



image 16 April 2008 Stolen whale meat intercepted by Greenpeace Japan and the delivery slip claiming the box contained only “cardboard”

Greenpeace Investigation: Japan's Stolen Whale Meat Scandal

GREENPEACE

greenpeace.org

For more information contact:
sara.holden@greenpeace.org

Authors: Junichi Sato / Sara Holden
Additional material provided by Ecostorm

JOB REF: 150

Published in May 2008
by Greenpeace International
Ottho Heldringstraat 5
1066 AZ Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 20 7182000
Fax: +31 20 5148151

greenpeace.org

Japan's Stolen Whale Meat Scandal

Introduction	5
--------------	---

Background

1. Contact from the informant	8
2. Testimonies from informants	10
3. Nisshin Maru docks at Tokyo Harbour	11
4. Confirming delivery vouchers at Seino Transport company depot	13
5. Kyodo Senpaku company employee register and comparison	16
6. Following boxes to Aomori prefecture and Fukuoka prefecture	17
7. Discovery of salt-preserved whale meat - the evidence is secured	19
8. Market research and other testimony	22
9. Contact to the Fisheries Agency of Japan	22
10. Greenpeace Demands: A full investigation and cancellation of whaling permits required	23

APPENDIX ONE: TRANSCRIPTS OF TESTIMONY AND INTERVIEWS

GREENPEACE INFORMER	24
WHALE MEAT TRADERS	26
TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH FISHERIES AGENCY OFFICIAL	29

“The research whaling which our country is doing is a lawful activity carried out on the high seas under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling.”

**Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda
House of Councillors - plenary
session 23 January 2008**

Introduction



image 15 April 2008 The whaling fleet factory ship Nisshin Maru, docked at Tokyo Harbour, Oi Fisheries pier.

On 15 April 2008 Japan's whaling fleet finished its five-month voyage to the Southern Ocean and docked in Tokyo Harbour in the midst of much international criticism. The Japanese government has consistently claimed the whaling programme, which has been going on for more than 20 years, is a lawful activity, and invests a subsidy of more than 500 million yen (approximately 5 million US dollars) per year from Japanese tax payers. The Fisheries Ministry which is the responsible government office, the Japan Institute of Cetacean Research which is the main constituent for the research, and the whaling vessels' charter company Kyodo Senpaku claim that this research is not only legal, but also based firmly in credible science. A Greenpeace undercover operation conducted over four months, shows clearly that there is serious illegality within the operation.

SUMMARY OF KEY EVIDENCE:

The Greenpeace evidence shows a systematic, large scale operation on board the whaling factory ship Nisshin Maru, to steal whale meat processed from the Southern Ocean hunt. It is believed the practise has been taking place for many years. During the course of the investigation, Greenpeace obtained a box of stolen whale meat as proof of the fraud.

The box contained 23.5kgs of whale meat. Known as "Unesu" in Japanese, the meat is preserved in salt, rather than the official preserving method of freezing. The box obtained by Greenpeace was one of four boxes, claimed to be "personal baggage" sent to a home address via an express delivery company by an employee of Kyodo Senpaku who was a crew member on board the Nisshin Maru during the 2007/2008 Southern Ocean expedition. The value of this one box is between 100,000 yen (US\$1,000) and 300,000 yen (US\$3,000). Further investigation has established that more than 23 crew members sent at least 93 boxes of "personal baggage" to at least 30 destinations.



image 16 April 2008 23.5 kilos of stolen whale meat secured as evidence by Greenpeace Japan.

From the evidence and testimony of this investigation, it appears that this kind of theft of whale meat, financed by tax payers money, has been taking place over many years as an open secret.

When enquiries were made to the Fisheries Agency of Japan, which has jurisdiction over whale meat distribution, they claimed only officially sanctioned whale meat is offloaded from the Nisshin Maru.

Given the scale and organised nature of the illegality uncovered by Greenpeace, it is not credible for officials from Kyodo Senpaku, the Institute of Cetacean Research and even the Fisheries Agency to deny knowledge of the fraud.

Greenpeace will file a complaint with the Tokyo district Public Prosecutor's Office. In addition to the complaint, Greenpeace demands the Government of Japan:

- 1. begin an immediate, full and public investigation of the evidence and allegations**
- 2. issue no new licences to the whaling fleet operator, Kyodo Senpaku**
- 3. revoke the Institute of Cetacean Research whaling permit**
- 4. give no further tax subsidies to the Institute of Cetacean Research.**

The remainder of this report gives further details about the Greenpeace investigation, including photographic and testimonial evidence of the scale of the stolen whale meat scandal.

