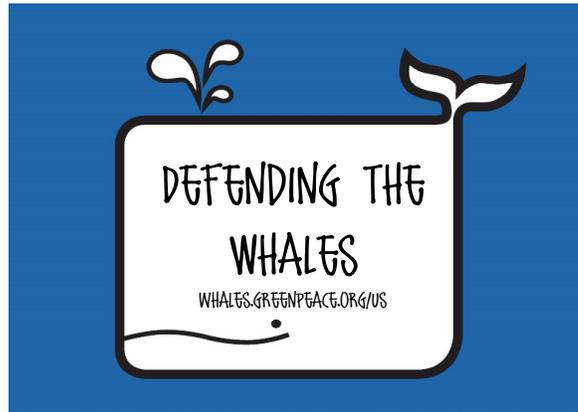


# WHALES OF INFORMATION

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Why Japan went Whaling in the Southern Ocean
2. Great Whales Commercially Hunted
3. The Southern Ocean
4. The IWC - a Fact Sheet
5. Whaling Chronology
6. Five Whaling Myths and Facts

**GREENPEACE**



## 2. WHY JAPAN WENT WHALING IN THE ANTARCTIC



- **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 that 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 (1939-1945), there was no Antarctic whaling. In 1945, after two Japanese cities (Hiroshima and Nagasaki) had been bombed and after the war had ended, whaling began again out of necessity. Trade routes between Japan and other countries were not open, which meant that the Japanese people were not receiving enough food. The Japanese people began to suffer from malnourishment and starvation.

At this time, Japan was under the occupation of the U.S. allied forces. An American General, Douglas MacArthur, realized the terrible situation in the country and gave permission for the Japanese Navy to be converted into a whaling fleet to bring back whale meat from the Antarctic to provide protein for the starving people. During this time, whaling provided the main source of protein for the people of Japan.

- **Antarctic Whaling Today**

From 1987 to now, the Japanese government continues whaling in the Antarctic claiming that they need to kill whales to study them. The hunt is similar to commercial whaling because almost 1000 whales are killed and the meat is sold in Japan. The older generation remembers when eating whale meat saved them from starvation, and some still eat it occasionally and favor whaling. Few young people actually eat whale meat and most are not in favor of whaling. The Japanese government still claims that whale meat eating is part of Japanese tradition but whaling and whale meat is less and less accepted by the public.

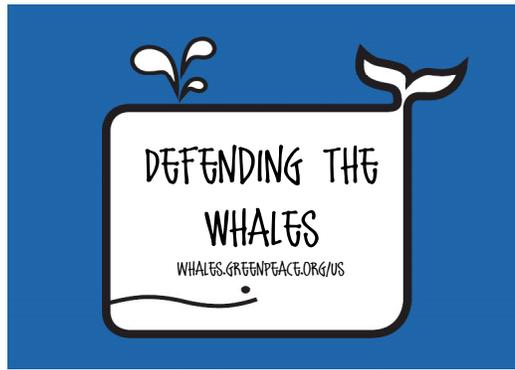
**Many whale species remain threatened or endangered. It is now time to help save the whales as they saved the Japanese people after the war!**

It is time for Japan to .....



whaling in the Antarctic!!

# GREENPEACE



### 3. GREAT WHALES COMMERCIALY HUNTED

#### General Whale Facts

- Whales are mammals just like humans and lions
- They are the largest creatures on Earth and some species are larger than any dinosaur
- They travel the farthest of any mammal, all throughout the World's oceans
- Whales sing the most complex songs of all wildlife on Earth

#### Related Definitions

**Baleen whales:** also known as great whales or whalebone whales. These whales are large, have two blowholes, and baleen (whalebone or keratin) plates on the upper jaw instead of teeth that help filter food (plankton). There are 11 species of baleen whales in the world today. (Keratin is a tough substance that makes up fingernails, hair, horse hooves and horns)

**Barnacles:** small shelled species that attach themselves to rocks, boats, wharves, and certain whales.

**Blowhole:** a single or paired breathing hole located on a cetacean's head.

**Breach:** the act by a cetacean of jumping or leaping out of the water and reentering on its side or back with a big splash.

