

# Eco

International Whaling Commission Annual Meeting

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## Business as Usual

The IWC proved yesterday that they were well capable of playing the games of the past.

The United Kingdom had developed an excellent transparency resolution, aimed at stopping some of the worst abuses of Japan and its client nations, such as bribery and play money scams. With some revisions, Poland introduced the resolution yesterday on

behalf of the European Union.

Daven Joseph, one of the biggest play-gamers in IWC history, objected that he was confused that the resolution was now authored by Poland rather than the UK, and did not that mean the resolution did not meet the IWC's 60-day deadline for being introduced in a timely manner? The UK patiently explained that the resolution was perfectly viable under the rules, but it took a ruling by the Chair to move the

discussion along, after a brief break.

Suddenly the Russian Federation objected, claiming they do not recognize the EU! A coffee break then ensued, while matters were to be worked out. Not very well however, as after the long coffee break, the Chair called for a Commissioners-Only meeting, where the transparency issue could be thrashed out in an...ummmm.. un-transparent forum.

It's business as usual at the ol' IWC!

## Iceland's Renegade Whaling

A new report by the Environmental Investigation Agency and the Whale & Dolphin Conservation Society outlines the history of Iceland's attempts to blow away the moratorium on commercial whaling by catching minke and endangered fin whales and by trading in whale products in contravention of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species.

Japan is heavily involved, allowing

Iceland's whale product exports into their country, accepting 1,200 tons of endangered fin whale meat and blubber from Iceland since 2008. Since Japan's rapacious whaling wiped out fin whale populations in the North Pacific and the Antarctic, Iceland is virtually Japan's only source of this sought-after meat. Plus, the report notes, Iceland trades whale meat at a bargain price.

Japan's "scientific research"

company Kyodo Sempaku, which distributes whale meat from the research cruises to Japan markets, also is involved in distributing Iceland's imported whale meat and blubber.

Japan and Iceland are undermining the IWC and CITES in their continuing quest to exploit cetaceans at any cost. They continue the pattern of moral, legal, and ethical corruption of the highest order.

## Norwegian Whaling: Back to the Future

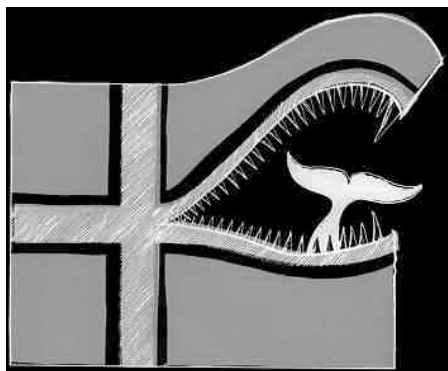
An extensive report on Norwegian whaling prepared by several Norwegian groups (NOAH & Dyrebeskyttelsen) and the World Society for the Protection of Animals notes that the whaling industry is as good as dead, being kept alive only by dubious government money poured into "research" and promotion to get a skeptical public to buy more whale products.

Present day whale catches are below

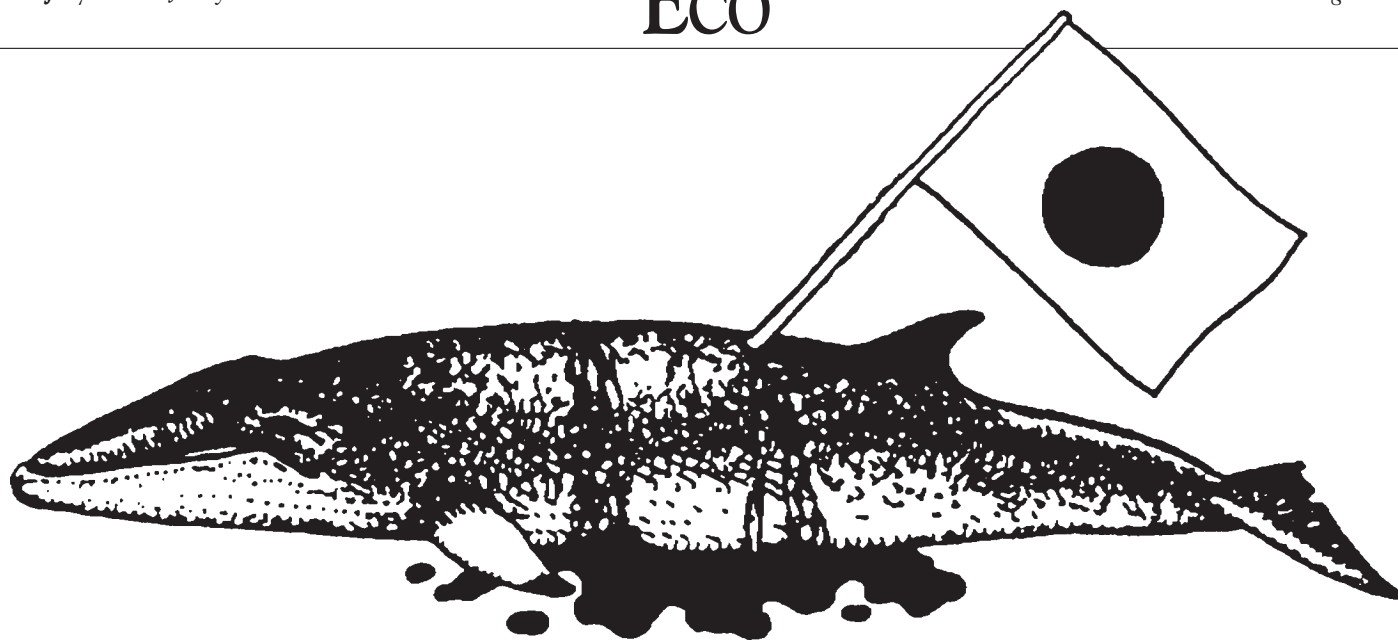
500 annually, with fewer than twenty vessels engaged in whaling. In an attempt to cut cost, the government has even cut back on inspectors, allowing whaling to go on with little review.