Details of the identity of informers and Kyodo Senpaku employees have been removed from this report, but employee details will be supplied to the Tokyo district Public Prosecutors Office.

Background

1. Contact from an informant

Greenpeace was contacted by an informer who used to be involved in the whaling operation and claimed to have information about the Japanese government's "research whaling" programme.

The credibility of the witness was verified through secondary interviews supporting his claims and Greenpeace's own investigation.

There were four allegations:

1. Individuals preserve large quantities of the valuable cuts of whale meat in salt and take them home. This is an open secret on board the ship and has been conducted for decades.

2. After flensing, a lot of whale meat is thrown into the sea in order not to overload the freezing capacity on board the Nisshin Maru during the whaling operation.

3. In order to achieve the increased quota from the JARPA II "research" programme, whales were targeted and not hunted randomly as required under the scientific regulations.

4. Working conditions on board the Nisshin Maru have become very bad because of the JARPA II increased quota and the demand to catch large numbers of whales.

The four-month long Greenpeace investigation focused on the first claim, of large scale theft of whale meat.



image informant wearing Kyodo Senpaku uniform.

2. Testimonies from informants

During the investigation, additional information from one current and two former employees of Kyodo Senpaku were also provided to Greenpeace. Greenpeace carefully examined the testimonies provided by all three informants, which revealed the following:

- 1. Many of the veteran crewmembers called “production workers” who engage in the work of flensing whale meat on deck take whale meat home themselves.**
- 2. This theft has been considered an “accepted practise” for decades.**
- 3. They take whale meat of particularly high value (for example the part called “Unesu” that becomes bacon) into their cabins, and preserve it in salt.**
- 4. When close to arriving at port, they pack boxes with at least 20 kilos of salted whale meat per box.**
- 5. Some people make up as many as 20 to 30 boxes.**
- 6. Other crewmembers and the Japan Institute of Cetacean Research staff make private orders for whale meat from the production workers.**
- 7. They send it to their homes and other places, preserved in salt, via Seino Transportation Company’s express home delivery service.**
- 8. In addition to the whale meat preserved in salt, whale meat is distributed on board for clients of Kyodo Senpaku, and for individuals’ souvenirs, and delivered after arriving in port.**
- 9. There is also whale meat for direct sale to crewmembers.**
- 10. These boxes are unloaded on the first day of arrival at port.**

**Excerpt from interview with one infomer:
The full transcript is available in Appendix 1**

Q: About how many of the people on board, do you think (involved in this theft)?

A: On the Nisshin Maru, if there’s 150 crew, it’s on the order of about 120 or 130, and everyone takes home about 200 or 300 kilos of whalemeat or bacon. This is meat that doesn’t appear in the production figures, you know.

Q: In other words, separate from the formally announced number of tons of whalemeat?

A: Apart, it’s apart from that. It seems like they’ve been doing this since a long time ago.

Q: Is this the kind of situation that everyone knows about?

A, Yes. Everyone knows, but it’s not talked about in public. They all do it with tacit understanding. There are Kyodo Senpaku staff there too, but it seems that they see and pretend not to see.

Q: On the Nisshin Maru it’s not only Kyodo Senpaku but, for example, there are people from the Institute for Cetacean Research on board, too, aren’t there?

A:, Yes. Probably they do know, but they don’t talk about it openly.

3. Nisshin Maru docks at Tokyo Harbour

On the 15th April 2008, the Nisshin Maru docked at Oi fisheries pier in Tokyo Harbour. In accordance with the information received, trucks from Seino Transport were waiting on the wharf to load baggage, and just after 1pm about twenty crewmembers in orange helmets and blue workclothes disembarked and lined up in front of the Seino Transport trucks.

Approximately 90 boxes, apparently “personal-use” baggage, were offloaded and waiting crewmembers quickly loaded these boxes into the Seino transport trucks, in exactly the same manner that had been witnessed following the ship’s arrival in 2006. The Greenpeace investigation team followed the Seino Transport truck overland.



image 15 April 2008 The whaling mothership Nisshin Maru docked at Oi Fisheries pier at Tokyo Harbour. The crewmembers can be seen gathered at dockside. In the foreground is the Maritime Safety Agency’s security boat.



image Ship's crew loading baggage unloaded from whaling mothership Nisshin Maru into Seino Transport company truck.