**Calf:** a baby whale.

**Cetacean:** an aquatic [mammal](#) that includes whales, [porpoises](#) and [dolphins](#).

**Dorsal fin:** the top fin, or fin on a cetacean's back.

**Flukes:** the two horizontal, fin-like structures that comprise a whale's tail.

**Krill:** Small shrimp-like creatures.

**Mammal:** warm-blooded animal that has lungs, hair, gives live birth and nurses its young.

# GREENPEACE

Pelagic: belonging to the upper layers of the open ocean or sea.

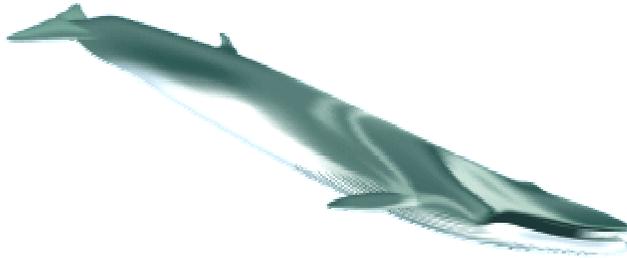
Prey: an animal that is hunted, killed and eaten by another animal.

Plankton: tiny plant and animal life drifting or swimming on ocean currents. They are an important source of food for baleen whales.

Rorqual: a group of baleen whales that include the blue, fin, sei, Bryde's and minke whales. Humpbacks are sometimes included in this list. They all have grooves on their throat and small pointed dorsal fins.

**GREENPEACE**

## Whales Hunted in the Southern Ocean



### **Fin whale**

Scientific name: *Balaenoptera physalus*

### Description

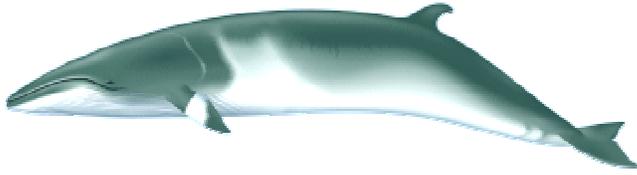
- Long and slender with a V-shaped head.
- 50-100 grooves on its underside from its jaw to its navel.
- Light gray to brownish-black on its back and white on its underside including its flippers and flukes.
- The body also has swirls of lighter colorings and one side of its jaw is black (left) while the other side is white (right).
- Has a slightly curved fin located far back in its body, a wide tail and small flippers.

### Fun fin facts

- Fin whales can be found in all oceans but prefer temperate (mild) and polar waters.
- The fin whale is the second largest whale in size and weight. Adult males in the Southern Hemisphere reach about 73 feet and females are slightly larger. Fin whales weigh between 45-75 tons!
- The fin whale is among the fastest swimming whales and can reach speeds of 23mph.
- They eat small species like krill and have been seen circling schools of their prey and rolling them into balls.
- They can consume up to 2 tons of food a day.
- Adult males are able to reproduce at 6-10 years of age.
- Because fin whales have powerful sounds that can carry long distances, they may stay in touch with each other from very far away.
- Population: about 40,000 in the Northern Hemisphere and 15,000-20,000 in the Southern Hemisphere, a small percentage of the original population levels.

Status: **ENDANGERED** (IUCN Red List)

# GREENPEACE



## Minke whale

Scientific name: *Balaenoptera bonaerensis* (Antarctic or Southern minke), *Balaenoptera acutorostrata* (Common or Northern minke)

### Description

- Long, slender and streamlined body with a narrow, triangular jaw.
- Black to dark gray on top, and white on the underside.
- Two areas of lighter gray appear on each side.
- Northern minkes have a white band on each flipper. The band is usually absent in Antarctic minkes.
- Has a tall, curved dorsal fin, skinny, pointed flippers and a wide tail that is up to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of its body length

