

# ECO

International Whaling Commission Annual Meeting

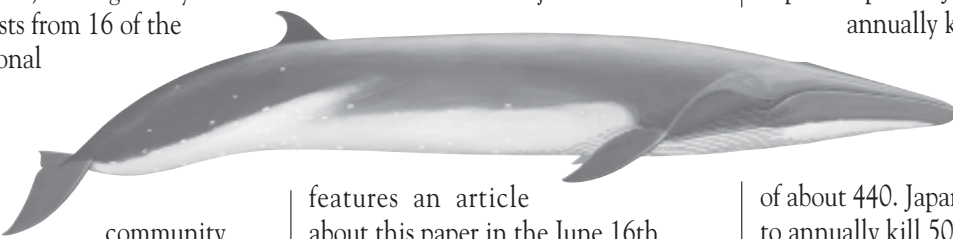
## In this issue ...

- **Foot in Mouth**
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## Whale Experts Blast Japan Culling

In a stunning paper (SC/57/022) submitted directly to the Scientific Committee (SC) and signed by 63 whale scientists from 16 of the 30 IWC national delegations represented on the SC, the scientific community blasted the new "scientific" whaling

program proposed by Japan. The prestigious international scientific journal *Nature*



features an article about this paper in the June 16th edition.

Japan plans a new round of whale slaughter in the southern oceans, targeting far higher numbers than before and adding two seriously depleted species. Japan proposes to annually kill 935 minke whales, more than doubling their current scientific quota of about 440. Japan further proposes to annually kill 50 humpback and 50 *concluded on page 3*

## Again No Secret Ballots

The annual effort by Japan and other nations to allow puppet nations to hide their votes to kill whales was defeated by the Commission during Monday's meeting by a 30-27 vote. Japan had proposed that Commission members could take a secret vote if five member nations asked for such a secret ballot for any particular issue.

Many nation delegations argued strongly against further undermining the credibility of the Commission by resorting to secret votes on highly contentious issues before the IWC. Other nations objected: "St. Kitts and Nevis is not for sale," exclaimed that

nation's delegate. "We small Caribbean nations must protect ourselves," he added.

But the UK delegate forcefully stated: "This issue goes beyond whales. It goes to the fundamental rights of people ..."

Nations voting for secret ballots alongside Japan: Antigua & Barbuda, Benin, Cameroon, China, Cote d'Ivoire, Dominica, Gabon, Grenada, Guinea, Iceland, Kiribati, Korea, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Nicaragua, Norway, Palau, Russian Federation, St. Kitts & Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent & Grenadines,

Senegal, Solomon Islands, Suriname, and Tuvalu.

Nations voting for continued transparency: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Oman, Panama, Portugal, San Marino, Slovak Republic, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, and US.

ECO and the environmental community thank those nations that have stood fast for transparent voting and accountability at the IWC.

## Japan and UN Security Council?

Japan is seeking a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. But how can other countries consider Japan for such an important world diplomatic post when Japan's IWC delegation treats the Commission and the Convention with total contempt? Japan's Fisheries Agency continues commercial

whaling under the false pretext of scientific research. Does the Fisheries Agency seriously believe the world cannot see through this lie?

Will nations of the world support a government on the Security Council that treats international agreements like so much rubbish? (Note in passing: ECO of course

realizes that this is the unfortunate course taken by the current U.S. Administration. We find the Bush unilateralism appalling. Does Japan really want to emulate the US in this manner?) Will nations support Japan despite its Fisheries Agency's violations of the international whaling moratorium? The Japan government's position is embarrassing to the Japanese people and the world.

## Korea Backs Off Whale Plant?

According to Agence France Presse, the government of Korea has backed off funding a controversial whale meat processing plant in the city of Ulsan, site of the IWC meeting this year.

A minister of the Korean maritime affairs and fisheries agency said that “due to a lack of funds in our budget,” the ministry turned down the request from the city for funding to build the plant. The minister added that this decision reflects “the views of environmental groups.”