4. Confirming delivery vouchers at Seino Transport company depot

The trucks were followed to the Seino company depot near the Oi Fisheries pier where investigators examined and verified names, addresses and sales voucher details on each box. Many of the boxes had listed the contents as “cardboard”, but were clearly far too heavy to contain only cardboard. Some contents were simply claimed to be “salted stuff.”

The investigation in the depot has established that more than 23 crew members sent at least 93 boxes to at least 30 destinations.



image 15 April 2008 Individually-addressed baggage unloaded from Nisshin Maru transported to Seino Transport's depot.



image 15 April 2008 Boxes piled up at Seino Transport's depot, mixed in with personal belongings such as guitars.



image 15 April 2008 On this sales voucher addressed to Mutsu [city] in Aomori prefecture, name of goods is “cardboard, salted stuff,” for sender, “Tokyo Oi Fisheries pier Nisshin Maru” is written, and indicates a total of two boxes being sent to the same address.



image 15 April 2008 This sales voucher addressed to Hokkaido, the goods name is “cardboard” and it shows five boxes being sent to the same address.



image On this sales voucher addressed to Hokkaido, “black nylon, box” is written in the Goods Name and the sender is “Kyodo Senpaku inc, Nisshin Maru.”

船 員

船 員

	氏 名	職 種	生年月日	〒	住 所	電話番号
あ	[REDACTED]	製 造 次 長	22. 1. 22	[REDACTED]	北海道 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	操機手	19. 1. 22	[REDACTED]	秋田県 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	司厨員	26. 10. 13	[REDACTED]	大分県 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	二 航	46. 7. 21	[REDACTED]	徳島県 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	甲板手	22. 3. 3	[REDACTED]	島根県 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	製造員	25. 4. 27	[REDACTED]	宮城県 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	甲板員	23. 2. 23	[REDACTED]	宮城県 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	製造手	60. 9. 4	[REDACTED]	高知県 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	製造員	37. 8. 13	[REDACTED]	青森県 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	見通士	36. 9. 27	[REDACTED]	和歌山県 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
	[REDACTED]	甲板長	59. 9. 23	[REDACTED]	長崎県 [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

© GREENPEACE

image The Kyodo Senpaku employee registers obtained by Greenpeace.

5. Kyodo Senpaku company employee register and comparison

Greenpeace also obtained copies of Kyodo Senpaku employee registers, which listed 267 names, personal details and the specific occupation of those working on board the Nisshin Maru. According to the information from the informants, “production workers” are experienced staff assigned to whale flensing work on the deck of the Nisshin Maru. The information obtained by Greenpeace suggested that men from these areas were the most likely to be involved in the theft of whale meat as they had the most access. Thirty nine of the 267 employees were listed as production workers, including “production head” and “production assistant.”

After documenting delivery notes on boxes at the depot, 23 names and addresses were noted. Of those 23, 12 names and addresses matched the personal details on the Kyodo Senpaku employee register. All were listed as “production workers”.

One of the 12 production workers sent boxes to one ex-production head, one ex-production assistant head and one ex-production worker who had been named by the informer as being involved in the same operation while they were employed by Kyodo Senpaku. The fact that they are still receiving boxes from current employees suggests they are still involved in the theft of meat. All 47 boxes sent by the 12 production workers were due to be shipped to Hokkaido, Aomori, Nagasaki, Akita, Miyagi, and Yamaguchi prefectures.



image 16 April 2008 to the Seino Transport depot in Aomori city.

6. Following boxes to Aomori prefecture and Fukuoka prefecture

Following the delivery of the boxes to the Seino Transport depot, on April 15th 2008 Greenpeace investigators followed two different consignments to depots in Aomori prefecture and Fukuoka prefecture



image 16 April 2008 One box secured from Seino Transport depot in Aomori prefecture.

On April 16th at the Aomori depot, boxes labelled as “cardboard” were tested for weight and clearly were considerably heavier than if they had only contained cardboard. Four boxes were all due for delivery to the home address of one of the “production workers” listed on the Kyodo Senpaku personnel register. Investigators intercepted the box in order to verify the contents.



image The same box documented in Tokyo, delivered to the Aomori depot the following day.



image 16 April 2008 The box taken to Aomori hotel and that day's Yomiuri Shinbun laid out to verify the date.