### Minke memorables

- Minkes enjoy both sub-tropical and polar waters.
- Minke whales are the smallest of the rorqual family. Adult males measure up to 31 feet and females measure up to 33 feet. Both males and females weigh about 9 tons.
- Minkes are curious and sometimes like to swim beside ships, which they can often keep up with because like fin whales they are fast swimmers, reaching speeds of 21mph.
- It may be hard to see a minke at sea because their blow is not very visible and they spend most of their time underwater.
- In the feeding grounds of the Antarctic (southern ocean), minkes inhabit the pack ice which are large blocks of ice on the surface of the ocean generally found in polar regions.
- Minke whales feed mainly on krill in the Southern Hemisphere and on small schooling fish or krill in the Northern Hemisphere.
- Minkes like to be by themselves but sometimes travel in pairs or small groups.
- When healthy, they live to be about 50 years.
- They have one natural predator, the killer whale.

Status: **THREATENED** (IUCN Red List)

# GREENPEACE

## Great whales hunted in other parts of the world



### **Sei whale**

Scientific name: *Balaenoptera borealis*

### Description

- Slim and streamlined.
- Has a ridge that runs from its snout to its blowhole.
- Has 32-60 throat grooves.
- Bluish-gray body with a white underside.
- Side fins are short and pointed and the dorsal fin is tall and curved.

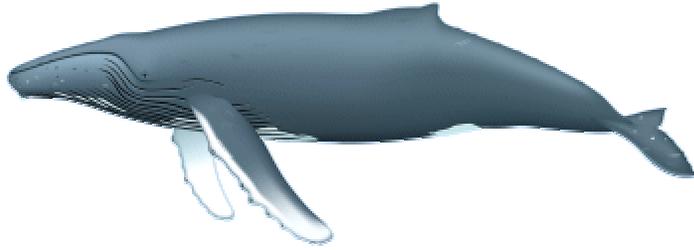
### Super Sei Stats

- Sei whales are found in all oceans and adjoining seas, except polar and tropical regions.
- These pelagic whales are found far from shore.
- Sei whales are the third largest baleen whales. Adult males measure up to 55 feet and weigh up to 25 tons. Females are a bit larger.
- The sei whale is one of the fastest swimming cetaceans and can reach speeds of 31 mph.
- Sei whales largely feed on small marine species such as krill and plankton, and often spend a lot of time at the surface skimming for food. They swim on their sides through swarms of prey.
- An average Sei whale eats about 1,984 pounds of food each day.
- Females typically give birth to only one calf every other year.
- Young reach sexual maturity at 10 years of age, but do not reach full adult size until they are about 25 years old.
- Sei whales can live to be 74 years old.

Status: **ENDANGERED** (IUCN Red List)

# GREENPEACE

## Great whales threatened by commercial hunting



### **Humpback whale**

Scientific name: *Megaptera novaeangliae*

#### Description

- Round body that narrows towards the tail.
- Black on top with black and white patches on the underside and tail.
- Flippers are very long and usually white underneath.
- The tail can be about 18 feet wide and the flukes have pointed tips.
- The shape and color pattern on the humpback whale's dorsal fin and flukes are unique to each whale as fingerprints are to each human.
- Has 20 to 50 ventral grooves, which extend slightly beyond the navel.

#### Helpful humpback hints

- Humpbacks are found in all the world's oceans.
- Most populations of humpback whales follow a regular migration route. In the summer they feed in colder regions like Alaska and in the winter they mate and give birth in warmer waters like Hawaii.
- The humpback usually reaches a length of between 46 and 51 feet and weighs up to 37.5 tons
- In the Southern Hemisphere, humpbacks mainly feed on krill, and in the Northern Hemisphere humpbacks eat schooling fish such as anchovies, cod, sand lance, and capelin.
- Humpbacks use a very interesting and unique way to feed. They sometimes construct bubble nets around a school of fish and then swim up through the bubble net to get their prey.
- The humpback is one of the most popular whales for whale watching because of its acrobatics.
- Humpbacks are often seen breaching, swimming on their backs with both flippers in the air, slapping their flukes on the surface, and slapping the water with their flippers. It is thought that this behavior is used for communication.
- The humpback is also called the "singing whale." A male's song may be as long as a half an hour and changes every year.
- At least 3 different species of barnacles are commonly found on both the flippers and the body of the humpback whale.