By contrast, whale watching cruises in Norway are already bringing in \$2 million US per year, already two-thirds as much as the heavily subsidized whaling industry.

In conclusion, Norway should make whaling a thing of the past and



responsible whale watching the industry of the future.



## Hassle, Hustle, an' Grapple 'em

I do hope the Japanese delegation does not yet again cause hundreds of earnest people to waste time during this IWC meeting watching blurred Power-Point presentations and listening to their efforts to turn the IWC into a kangaroo court and cast out heretics and people who have not been shown to have broken any laws, just perhaps to have been impolite. This year I'm referring to the capers of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, made more poignant by the revelation that the US Commissioner has told representatives of Japan's Government that she would personally see that those

transgressors were appropriately punished.

But this is just the most recent of a long series of events, some serious, some hilarious. Before Sea Shepherd became the dragon to be slaughtered, the Japanese delegation demonized the International Fund for Animal Welfare, Greenpeace, even peaceful World Wildlife Fund, and called for their removal from the conference floor. I still remember vividly the distinguished scientist Dr. Roger Payne being dragged from his legitimate delegation seat because the Commissioner for Japan—not the Secretariat—said his credentials were not in order; they were. At the special meeting on Norfolk Island, in 1994, where we were discussing the French proposal for a Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary, the Commissioner for Japan tried to have me thrown out as well as the World Conservation Union (IUCN) which I was representing at that time, because—he said—I wear too many hats. I was saved from expulsion and millinery disgrace by the Working Group Chairman, the Commissioner for Switzerland—incidentally the home-base of IUCN. Another year, when I was a member of the Italian delegation, the Commissioner sent one of his minions

over to the Italians to tell them that they must remove me because their delegation was too big. That same Japan Commissioner is on record as having said, in Plenary Session, that the Italians should get a proper lawyer on their delegation, despite the fact that their lawyer was one of the most eminent world experts on the Law of the Sea and the Antarctic. He was given the opportunity to respond and said, "I suggest that Japan find some proper diplomats to represent it."

