in 1985-86 Antarctic season, was an important step towards recognizing and respecting whales' rights. But more is

needed.

Norway filed an objection to the global moratorium and is one of two countries that allows commercial whaling, along with Iceland. Japan doesn't openly conduct commercial whaling; the meat from Japan's phony "research" hunts still ends up on the commercial market.

Japan further imports whale meat from Norway and Iceland. Norway claims that there are large enough populations of whales to sustain commercial hunts. So why are the quotas not being filled? Whalers cite high fuel prices and a lack of capacity at whale meat processing facilities, as well as climate change, which appears to be compelling whales further and further away from Norwegian hunting waters. We are starting to see the whaling nations claim that climate change is depleting whales and dolphins, not the hunts themselves. Others point out that fewer people want to eat whale, period.

Whaling is cruel, and violates the intrinsic rights of whales. They do not deserve the often slow and agonizing deaths at the hands of whalers who are motivated by profit.



Iceland Stops Minke Hunt (For Now)

While endangered fin whales continue to be hunted in the north Atlantic, Icelandic whalers recently announced they would no longer hunt minke whales, at least for now. <https://phys.org/news/2018-07-minke-whale-iceland.html>

Despite Iceland's claims that minke whales are abundant in the north Atlantic, their whaling vessels have increasingly been unable to find any to kill. Only six minke whales were killed in June 2018, and none in July. Unable to cover their costs, the whaling company ended the minke whale hunts early. But they will likely head out again on the hunt for minke in future years.

The self-imposed quota for 2018 is 262 minke whales, but whalers have in fact been unable to find enough minke whales for several years in a row to meet that expansive quota.

In 2016, whalers were able to kill only 46 minke whales, while only seventeen whales were caught in 2017. This is a classic case of whale population depletion, resulting from overkill of a small population.

Yet, this is not the end. The whalers continue to pursue fin whales, which are considered endangered by most countries and whale scientists.