Status: **ENDANGERED** (IUCN Red List)

# GREENPEACE



## 4. THE SOUTHERN OCEAN

The Southern Ocean is the world's fourth largest ocean, roughly twice the size of the United States, and completely encircling Antarctica. The strongest winds on Earth blow across its waters, and the world's largest ocean current – the Antarctic Circumpolar Current—flows through it, carrying more than a hundred times as much water as all the rivers of the world combined.

### Life in the Southern Ocean

The waters of the Southern Ocean teem with life. It is home to around twenty species of whales and dolphins and six types of seal. 120 species of fish live there and they have evolved to avoid freezing in the icy Antarctic waters. Many seabirds live in the region, including 18 of the 21 kinds of albatross. It is also home to the smallest of ocean life – plankton.

Microscopic plankton is eaten by krill, and together they form the basis of the Antarctic food chain. Krill is the staple diet of many of the Southern Ocean's seabirds, fish and mammals. Krill swarms can contain up to 30,000 creatures per cubic metre.

The Southern Ocean is protected by a number of international treaties: a ban on commercial whaling under the International Whaling Commission; a limit to sealing under the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Seals; and regulations on fishing under the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources. However, these conventions are poorly policed and routinely breached.

### Threats to the Southern Ocean

#### Fishing

Despite the isolation and harsh conditions of the Southern Ocean, its waters are heavily and unsustainably fished. Two important commercial fisheries of the Southern Ocean, rockfish and ice-fish, collapsed as early as the 1970's and have not yet recovered. More recently, Patagonian toothfish and southern bluefin tuna have been targeted – by legal and pirate vessels alike – threatening the species and leading to calls for them to be listed and protected under the Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). In some areas it is thought up to 80% of the total Patagonian toothfish catch is illegal.

Targeting already threatened Patagonian toothfish and southern bluefin tuna, long-line fishing vessels, using lines up to 200 kilometres in length and armed with thousands of baited hooks, kill a broad range of Southern Ocean life. Attracted to the bait and then snared by the hooks, more

# GREENPEACE

than 100,000 albatrosses alone drown on long-lines every year. All eighteen species of albatross found in the Southern Ocean are on the brink of extinction.

### **Whaling**

Under international law, commercial whaling is banned in the Southern Ocean, but every year under the guise of “scientific research” a whaling fleet from Japan takes hundreds of minke whales. In 2005, the Japan Fisheries Agency announced they would double the take and add 50 fin and 50 humpback whales, taking the total annual Southern Ocean ‘scientific slaughter’ to around 1,000. Overall, 90% of Antarctic whales have been lost since whaling began. Despite 40 years of protection, the number of Southern Ocean blue whales is still only a fraction of the pre-whaling population.

### **Climate Change**

The Antarctic Peninsula is warming at a rate 2-3 times faster than the rest of the world. Temperatures have jumped by about 2.5°C over the past 50 years, causing the collapse of two major ice shelves in the last decade alone. Warming of the Antarctic Peninsula has been linked to a dramatic decline in krill populations, the basis of the area’s food chain. This may be one reason for the recent decline in penguin populations, and could also contribute to the failure in the recovery of some whale populations. In 1997, a Greenpeace expedition to Antarctica reported a large crack in the Larsen B Ice Shelf and warned of its imminent collapse. The 200-meter thick ice shelf, covering ten thousand square kilometres, collapsed into the sea in 2002.

### **World Park Antarctica**

Since the 1980s, Greenpeace has campaigned for the protection of Antarctica, establishing the Greenpeace World Park Base on Ross Island. For five years, the base was the centre of Greenpeace campaigns in Antarctica, maintained by annual re-supply voyages. It operated until a significant victory was achieved in 1992 when the Protocol on Environmental Protection was signed, designating Antarctica as a “natural reserve devoted to peace and science”.