7. Discovery of salt-preserved whale meat - the evidence is secured

After carefully opening the box, it was found that contrary to the consignment sheet claims that it contained cardboard, it contained ten large pieces of whale meat, known as “unesu” preserved in salt, hidden under overalls and sealed in thick plastic packaging. Unesu is high value meat, taken from the lower jaw to belly region and used to make whale bacon.

Demand for this type of meat is much higher than for the red meat usually sold on the official market. The total weight of the meat was 23.5 kilos.

In addition to being prime cuts of meat, the salt preserving process, which can take months and is not the official preserving process on board, adds to the value. At the market, minke whale bacon sells for about 20,000 yen per kilo.

The whale meat in the box had not been fully processed into unesu, therefore the actual market value is unclear, but even taking this into consideration, it is estimated to have a value of between 5,000 and 15,000 yen (US\$50 – US\$150) per kilo. Therefore one 23.5 kilo box would be worth between 110,000 and 350,000 yen (US\$1,100 – US\$3,500). If all four boxes contained the same amount of meat, the crewmember could be making a profit of between 440,000 to 1,400,000 yen (US\$4,400 – US\$14,000)



image 16 April 2008 The sales voucher attached to the box with the whale meat. It describes the contents as “cardboard” and indicates that a total of four boxes have been sent.



image 16 April 2008 The contents of the box packaged with work clothes as if to conceal the contents. The black plastic bag at the bottom contains whale meat.



image 16 April 2008 The total weight of the whale meat in the box was 23.5 kilos



image 16 April 2008 The whale meat is a cut called "Unesu" and the surface has turned an orange colour because it's preserved in salt.



image 16 April 2008 in the black part of the grooves of the "Unesu" white salt used in the preserving process can be seen.

The Greenpeace investigators retained the box in order to carry out further investigations prior to presenting all the evidence to the authorities.

8. Market research and other testimony

“The minke whale and fin whale products sold by this Institute are a research byproduct of public character, so it has to be distributed fairly to all levels of society and at the lowest price possible. From that point of view, we should ensure fair selling guarantees, and we requested guidance from traders to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries integrated food department distribution section and, under guidance of the Fisheries Agency Far Seas section this Institute will host a study group concerning trade for everyone involved in distribution, and is working to more extensively and fairly disseminate whale meat at a reasonable price to all classes of citizens. “(Press release from the Institute of Cetacean Research 31 May 2007)

Before and after the Nisshin Maru returned to Tokyo harbour on 15 April, Greenpeace investigators visited whale meat sellers and restaurants in various locations including Hakodate, Hiroshima, Kushiro, Sapporo, Nagasaki, Nagano, Shimonoseki, Kagoshima, and Tokyo, gathering evidence that traders not only know stolen whale meat is available from the Nisshin Maru crew, but that many were expecting supplies of whale meat well in advance of the official release of meat in June. Transcripts of secret filming of traders is contained in Appendix 1.

9. Contact to the Fisheries Agency of Japan

At the press conference on April 5th 2008, Takahide Naruko, a chief of Far Seas Fisheries Division of the Fisheries Agency of Japan, said that raising the price of the whale meat from the research whaling had been considered. “This is because we could hunt only 551 whales this year from the Southern Ocean, 60% of our aim, since activities by anti-whaling organizations disturbed our research.” (April 15th 2008, Asahi-Shinbun Website)

Greenpeace Japan telephoned Takahide Naruko on May 8th 2008. Despite the apparent widespread knowledge of the illegal activities on board the Nisshin Maru factory whaling ship amongst crew, as well as meat traders who expect to receive the supplies earlier than the official release date, Mr. Naruko denied that there was any possibility of crew privately bringing back whale meat from the Southern Ocean whaling expedition. If it is true that the authorities responsible for whale meat distribution are not aware of additional meat being sold earlier than the official release dates, then this raises serious questions about the competence of the Fisheries Agency and the Far Seas Fisheries Division, to manage the whaling programme and the subsequent meat sales.

A full transcript of the recorded conversation is in Appendix 1.

10. Greenpeace Demands:

A full investigation and cancellation of whaling permits required

In addition to the need for a full public investigation and the suspension of permits, Greenpeace proposes that subsidies to the Institute of Cetacean Research and contracts to Kyodo Senpaku should no longer be issued for a whaling programme, but the resources and staff of both organisations could be employed as part of the Australian government's proposed collaboration on non-lethal research on whales and marine life in the Southern Ocean.

