

# Why Japan Whales in the Antarctic

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*Since 1971 Greenpeace has been a leading voice of the environmental movement. We work throughout the world to protect oceans and ancient forests, and to fight toxic pollution, genetic engineering, global warming and nuclear threats. Without compromise, Greenpeace takes on powerful political and corporate opposition to protect the future of our planet.*

- **Historical Whaling in the Antarctic**

Whaling in Japan began 400 years ago. Hunts were restricted to a few areas and nets were used to catch the whales. At this time, eating whale meat was a tradition in some areas of Japan.

In 1934, more modern Japanese Antarctic whaling began. During this time, most whaling in the Antarctic was being done by Norway and the United Kingdom.

- **How the Whales Saved the Japanese People**

During World War II, whaling did not take place in the Antarctic. In 1945, after two Japanese cities (Hiroshima and Nagasaki) had been bombed and after the war had ended, whaling began again out of necessity. The U.S. allied forces occupied the country and trade routes between Japan and other countries were not open. Without certain imports, the Japanese were not receiving enough protein and the people began to suffer from malnourishment and starvation.

During this time, Japan was under the occupation of an American General, Douglas MacArthur. MacArthur gave permission to the Japanese people to send a whaling fleet to the Antarctic to bring back whale meat for the starving people. The whaling fleet provided the much-needed protein to Japan and saved the Japanese people from starvation.

- **Antarctic Whaling Today**

From 1987 to present, the Japanese government has continued whaling in the Antarctic claiming it is for science. Sixty years after commercial whaling resumed in Japan, the Japanese Government, driven largely by a faceless Government Department called the Fisheries Agency (JFA), remains dedicated to the hunt. The JFA is not answerable to the public, only the politicians, where it reigns as a powerful part of the Japanese bureaucracy. The JFA has had a clear control over the Japanese media, which has largely ignored Greenpeace's claims, except to run the JFA's anti-Greenpeace spin. Other opinions have also had difficulty breaking the barrier. The JFA affirms that whale meat eating is a Japanese "tradition", despite growing public sentiment to the contrary.

Whaling and whale meat is being less and less accepted by the public. The older generation remembers when eating the whale meat saved them from starvation, and some still eat it and favor whaling. However, few young people actually consume whale meat, and most are not in favor of whaling. An opinion poll conducted in Japan in June 2006 by the Gallup affiliate, the Nippon Research Centre, showed that 95% of Japanese never or rarely eat whale meat and more than 70 % of Japanese do NOT support whaling in the Southern Ocean.

The message that must be sent about Japan's whaling is clear, whales saved the Japanese people after the war, and it is now our turn to save them.



# Whaling in the Southern Ocean

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- **A Brief History of Whaling**

While whaling has been conducted for centuries, the size and speed of many whales meant that they were off limits to the whalers. But, in the mid-1800s, the invention of an exploding harpoons and advances in ship-building technology, made whalers deadlier and able to travel farther and faster. By the early 1900s, industrial scale whaling was wiping out whale populations in the farthest corners of the planet. Japanese whalers alone, in less than 30 years, went from killing about 15 whales per year in the 1880s to killing over 1000 whales per year by 1907. By 1930, 80% of the great whale species were feared to be approaching extinction.

- **The Southern Ocean**

The Southern Ocean surrounds Antarctica and extends north to between 50 and 60 degrees latitude. It is an area of stark beauty, that to an untrained eye, could resemble a lifeless zone of snow and ice. However, its nutrient-rich waters support many forms of life that, at one time, included thriving populations of whales.

The Southern Ocean is the feeding ground for 80% of the world's great whales. It has also been the killing fields of the whaling industry. In the mid-1800s, the Southern Ocean was home to as many as 650,000 fin whales and 250,000 blue whales. Today, fin whales have declined to as few as 12,000 and the blue whales may number no more than 400. Recognizing the need to provide a refuge for whale populations, the International Whaling Commission designated the entire whale feeding grounds of the Southern Ocean as a whale sanctuary in 1994.

- **The International Whaling Commission**

In 1946, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) was formed in recognition of the fact that whale populations were severely declining. The IWC is the body recognized by the United Nations as having responsibility for the world's whales. In 1982, the IWC voted to place a moratorium on commercial whaling that began in 1986. The moratorium, subject to an annual vote by IWC members, has remained in effect, but its fate remains uncertain in the face of Japan's aggressive efforts to overturn it. In a continued effort to resume commercial whaling despite the moratorium, the Japanese government exploits a loophole that allows for whaling for "scientific research". The Japanese government openly states that the purpose of its "scientific" whaling is to begin large-scale commercial whaling in the Antarctic in the future.

- **"Scientific" Whaling**

In 1987, one year after the IWC moratorium on commercial whaling took effect, the Japanese commercial whaling reorganized itself into a "scientific" whaling operation. Three of the largest whaling companies formed a new whaling company, Kyodo Senpaku, which to this day, operates the whaling fleet in a nearly identical form to the past commercial fleet.