**GREENPEACE**



## 5. THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION A FACT SHEET

- This year, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) will meet in Anchorage, Alaska. It will be the 59<sup>th</sup> meeting in the organization's history.
- The IWC first met in 1949, and has met every year since. The Commission's Scientific Committee meets for two weeks, followed by a week of working groups, and then the main meeting. This year, the main meeting will take place from May 28-31.
- The original 15 members of the IWC were Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Mexico, the Netherlands, Norway, Panama, South Africa, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Japan joined in 1951.
- Beginning in 1979, IWC membership started to grow: 23 members in 1979, 41 by 1985. Today, there are more than 70 countries that are members of the IWC.

### Early Failures

- The initial members were whaling nations. The goal of the IWC was to "provide for the proper development of whale stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry."
- However, in its early days, the Commission achieved neither, as one after another, remaining whale populations were hunted to near-extinction as member nations pursued their own narrow self-interests.
- As whale populations diminished, whaling became uneconomical, and one after another, the whaling nations hung up their harpoons.
- By the late 1960s and early 1970s, as environmental awareness increased, these former whaling countries began to push for whale conservation.

# GREENPEACE

## From Regulation of Whaling to Conservation of Whales

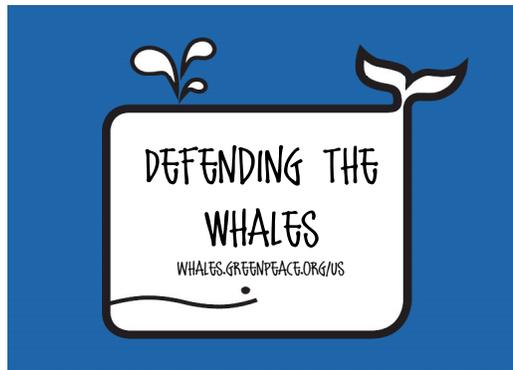
- In 1972, the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm, Sweden, passed a resolution by 52 votes to 0, calling for a ten-year moratorium on commercial whaling.
- Similar resolutions were introduced in the IWC in 1972, 1973, and 1974. But the proposal didn't receive the required three-quarters majority.
- Beginning in 1979, however, more and more countries joined the IWC which had never been involved in whaling but which were concerned for the future of the great whales. This influx of membership allowed the IWC to adopt a series of conservation measures.
- In 1979, the IWC banned the hunting of all whale species (except minke whales) by factory ships, and declared the entire Indian Ocean as a whale sanctuary.
- In 1982, the IWC adopted an indefinite global moratorium on commercial whaling. This moratorium was scheduled to take effect in the 1985/86 Antarctic whaling season.
- In 1994, the Commission declared the entire Southern Ocean to be a sanctuary for whales.



## Loopholes, Evasions, and Threats

- Despite the moratorium, loopholes in the IWC convention allow commercial whaling to continue.
- Under IWC regulations, any member country may lodge an objection to an IWC decision within 90 days, and thus be exempt from that decision.
- **Norway** lodged an official objection to the moratorium in 1982, and is not bound by it. It continues to hunt minke whales in the North Atlantic.
- **Iceland** left the IWC in 1992 but rejoined in 2003 with a reservation to the moratorium. It began commercial whaling in 2006.
- **Japan** conducts commercial whaling in the Antarctic and North Pacific under a loophole in the IWC convention that allows countries to kill whales for "scientific research." It began this "scientific whaling" in the Antarctic in 1987, and in the North Pacific in 1996. The IWC has repeatedly requested that Japan not conduct this "research," but under IWC rules, Japan is free to ignore the IWC and set its own quotas. The meat from this "research whaling" is packaged and sold on the market.