The demand for whale meat is now so low that the operation is commercially unsustainable – a fact made clear by the revelation that the Institute of Cetacean Research has been unable to repay the 1 billion yen (approximately 10 million US dollars) government loan from 2006.

The Japanese taxpayer should no longer be expected to fund a failed and corrupt whaling programme in the Southern Ocean.

APPENDIX ONE: TRANSCRIPTS OF TESTIMONY AND INTERVIEWS

GREENPEACE INFORMER

Q: First of all, to start with, it's fine to say as much or as little as you like, but could you please let us know how it is that you knew about the details that you've given to us as evidence at this time, and the reason why you gave it to us now. .

A: It's because I was actually with Kyodo Senpaku, whaling in the Southern Ocean, sailing on the research programme. If you ask why I wanted to talk about it, the reality is that a considerable quantity of whalemeat was being discarded under the name of research. I had some doubt about whether this maybe wasn't research, you know, and felt that this wasn't good, and started wanting to talk about it.

Q: In what way specifically was the discarding of the whalemeat being done?

A: As there was a period when we couldn't catch due to Greenpeace and Sea Shepherd's obstruction actions, the situation was that we had to quickly catch in a hurry, and there were many times when we had to catch at least 20 minke in a day. At those times mostly, when there were at least twenty whales, it was 'miscellaneous meat.' We couldn't handle all this smaller parts of meat and other miscellaneous meat and it would be left there as it was until the next day. At 7.00am, the next new whale would come on board. Next, we couldn't finish processing and the whole lot would just be discarded. From one minke there is about 350 kilos of miscellaneous meat, so by a rough calculation it would seem about seven tons was thrown away.

Q: That means almost on a daily basis about seven tons of meat was being discarded?

A: That's right. When twenty or more whales came on board, without a doubt they discarded meat.

Q: That means, without any processing they discard it just like that?

A: That's right. Without touching it. They discard it because there's no time to process it.

Q: How did the ship's crew who saw this feel about it?

A: A lot of people were saying don't catch them if it's just going to be discarded, but it wasn't something that could be complained to the bosses, you know. It was a private matter. They were saying don't take them if it's so many that they're discarded.

Q: I expect for the people who caught the whales, the fact that they were discarded...

A: They really hated that. It was a very disagreeable thing for the people who have been involved a long time with whales.

Q: So what they're doing is quite pointless?

A: Yes, it's not research whaling, it seems like it's commercial whaling.

Q: So they take just the part they need and discard the remainder?

A: Yes, that's right. It seemed they were working with the idea that they'll discard it without touching it.

Q: In some places, it's been said that the random catching wasn't being done. What do you think about that?

A: It seemed like whenever they could catch a whale, they caught it. Most of the time when they couldn't, it was when the sea was rough. The impression is that when whales could be caught, they would catch any number.

Q: So you definitely didn't have the sense that they were catching randomly, but taking them wherever they were, whenever they were there.

A: That's right.

Q: Beside this, do you know of other matters in which the crewmembers were doing wrongful things?

A: Well, I think this is probably a traditional thing, but most of the crew preserve whalemeat in salt themselves, such as Unesu for whale bacon, and take it home. This is a fair quantity, with so many people taking some. It's not every crewmember, though. The young people don't have much interest. All the people of a certain age are taking it home.

Q: Specifically, the older crewmembers are people connected with what kind of employment?

A: Mostly production, they're production workers. It's production workers mostly.

Q: About how many of the people on board, do you think?

A: On the Nisshin Maru, if there's 150 crew, it's on the order of about 120 or 130, and everyone takes home about 200 or 300 kilos of whalemeat or bacon. This is meat that doesn't appear in the production figures, you know.

Q: In other words, separate from the formally announced number of tons of whalemeat?

A: Apart, it's apart from that. It seems like they've been doing this since a long time ago.

Q: Is this the kind of situation that everyone knows about?

A: Yes. Everyone knows, but it's not talked about in public. They all do it with tacit understanding. There are Kyodo Senpaku staff there too, but it seems that they see and pretend not to see.

Q: On the Nisshin Maru it's not only Kyodo Senpaku but, for example, there are people from the Institute for Cetacean Research on board, too, aren't there?