Greenpeace and Korean

environmental groups have set up a camp on the site of the proposed plant, protesting the plans for building. Greenpeace thanked Korea for its decision to defund the slaughter factory, but urged the city of Ulsan to pledge in writing that the plant would not be built for ten years. AFP states the city has refused.

“Greenpeace is suspicious of Korea, because (it) has the second largest by-catch numbers only after Japan,” explained Korean activist Oh Young-Ae.

Environmental groups will also



be closely watching how Korea votes during the IWC meeting.

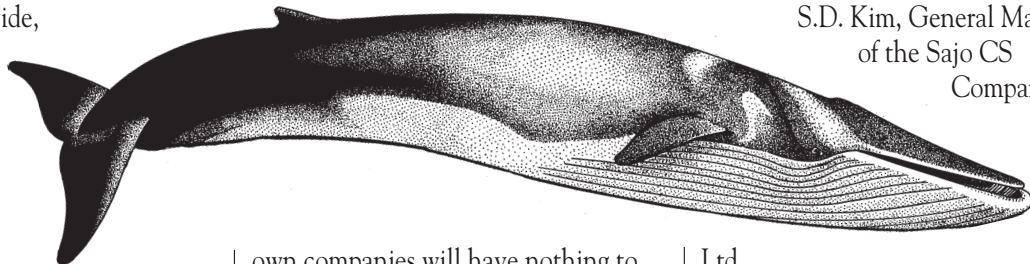
## Major Korean Fish Processors Denounce Whaling Plans

In an ECO exclusive, several major Korean fish processing companies, doing millions of dollars in business worldwide, have expressed their concerns about the Republic of Korea returning to commercial

whaling. These companies have assured environmentalists that their

in a Dolphin Safe manner to avoid deaths of dolphins and other marine life.

S.D. Kim, General Manager of the Sajo CS Company



### Quotable

“Migaloo (a rare albino humpback whale) could face the death sentence from this so-called science ... when they blow them up, they put them on the ship, cut them up and send them to restaurants ... And that’s what they call science. It is totally absurd, obscene, inhumane and we want to stop it.”

—Australian Environment Minister Ian Campbell, AFP, June 17, 2005

own companies will have nothing to do with commercial whaling.

Ingu Park, president of the giant Dongwon F&B Company Ltd., states: “We are sorry the Korean government decided to set up a whale and dolphin meat factory in Ulsan, Korea, but once again we promise to keep our dolphin safety company policy continuously.” Dongwon is a major player in international tuna, fishing

Ltd., adds: “Based on our dolphin-safe corporation policing, our company and our subsidiaries have committed to protect dolphins and other marine mammals in all our operations. As such, our company and our subsidiaries cannot get involved in any activity that is in any way related to this dolphin and whale meat processing facility.”

### Erratum

In yesterday’s *ECO*, we reported that the Republic of Korea reported annually killing 400 minke whales “accidentally” in fishermen’s nets. We now understand this number reported by the media was due to a translation error. The correct number is about 80

minke whales annually killed “accidentally”, with a high of 156 in one year. The 400 number does not refer to minke whales at all, but to dolphin kills instead. We hope these corrected figures will accurately portray the amount of bloodshed going on offshore.

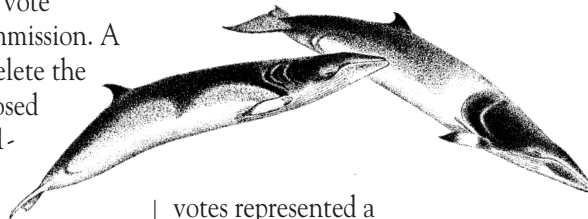
# ECO

ECO is published on the occasion of the 57th Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission.

## Japan Still Falls Short

As in previous recent IWC meetings, Japan on Monday again fell short of having a majority vote among nations of the Commission. A vote on Japan's effort to delete the agenda discussion of proposed whale sanctuaries failed 31-24, with two abstentions.