# GREENPEACE



## 6. WHALING TIMELINE

- c. 1000 CE** Basques begin hunting right whales in Bay of Biscay region, the first true commercial whaling operation. Over the ensuing centuries, they expand slowly northward and westward, arriving off Labrador around 1540.
- 1611** England's Muscovy Company sends two whaling ships to the newly discovered Arctic Island of Spitsbergen to hunt bowhead whales. By 1613, the waters around Spitsbergen are choked with whaling ships. By the late seventeenth century, Dutch whalers alone send roughly 250 vessels and 18,000 men to the Arctic in search of bowheads.
- 1675** Yoriharu Wada begins organizing whaling crews in Taiji, Japan.
- 1712** Beginning of American commercial whaling, operating out of Nantucket in search of sperm whales.
- 1842** British explorer James Clark Ross, sailing off the Antarctic Peninsula, observes "a very great number of the largest-sized black whales," prompting interest in the prospects for an Antarctic whaling industry.
- 1863** Norwegian whaling pioneer Svend Foyn launches the *Spes et Fides*, the first truly steam-powered whaling ship.
- 1868** Foyn perfects the harpoon cannon.
- 1874** German whaling ship, the *Grönland*, heads south in search of the whales spied by Ross. It becomes the first steam ship to cross the Antarctic Circle, but fails to catch any whales.
- 1904** Norwegian Carl Anton Larsen establishes the first Antarctic whaling operation, at Grytviken on South Georgia. In its first twelve months, the company shoots 184 whales. Within ten years, South Georgia whalers kill 1,738 blue whales, 4,776 fin whales, and 21,894 humpback whales.
- 1909** First British Antarctic whaling station established on West Falkland Island.
- 1923** Larsen leads the *Sir James Clark Ross*, the first Antarctic factory ship, into the Ross Sea.

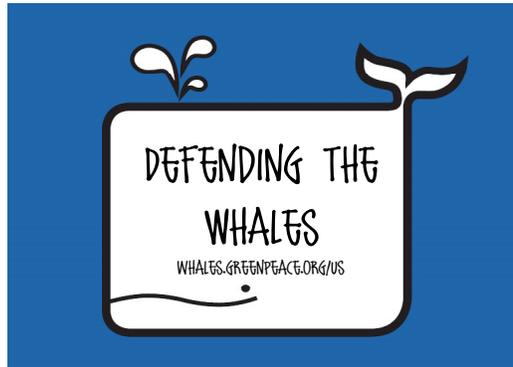
# GREENPEACE

- 1924** The *Lancing*, the first modern factory ship equipped with a stern ramp, reaches the Antarctic.
- 1927** Whale kills for the Antarctic season: 13,775.
- 1929** Whale kills for the Antarctic season: 40,201.
- 1930** Thirty-eight factory ships and 184 catchers, mostly British and Norwegian, are operating in the Antarctic.
- 1931** Geneva Convention for the Regulation of Whaling is signed; the first international attempt to regulate the industry.  
That same year, an all-time record 29,410 blue whales are killed in the Antarctic.
- 1934** First Japanese factory ship, the *Tonan Maru*, heads to the Antarctic.
- 1937** International Agreement for the Regulation of Whaling is signed in London.  
The next season, 46,039 whales are killed in the Antarctic, the highest total ever.
- 1946** International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW) is signed in Washington, D.C. Three years later, the IWC meets for the first time.
- 1964** Antarctic whalers are able to find and kill just twenty blue whales. The following year, the IWC protects the species from whaling.
- 1971** Greenpeace makes its first voyage, to Amchitka Island to protest nuclear testing.
- 1972** United Nations Conference on the Human Environment votes for a ten-year moratorium on commercial whaling.
- 1975** First Greenpeace anti-whaling voyage, confronting Soviet whalers in the North Pacific.
- 1979** IWC establishes Indian Ocean Sanctuary, and bans pelagic factory ship whaling for all species except minke.
- 1982** IWC establishes indefinite commercial whaling moratorium, to take effect from 1985/86 Antarctic season. Japan, Norway, Peru, and USSR file objections; Japan and Peru later withdraw their objections.
- 1987** Japanese factory ship *Nisshin Maru No. 3* and three catchers set out on first “scientific whaling” voyage in Antarctic, to kill up to 330 minke whales.
- 1989** During second “scientific whaling” voyage, the *Nisshin Maru No. 3* encounters the Greenpeace icebreaker *Gondwana*, which interferes with its actions for several days.
- 1991** MV *Greenpeace* leaves Singapore on 81-day voyage to intercept Japan’s Antarctic whaling fleet.
- 1992** French government proposes Southern Ocean Sanctuary; *Greenpeace* departs on second voyage to find Antarctic whalers.
- 1994** IWC adopts Southern Ocean Sanctuary; *Greenpeace* embarks on third Antarctic anti-whaling expedition.
- 1995** Japan increases quota for Antarctic “research” whaling from 330 to 440.