A: Yes. Probably they do know, but they don't talk about it openly. To some extent everyone is being fair and square in this way, they aren't doing something like stealing in front of people's eyes. Each person is doing it in a hidden way. But everybody knows. But they aren't doing anything to pursue the matter boldly.

Q: How exactly are they doing this as you say "in a hidden way"?

A: For example, if it's unesu, it's made into bacon, and each person pickles it in salt to preserve it in their own cabin. For the rest of the meat, cuts like red meat and tail meat are preserved by freezing. Everyone has their own coldstore, and in there is a place for preserving.

Q: So this means they are preserving something taken improperly?

A: That's right. Yes.

Q: In what kind of form does everyone put it in?

A: They pack it in boxes. Frozen goods are already packed in boxes, and everything is packed in boxes.

Q: So they put this there under an implicit understanding?

A: That's right. It's known that it exists, and none of the people responsible say anything. None of the the Kyodo Senpaku employees say anything. The Institute people almost never go in there,

Q: Do you know what quantity is taken home by the people who take the most, for example?

A: Yes. The biggest packing case for home delivery service can generally hold about 40 kilos, and there are people who take about 20 boxes. So that's 800 kilos. About that much, for people who take the most.

Q: What about the least?

A: They take about five or six boxes.

Q: Would there be, for example, whales like fin whales included in that?

A: Yes. When I was on board we were taking fin whales, and fin whale is perfect, so red meat and unesu from fin whales was included. However, not entirely. I think most of that was grabbed and packed by upper management and other superiors.

Q: As for this whalemeat which is hidden and taken home, is a lot of it high value?

A: High value product, yes. All of it.

Q: So this means they don't steal the inexpensive cuts?

A: Right. 80% is unesu. The raw material for bacon, you know.

Q: Is there anything besides that?

A: There's red meat, and fatty red meat, and tail meat too.

Q: Is this hiding and taking meat home done for no particular reason, simply to hide it and take it home?

A: If it was just to eat at home, they wouldn't need that kind of quantity. Therefore, well, the impression is that people who have been crew for ten or 20 years are selling it on a wide scale in their home towns and at markets in the area.

Q: What kind of tangible form does that take, is there evidence for this selling on a large scale that one hears of, is there anything like that?

A: I heard it from people on the ships' crew. There was even one who said he'd sold enough, just with bacon, to build a house.

Q: Earlier, you mentioned that people from the Japan Institute for Cetacean Research knew about this to some extent, but to what extent do you think everyone was aware of it?

A: They weren't looking to catch people red-handed but knew it was going on, and mostly said nothing.

WHALE MEAT TRADERS

Case 1: 24 and 26 April Conversation with female trader said to be delivering salt to Kyodo Senpaku company



image 26 April 2008 female trader supplying foodstuffs and salt etc to Kyodo Senpaku in Hiroshima.

24 April 2008

14:14:06

Researcher: Do you have something like a delicious tasting salt, maybe a good salt to spread over fish and preserve it? Are there different kinds?

Woman: No, because even for something like whale, ordinary salt is used. The preserving of the skin in salt is done with salt coming from here. Coarse sea salt is good. If it's a carefully selected part, the type of salt makes no difference.

14:14:50

Researcher: Where is the whale coming from?

Woman: You hear it a lot, don't you, like Kyoko Senpaku or Nisshin Maru. They bring it back pickled in salt, or frozen. The research whaling has been treated badly recently hasn't it? They're coming back on the 29th. Coming into the Universal shipbuilding dock. We're doing that sort of work.

14:16:20

Researcher: Have you been selling salt for a long time?

Woman: Uh-huh, been making a living from shipping for a long time. It's that kind of work, isn't it.

26 April 2008

17:10:00

Researcher: At the sushi shop kindly recommended to me by your husband I was able to have some of this year's whale meat.

Woman: But for sushi, it's no good because the mothership isn't in yet, you know. [Go] after it comes in. That's after it comes on the 29th. Because then that sushi shop [and] people from restaurants around this area buy it.

Researcher: Oh, they buy it from the ship?

Woman: No, not from the ship but I don't know what the route is.

17:12:10

Researcher: There's frozen whale and there's salt-pickled whale. So is it that you're selling your salt to Kyodo Senpaku?

Woman: Uh-huh.