Further debate on Japan's efforts to delete other important issues from the agenda, including humane killing of whales, whalewatching, small cetaceans, and the IWC



Conservation Committee, was shut down on a 29-28 vote, Japan's delegate Joji Morishita bitterly complained that the two

votes represented a "gross inconsistency" as one was based on New Zealand's insistence that sanctuaries be discussed as part of their rights as a member nation of the IWC, while Australia's motion ended

discussion of Japan's issues on the agenda.

New Zealand responded tartly that the two votes were not at all inconsistent. Both votes by the Commission ensured that the issues remained on the agenda for further discussion, contrary to Japan's failed efforts to prevent open discussion.

It is still not clear how the rest of the meeting voting will go. Several nations are not present or do not currently have voting rights at this meeting—that balance of member nations may change over the coming days.

**Japan Cull**, *continued from page 1* fin whales. This escalation of the hunt has been condemned worldwide and is likely to dominate this week's IWC meeting.

A resolution by Australia condemning Japan's scientific whaling plans has been submitted to the Commission and endorsed by 25 additional member nations.

The scientists' paper is extremely critical of the Japanese proposal, pointing out that Japan only killed a total of 840 whales under scientific permit between 1954 and 1985, the year the moratorium went into effect. Thus Japan's new whaling plan calls for killing *more* whales in one year in the name of science than the country killed in all the three decades before the moratorium! In vastly understated tones, the scientists note: "Such takes differ little in scale from commercial whaling ..."

Due to the almost complete lack of publication of the Japanese research results in peer-reviewed scientific journals, the SC has not had a chance to critically review any of the just-completed research efforts of the past two decades (JARPA). The SC is not expected to complete its review until at least late 2006, making any new bloody research

efforts premature at best.

The scientists further point out that the killing by Japan is unilateral and concentrated in the Antarctic Ocean "sanctuary" established specifically so scientists could study whale stocks not being exploited. The letter notes several of the stocks of humpback and fin whales show no signs of recovery or have no data on their status at all. Culling by Japan could seriously harm these stocks and may push some towards extinction.

One of the most serious criticisms raised by the scientists is that Japan's new research proposal would establish a new and very dangerous management regime—culling humpback and fin whales to induce more economically valuable species, such as the blue and minke whales, to recovery more quickly from serious depletion due to commercial whaling. This new fantasy turns the concept of ecosystem management on its head by claiming that culling one species will somehow benefit another. The scientists note: "This simplistic approach ignores the complex roles of the many other predators in this ecosystem, as well as recent work which estimated that mysticetes consume less than four to six percent of krill production."

"We once again note," state the scientists, "that non-lethal methods can provide, much more cheaply and efficiently, all of the information currently required for management by the IWC."

The scientists end by stating: "Indeed, we suggest that such premature and superficial reviews (by the SC) fundamentally undermine the scientific legitimacy of this Committee."

Early estimates in this decade suggest Japan's "scientific" whaling program yields US\$50+ million from sales of whale meat alone. With the proposed increase in catch, this amount will rise considerably, assuming Japan is successful in selling it, a problem in the past. Japan annually subsidizes the whaling effort to the tune of US\$10 million.

Clearly, someone is benefiting from this outrageous charade, but it isn't the whales and it isn't science—and it certainly isn't the Japanese taxpayers who subsidize this shameful program.

The whale scientists have spoken. Science is being betrayed by the whaling countries on a grand scale.

Will the Commission listen?

## RMS Still DOA?

The IWC's Revised Management Scheme (RMS) continues to evade consensus. At last year's IWC meeting in Italy, the Commission passed a resolution urging finalization of the RMS for approval at this year's meeting. Despite several drawn-out intercessional meetings and negotiations, a final RMS is still far from likely any time soon. At least two possible texts are rumored to be circulating during this meeting. But since an RMS will require a 3/4 vote of the member nations, little real progress is expected given different views and the short time available.