IWC member nations and many of the world's leading whale scientists have asked Japan to stop its "scientific" whaling. These nations have tried to explain that new, non-lethal methods for obtaining information exist and result in a better understanding of whales' roles in their ecosystems. Despite the passage of nearly two dozen IWC decisions urging Japan to withdraw or revise their proposals, the Japanese government continues to issue special permits to the whaling industry for larger and larger annual quotas. In 2005, the Japanese government more than doubled their quota for minke whales to 935, and expanded their hunt to include endangered fin whales. From December 2005 to March 2006, 866 whales were killed by Japan in the S.O., 10 of which were endangered fin whales. Japan also has plans to start hunting endangered humpback whales in the 2007-2008 season.

- **Government Response**

Many countries are putting significant pressure on Japan to abandon its poorly disguised commercial whaling program. On January 17, 2006, seventeen countries issued a strongly worded call to the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan to join the international community, cease lethal scientific research on whales and assure the return of the whaling fleet from the Southern Ocean. The countries were Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, New Zealand, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

- **U.S. Position**

The U.S. Government was conspicuously absent from the international appeal to Japan to end whaling. In the past, when the U.S. has chosen not to participate in joint criticisms of Japan's whaling program, it has delivered an independent statement. The U.S. government has expressed its opposition to the whaling to Japanese officials. With a long record of opposition to whaling and vocal support for whale conservation, the U.S. government must now have a stronger voice than ever, as it is speaking for the American people who truly care about the whales' welfare.

- **A Victory with Gorton's of Gloucester**

Last year Greenpeace, the Humane Society of the US and the Environmental Investigation Agency exposed the big business ties to the Japanese government's whaling program. For international seafood giant, Nippon Suisan (Nissui), the sale of whale meat that resulted from the "scientific" hunt added as much as \$100 million a year to their bottom line. In 2001, Gorton's of Gloucester, the best selling frozen seafood brand in the U.S., became a wholly owned subsidiary of Nissui. On learning of the links between Gorton's and the Japanese "research" whaling program, consumers from across the U.S. pressured Gorton's to cut its ties to whaling. In a testament to the power of consumer action, by April 2006 Nissui committed to end its involvement in whaling.

- **Mizuho Corporate Bank**

Unfortunately, there are more ties between U.S. businesses and the Japanese government's whaling operation. One of the world's largest banks, Mizuho, has financially backed the Japanese government's whaling program, including through a 1.6 billion Yen long-term loan for the construction of the whaling vessel Yushin Maru 2. Mizuho is international in scope with offices in at least 18 countries and partnerships with national banks in many of those countries. In the U.S., Mizuho has partnered with Wells Fargo, Wachovia and the Bank of New York in an effort to build its business in the U.S.

Wells Fargo, Wachovia and the Bank of New York have a responsibility to their clients and American public opinion, which is overwhelmingly in support of protecting whales. If Mizuho is serious about having strong and lasting partnerships with U.S. banks and clients, it must end its financial backing of the Japanese governments whaling program.



Dear President Bush:

## THE WHALES NEED U.S.!

I am writing to ask you to help avert a looming threat to our ocean wildlife.

Whales are an important and irreplaceable part of our ocean environment. Their intelligence, grace and beauty make them ambassadors of our increasingly endangered seas. In the 1980s, however, whales of many species were being driven to the brink of extinction by rampant and uncontrolled commercial whaling. The United States' leadership in bringing about an end to this whaling in 1986 was a great victory for ocean wildlife and remains an important part of America's ocean legacy.

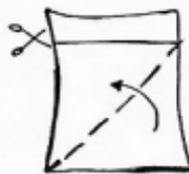
Despite the 20 year moratorium on commercial whaling, many whale species remain endangered. Yet, Iceland recently resumed commercial whaling and the Japanese whaling fleet has once again set out on its whale hunt. Japan is hiding its commercial whaling behind the cloak of "scientific" research but plans to kill 945 whales this year, including endangered fin whales. Next year, they will hunt endangered humpbacks.

The United States has long been a friend to whales and a strong opponent of commercial whaling. Now the whales need U.S. more than ever. As an architect of the whaling moratorium, the United States has a special responsibility to prevent the resumption of commercial whaling. More than any other country, the United States has the power to ensure that the IWC continues to protect whales and that the commercial whale hunt does not resume. Our government must use the full weight of its diplomatic resources to encourage new pro-conservation countries to join the IWC, to aid existing pro-conservation members to attend this year's meeting, and urge pro-whaling nations to reconsider their positions. Mr. President, I ask you personally to lead this effort.

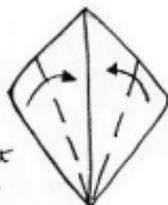
Your actions will make the difference between victory and defeat on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

# Origami Whale



1. First make yourself a square piece of paper by simply folding one corner to the adjacent side. Then cut off the small rectangle on top.



2. Fold left and right sides to meet at the center fold.



3. Your paper should look like an ice-cream cone. Continue by folding the tip over so that it meets the other folds.



4. Fold the right side over, so that it meets with the left side.



5. Turn your work around.



6. Make the tail by folding the end point up.

7. Now you can start being creative: draw eyes, fins or write a message on your whale.