Case 2: 24 April Conversation with male trader said to be delivering salt to Kyodo Senpaku company



image 24 April 2008 Male trader delivering food, salt, etc to Kyodo Senpaku in Hiroshima prefecture.

24 April 2008

19:05:40

(After visiting the recommended sushi shop)

Researcher: It wasn't written on the menu.

Man: Yeah, it's not.

Researcher: If you're in the know, you're in the know?

Man: (Nods)

Researcher: Is there a special name?

Man: I don't think so. This year's whale isn't here yet. From the 29th onwards.

Researcher: If so, I'll go then. Is it this sort of feeling every year? When the ship arrives...

Man: Some people have them, somehow...

Case 3: 24 and 26 April Conversation with sushi shop man in Hiroshima prefecture introduced by man in Case 2



image 26 April 2008 Sushi shop man in Hiroshima prefecture.

24 April 2008

19:27:15

Researcher: I've come today having been referred by Mr. XX. I'd like to eat whale.

Man: Yes?

Researcher: Do you have this year's new stock?

Man: We do have some, but haven't cut the seal yet.

19:27:30

Researcher: When will you be opening this year's?

Man: It's been busy, you know. Ha ha ha.

Researcher: So it's that you're in the process of stocking up?

Man: That's right.

Researcher: I'm in Hiroshima til the end of the month, will it be in time?

Man: Hmm, well.

Researcher: Is there enough time?

Man: (makes affirmative gesture)

Researcher: Well then, I'll come again around the end of the month.

26 April 2008

17:32:35

Researcher: Is the meat I've asked for today from the Southern Ocean? Did it come this year?

Man: (makes affirmative motion)

17:34:19

Researcher: Quite valuable, this, isn't it? Special route... new meat from the Southern Ocean, I humbly partake. Which part is it from?

Man: That's a secret. The very best is meat from the tail, but it's so much so that it's practically impossible to get if you don't live in Nagatacho.

17:47:35

Researcher: Crewmembers take whalemeat for their own use. In secret?

Man: That's right. Those who have recently joined get red meat, and it's allocated by seniority of service. Of course the good parts, well it's the same with everything, but there's a thing called fishermen's cuisine.

17:49:00

Man: The delicious parts don't appear in the market. They choose the best parts themselves when they do the flensing.

Researcher: What I've had just now, has it come by that route?

Man: No, no, that comes a different way.

17:51:35

Researcher: By a different route, there's a route for obtaining this year's meat?

Man: (nods)

TRANSCRIPT OF INTERVIEW WITH FISHERIES AGENCY OFFICIAL

8 May 2008

Researcher: The high value part?

Man: (nods) If you pay a bit of money you can get it. On the boat, it's classified by regions of the country. It's cut precisely and comes out as sashimi product.

18:00:40

Researcher: Are the crew selling what they've secretly brought back?

Man: That kind of thing doesn't happen much. Mostly it's friends and relatives and the like. A few years ago there was a crewmember who said "I gave some to that snack [bar?]"

18:12:30

Researcher: About how much, by weight, of this meat is being brought in?

Man: (silence)+ Sometimes there's talk about frozen blocks coming from Kyushu.

The whalemeat that's just arrived hasn't gone round anywhere yet.

18:23:10

Researcher: The specially valuable meat I had just now...

Man: Somewhere, there will be some place where that is.

18:25:45

Researcher: Is this meat from this year?

Man: (nods yes)

11:58

Investigator: After the price (of the whale meat) will be decided on June, will all whale meat be sold at this price?

Mr. Naruko: Yes, United price will be set according to each part of the meat. Meat will go to the wholesalers with this price.

Investigator: Which means there will be no sales before June?

Mr. Naruko: Yes, without a price, there's no way to sell.

Investigator: I heard from somewhere that the sailors used to bring back some whale meat as private souvenirs during the industrial whaling period. This does not happen these days under the research whaling, right?

Mr. Naruko: Of course not. Since the distribution (of whale meat) is very limited.

Investigator: Since the whale meat is considered as "official," right?

Mr. Naruko: Yes.

GREENPEACE

Greenpeace is an independent global campaigning organisation that acts to change attitudes and behaviour, to protect and conserve the environment and to promote peace.

Greenpeace International
Ottho Heldringstraat 5
1066 AZ Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel: +31 20 7182000
Fax: +31 20 5148151



image 15 April 2008 Greenpeace campaigner holding a banner saying "Can you call this research?" in front of Nissin Maru.