

**"SCIENTIFIC" WHALING**

The so called 'scientific' whaling practised by the Government of Japan is simply commercial whaling in disguise. In April 1987, Japan's factory ship returned from the Antarctic after the final season of commercial whaling and the moratorium came into effect. In November 1987, the same factory ship, accompanied by the same catchers, sailed again for the Antarctic, this time as a 'research' expedition despite the fact that the IWC had not requested any research and had opposed the venture. "Scientific" whaling was begun in order to keep the whaling industry alive, as was acknowledged in the Japanese press at the time.

"Scientific" whaling does not provide needed information - its real product is thousands of tons of whale meat. It is a growing industry with a wholesale income from whale meat sales of over 50 million US dollars a year.

Year	Gross income (millions of Yen)
1990/91	2,187
1991/92	2,127
1992/93	2,812
1993/94	2,650
1994/95	2,726
1995/96	4,119
1996/97	3,764
1997/98	4,024
1998/99	4,184
1998/00	4,074
2000/01	4,602
2001/02	4,884
2002/03	5,380 (estimated)
2003/04	5,890

These programs are supposedly being done on behalf of the IWC. But the IWC has repeatedly said that it does not need the data from these programs. It has expressed concern that:

- these programs enable countries to conduct whaling for commercial purposes despite the moratorium on commercial whaling,
- that current operations represent an act contrary to the spirit of the moratorium and to the will of the IWC,
- that the IWC's provisions allowing this whaling were not intended to be exploited to provide whale meat for commercial purposes, and shall not be so used, and has repeatedly asked the Government of Japan to end these operations. Unfortunately, the IWC's convention, agreed in 1946, contains a loophole which exempts whaling carried out for scientific reasons from all regulation under

the convention. The Government of Japan does not need the IWC's permission to undertake these programs and simply ignores the IWC's requests.

Supporters of whaling point out that the program had produced huge amounts of data and attracted much praise in the IWC's scientific committee. What they don't say is that the committee has agreed that the data produced is not necessary for management and the praise comes only from pro-whaling scientists.

When the 'scientific' programs are put forward, the scientists who proposed them take part in the evaluation of the proposal, something that is unheard of in normal scientific practice. And after the programs go ahead, they participate in the review of the results. No wonder that the scientific committee report always shows praise for the program. It also shows strong criticism.

Little of this 'research' is actually published in peer reviewed journals. An American member of the scientific committee was recently quoted in the international media saying: "The quality of the scientific research is extremely poor despite 16 years of operations and thousands of whales killed."

Thousands of scientists study whales around the world producing high quality data and peer reviewed papers that are increasing our understanding of whales and their environment. None of them kill whales; the modern tools of science allow non lethal studies. The sham of 'scientific' whaling disgraces the very name of science and is an example of the bad faith displayed by the whalers.