Many environmental groups have denounced various aspects of proposed RMS texts. The Humane

Society International, Pro Wildlife, and WDCS have issued a new report pointing to numerous flaws in the proposals being discussed by the Commission. These proposals would "repeat the mistakes, and disasters, of [the IWC's] long and infamous history," according to the report, prepared by legal experts versed in international laws and treaties.

The report demonstrates that RMS proposals do not comport with existing fishing treaties which whaling nations are currently complying with, nor are the proposals likely to avoid past management oversights that resulted in overkill.

Some specifics from the report:

- Illegal, unreported, and unregulated whaling, a serious problem in past whaling history,

is not adequately protected against.

- The RMS proposals do not deal with the abuses of scientific whaling permits that currently plague the Commission.
- If a nation objects to the RMS, that nation can avoid any regulation at all, another fatal flaw in past IWC management efforts.
- There are no IWC enforcement measures to ensure compliance by participatory nations.

The report further notes that a lack of funding may doom the RMS to failure at the outset, nor is the welfare of hunted whales dealt with in the existing RMS proposals.

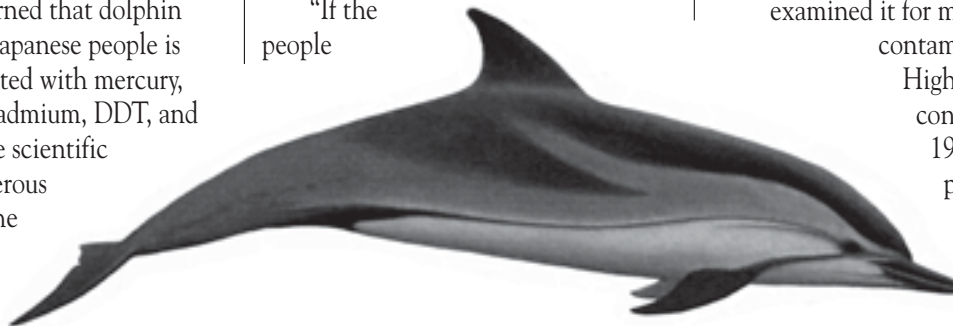
## Dolphin Meat is Poisoning the Japanese People

Three international environmental organizations - the Elsa Nature Conservancy (ENC) of Japan, the International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute (EII), and One Voice, a leading French animal protection organization - warned that dolphin meat sold to the Japanese people is highly contaminated with mercury, methylmercury, cadmium, DDT, and PCBs. Despite the scientific evidence of dangerous contamination, the Japanese government provides no warning to its people that eating dolphin meat is a serious health hazard.

Dolphin meat on the market in Japan can be mislabeled as "whale" meat. Fishermen drive dolphins into shallow bays and nets, where some are harpooned and butchered in blood-filled waters. Other dolphins are sold for high profits to aquariums around the world.

Explained David Phillips, Director of EII: "Dolphin and whale meat are seriously contaminated with poisons that can injure, sicken, and kill people. Yet, the Japanese government has taken no steps to protect its people from harm."

"If the people



of Japan knew the truth, they would refuse to buy the poisoned meat of dolphins and whales that have been brutally slaughtered," stated Ric O'Barry, Lead Investigator of One Voice, "But the government and the fishing industry keep this dangerous secret hidden from the Japanese people. It is time for the Japanese government to end the slaughter of

dolphins and end the poisoning of its people."

ENC acquired a slice of meat from a bottlenose dolphin that was butchered in Futo on November 11, 2004. ENC sent the sample to Hokkaido where Dr. Tetsuya Endo of the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Hokkaido, examined it for mercury contamination.

Highly polluted, it contained 19.2ppm (parts per million) of mercury, 48 times higher than the maximum advisory level of

0.4ppm set by the Health, Labor and Welfare Ministry of Japan.

Mercury can cause severe damage to the brain and nervous system in adults, and is particularly dangerous for young children and pregnant women. To avoid contamination, consumers in Japan are advised to avoid buying dolphin or "whale" meat.