# GREENPEACE

- 1996 Japan begins “research” whaling in the North Pacific.
- 1997 “Irish proposal” floated at IWC meeting in Monaco.
- 1998 Brazil floats idea for a South Atlantic whale sanctuary; Australia and New Zealand suggest a similar sanctuary in the South Pacific.
- 1999 *Arctic Sunrise* engages *Nisshin Maru* and catchers.
- 2000 Japan expands North Pacific “research” to include Bryde’s and sperm whales.
- 2001 *Arctic Sunrise* again engages Antarctic whaling fleet.
- 2002 Japan expands North Pacific hunt to include sei whales, and increases N. Pacific quota of minke whales. At the annual IWC meeting, Japan and allies initially deny bowhead quota to natives of Alaska and Russia. At a special meeting in England, the IWC apparently readmits Iceland in to IWC, with a reservation against the moratorium; somehow, non-member Iceland is itself allowed to cast the deciding vote.
- 2005 The Government of Japan announces massive increase of “research” whaling quota in the Antarctic, to 935 minke whales annually. Beginning in 2006, the catch will also include endangered fin whales; and, from 2007, endangered humpback whales.
- 2005-6 The Greenpeace ships *Esperanza* and *Arctic Sunrise* interfere with the whaling fleet in the Antarctic.
- 2006 Iceland returns to commercial whaling, killing seven endangered fin whales.
- 2007 The *Esperanza* returns to the Antarctic in search of the whaling fleet.
- 2007 The International Whaling Commission meets on US soil for the first time in 18 years, in Anchorage, Alaska, in May.

*Adapted from “The Whaling Season: An Inside Account of the Struggle to Stop Commercial Whaling” by Kieran Mulvaney (Island Press, 2003).*



## 7. 5 WHALING MYTHS & FACTS

The whaling industry generally makes five main arguments in defense of itself: whales are not only not endangered, they are numerous and increasing; whales need to be “culled” to protect marine ecosystems because they eat too many fish; whaling is an essential element of their countries’ tradition and culture; that the anti-whaling countries are blocking movement forward, and; that we have learned from past mistakes.

Here are some reasons why those arguments are wrong:

- **Myth 1: Whales Must Be “Managed” To Protect Ecosystems Because They Are Eating Too Many Fish**

The pro-whaling forces repeatedly insist that whales eat “too many” fish and need to be controlled as part of a broader marine ecosystem management approach. The statement is unscientific and has no basis in fact:

- Many whales do not eat fish at all; indeed, most of the world’s baleen whales live in the Southern Hemisphere, where they primarily eat krill. Indeed, the stomach of virtually every whale killed in the Antarctic during Japan’s research whaling program has contained krill and nothing but krill, and yet still the Fisheries Agency of Japan continues to insist that its research program is essential for understanding “whales’ place in the ecosystem,” which is code for “proving that whales eat large amounts of fish.”
- The sizes of many whale populations today are at a small fraction of their levels in pre-whaling times when commercial fish populations were considerably larger and much healthier than they are today.
- The primary predators of fish are not whales, but other fish.
- The removal of top predators (such as cetaceans) can cause major ecosystem disturbances, with negative consequences for fisheries.
- Human overfishing (not whales) is the cause of the precipitous decline of commercial fish stocks worldwide.

# GREENPEACE

- **Myth 2: Whale Populations Are Numerous and Increasing**

The whalers argue repeatedly that whale populations are numerous and increasing, and that their catches will not deplete those populations. However, these arguments are based on some doubtful science. For example:

- The website of Japan's Institute of Cetacean Research (ICR) claims that populations of humpback and fin whales are growing by 14-16%, which the IWC's Scientific Committee has agreed is biologically impossible.
- The Fisheries Agency of Japan repeatedly claims that the IWC Scientific Committee has agreed there are at least 760,000 minke whales in the Southern Hemisphere. But this is not true. The 760,000 figure was an estimate based on surveys completed in 1987/88 which the Scientific Committee once acknowledged was the best available at the time. Since then, more recent surveys have suggested a significantly lower abundance of minke whales. Indeed, the Scientific Committee agreed in 2000 that the 760,000 number was no longer appropriate. There has been no agreed population estimate since and the population may be declining.
- Proposed Japanese catches of humpback and fin whales in the Antarctic will occur in populations that are believed to be below the level at which catches would be allowed under scientific guidelines developed by the IWC. Catches of humpbacks may threaten recovery of isolated humpback populations in the Pacific as well as interfering with existing non-lethal research programs.