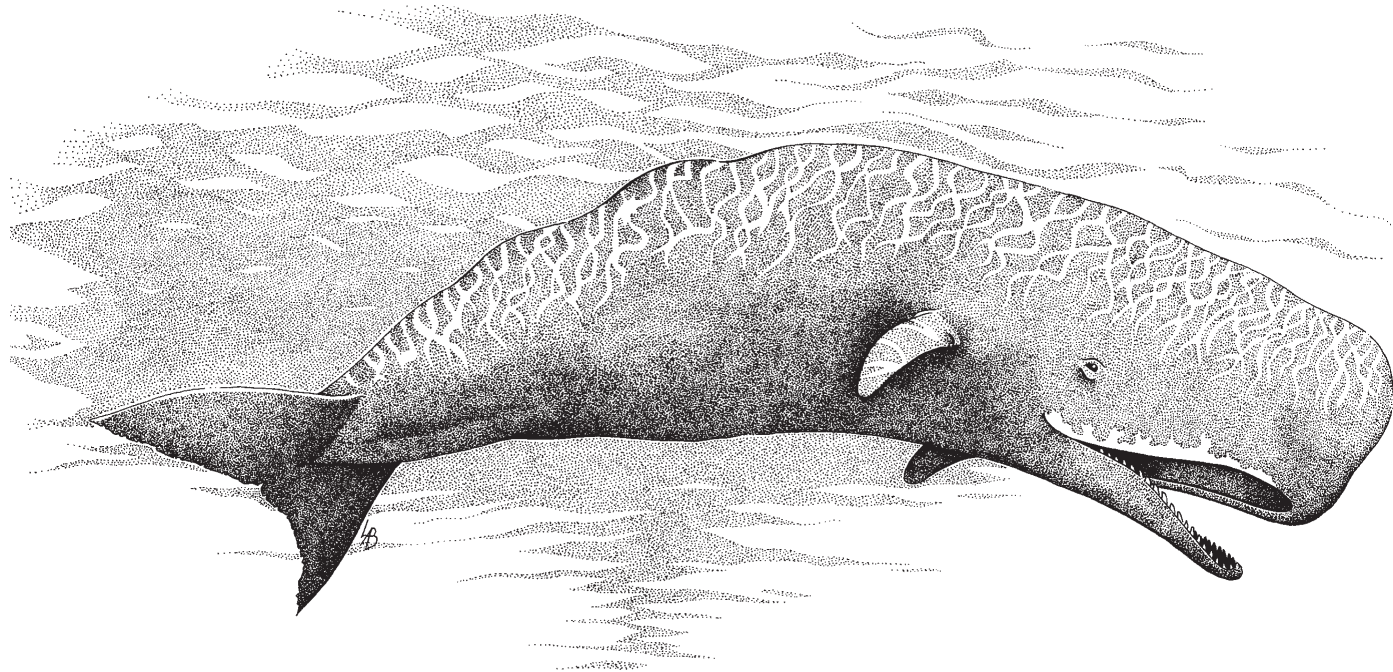
The entities that run whaling from Tokyo have asked that a unit of the Japan Coast Guard accompany them to the Southern Ocean when—if—the *Nisshin Maru* returns there this coming southern summer. The JCG is somewhat embarrassed, it seems, because, for one thing, it does not have an appropriate vessel. A cheaper alternative might be for the JCG to accompany the delegation to wherever the IWC meets next time, armed with Very lights and grappling hooks to deal with unruly elements who slip in to IWC gatherings disguised as delegates, advisers, observers, press ladies and gentlemen or other low members of civil society. I wonder why the UK has not suggested such action in its well-intentioned paper on 'transparency'? (Naughty word!)

—Dr. Sidney Holt

## ECO

ECO is published by Earth Island Institute's International Marine Mammal Project at the annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission in Isle of Jersey, on behalf of environmental and animal welfare organizations around the globe.

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“The moot point is, whether Leviathan can long endure so wide a chase, and so remorseless a havoc; whether he must not at last be exterminated from the waters, and the last whale, like the last man, smoke his last pipe, and then himself evaporate in the final puff.”

—Herman Melville in *Moby Dick*

## US Replaces Japan in Role as Villain on Whales

IPS News reported that Latin American NGO groups are increasingly angry about the role of the US at the IWC meetings. Excerpts from that article by Marcela Valente follows:

José Truda Palazzo, former Brazilian commissioner to the IWC and now the coordinator of the Southern Right Whale Project at the Cetacean Conservation Centre of Brazil, told Tierramérica that the latest threat is not posed by Japan but rather by the United States.

“There is considerable unease throughout the region because the U.S. delegation, which is aggressive and unwilling to negotiate, is going to try to retake an initiative in Jersey that would legitimize whaling,” he said.

The United States was long viewed as a world leader in whale conservation, but defended the allocation of a quota for subsistence whaling by aboriginal peoples in the northwestern state of

Alaska. In 2002, Japan used its majority of votes in the CBI to block this quota.

Following that defeat, considered by environmentalists as a Japanese reprisal against U.S. conservationist leadership, the United States remained neutral. But for the last three years, its delegates have become even more pro-whaling than Japan.

At the last IWC annual meeting, held in 2010 in Agadir, Morocco, the United States sought the adoption of a program of reforms that maintained the moratorium in general but proposed quotas for whaling and legitimized Japan’s captures.

This proposal was rejected, among other reasons, because of the strong opposition of Latin American countries along with others like Australia.

In Jersey, the U.S. delegation, with the support of New Zealand, will attempt to push through its proposal once again.

“It is truly unfortunate, because (the United States) has a long tradition of conservationism and defense of non-lethal use, and now the U.S. delegation is pro-whaling,” commented Truda Palazzo.

The Buenos Aires Group, as the Latin American bloc in the IWC is known, has announced that it will continue to oppose this initiative. The group is made up of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

Roxana Schteinberg of the Whale Conservation Institute of Argentina agreed that the greatest cause for concern is no longer Japan but rather the United States.