- **Myth 3: Whaling Is Essential For Traditional, Cultural, and Nutritional Reasons**

- Japan's whaling tradition dates back only a few centuries (roughly as long as the whaling traditions of Britain and the Netherlands), and is centered around a few coastal communities. Japan's Antarctic whaling did not begin until the 1930s, and was expanded massively following World War II at the instigation of the United States, as a means of feeding a starving population.
- Demand for whale meat no longer exists in Iceland, Japan or Norway.
- In 2006, the Norwegian government cut short the whaling season halfway through because the market for whale meat was already saturated.
- In early 2007, Greenpeace discovered that more than half the total weight of the whales killed in Iceland's 2006 commercial fin whale hunt had been discarded in a waste dump outside Reykjavik.
- Meanwhile, Japan has more than 4,000 tons of whale meat from its "scientific" whaling program in cold storage—uneaten, unsold, and unwanted.
- Few Japanese people view whales as a vital food source and even fewer actually eat them. According to an opinion poll conducted in Japan in June 2006, 69% of Japanese people do not support whaling on the high seas and 95% never or rarely eat whale meat.

**GREENPEACE**

#### **Myth 4: The Anti-Whaling Countries Have Repeatedly Blocked Attempts to Adopt the Revised Management Procedure**

One of the most frequent claims by the FAJ, as well as by Norwegian and Icelandic whaling interests, is that non-whaling nations are obstructionist, moving goal posts and doing all they can to block “rational” management of whale populations. Specifically, they repeatedly insist that NGOs and the conservation-minded governments have stubbornly blocked the adoption of the Revised Management Procedure and Revised Management Scheme (RMP/RMS). The truth is rather different.

- The IWC adopted the RMP in principle back in 1994. The biggest obstacle to the implementation of the full Revised Management Scheme (RMS) has been the refusal by Japan and other whaling nations to accept the need for monitoring and oversight of their whaling operations, from inspectors and observers on board whaling vessels to oversight of DNA databases and trade monitoring schemes. Japan and the pro-whaling nations refuse to accept control and administrative measures that are considered routine in modern fisheries treaties.
- At the 54<sup>th</sup> IWC meeting, in Shimonoseki, Japan, Sweden introduced a proposal to adopt the RMS, which would have moved the IWC toward whaling under very strict conditions. Japan and its paid allies voted against it. Had they voted for it, it would have passed and the RMS would have been adopted five years ago.
- Norway, having found that the RMP does not provide high enough quotas for its liking, is now working to revise it. This revision is based on running simulations for 300 years and allowing higher catches in the first 100 years, which are made up for by reduced catches over the next 200 years.

#### **Myth 5: We Have Learned From the Mistakes of the Past**

Historically, large-scale management failures, overhunting and the mistake of treating marine mammals as if they were fish, lead to the massive depletion of each whale species that was commercially targeted. Those who argue for a return to commercial whaling say that the mistakes of the past will not be repeated, that the lessons have been learned. Recent evidence suggest this is not the case:

- As outlined above, pro-whalers use disputed population figures and manipulate or ignore the RMP in order to produce the highest possible hunting quotas.
- Under JARPA II, both fin and humpback whales will be targeted. Despite some recovery fin whales are still considered to be endangered, humpbacks to be vulnerable.
- In August 2006, investigations revealed that Japan had been illegally overfishing for Southern Bluefin tuna over a period of 20 years, taking 178,000 tons of tuna above what was allowed. Southern Bluefin tuna is now considered critically endangered by the IUCN.

# **GREENPEACE**