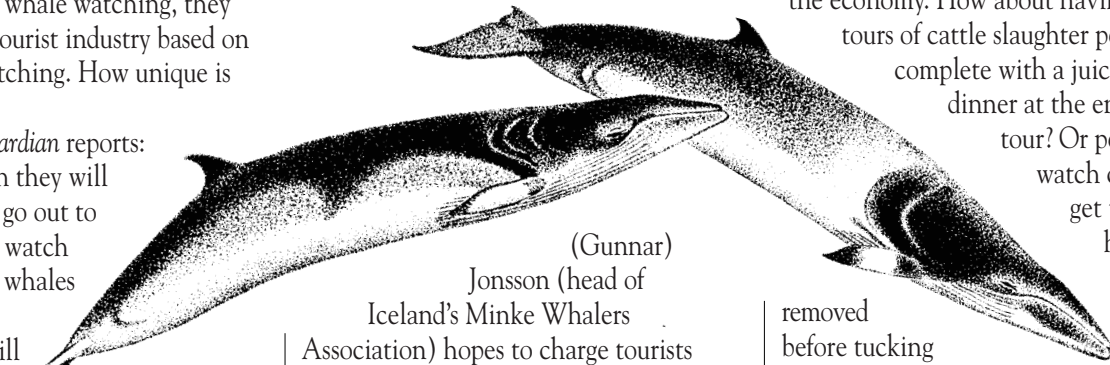
“In 2012, aboriginal whaling quotas will be up for negotiation once again, and it is possible that the United States has made a bilateral deal with Japan to support it now in order to get its backing for those quotas next year,” Schteinberg told Tierramérica.

## Watch-a-Whale-Die Cruises in Iceland

Those wacky Icelandic whale killers have come up with a brand new way to make money and influence people—bring tourists out to watch whales being killed. Instead of whale watching, they want to make a tourist industry based on whale-killing watching. How unique is that?

The UK *Guardian* reports: From next month they will invite tourists to go out to sea with them to watch minke and other whales close-up. The holidaymakers will then get to “experience” the life of a whaler, see and hear harpoons being fired, touch a

whale tail, inspect the internal organs of whales and sit down for a tasty meal of blubber and whale meat with the captain.



(Gunnar)

Jonsson (head of

Iceland's Minke Whalers

Association) hopes to charge tourists visiting Iceland from \$200 to \$300 and take them out in groups of 15 to 20. “We have seen that people enjoy whale-

watching, and many people ask us how whaling is done, but we are not going to push whaling. Now they can learn about the culture.”

ECO notes that this could really boost sales in meat in other sectors of the economy. How about having guided tours of cattle slaughter pens, complete with a juicy steak dinner at the end of the tour? Or perhaps watch chickens get their heads

removed before tucking into a fine pasta and chicken supper, swimming in gravy?

## Animal Welfare and Whaling

The United Kingdom, with support from the World Society for the Protection of Animals, produced a workshop on Whale Welfare and Ethics, in which a number of countries participated. The UK presented the workshop scope and conclusions on Monday during the Plenary session. The UK recommended establishment of a Working Group on whale welfare and ethics, but, with criticism from whaling

countries (Norway, Iceland, and Japan), withdrew the proposal and offered to continue review of the issue with an invitation to other countries to participate.

WSPA is urging the IWC to take animal welfare issues into account in consideration of whaling activities. They note that the killing of whales is not in compliance with well-established standards of animal welfare that apply to

farm animals and other species of concern.

Norway gave a very grumpy response on Monday to the UK presentation. The Commissioner claimed that “whalers are sentient animals, too” and care about whales. He further likened whaling to sport hunting on land, claiming the killing of whales was far more humane and quick than such hunting of large animals on land. Norway claims killing is already “highly regulated.”

## Conservation Committee: A Beacon of Hope

On the stormy IWC seas, the Conservation Committee continues to stand out as a beacon of hope for whales around the world and as the future we all hope will come to pass. The Committee is taking on many issues about whales that have been long neglected by the IWC, and prospects are good that the Committee can invigorate the Commission and improve the dismal record of IWC conservation measures.

Conservation Committee initiatives include reviewing whale watching

(which not only aims at protecting whales but also provides considerable and growing income to many coastal communities around the world), avoiding ship strikes on whales, evaluating pollution problems, and evaluating and encouraging whale sanctuaries.

ECO and the environmental and animal welfare community encourage countries to participate in the Conservation Committee activities.

## Thanks, Australia!

ECO salutes Australia for standing up yesterday morning to the Japanese delegation's annual “Woe is Me, Safety at Sea” presentation. Repeatedly, Japan bashed Sea Shepherd for jeopardizing the safety of their “research” vessels in the Antarctic, to which Australia's delegate replied that Japan should stop calling their whaling vessels “research” vessels.

Amen!