

Resolution on Small-Type Coastal Whaling Submitted by Japan

Recalling that since the imposition of the moratorium on commercial whaling in Japanese coastal waters twenty years ago, the Government of Japan has repeatedly requested an interim relief allocation of minke whales in order to alleviate the hardships of its small-type coastal whaling communities;

Noting that these requests have been rejected by the IWC even though the Commission has adopted a number of resolutions (ref. IWC-45-51(1993), 1995-3, 1996-1, 2000-1, 2001-6, and 2004-2) that:

- i) recognize the socio-economic and cultural needs of the small-type coastal whaling communities;
- ii) recognize the severe impacts of the moratorium on these communities;
- iii) agreed (and reaffirmed) its commitment to work expeditiously to alleviate their distress and;
- iv) noted the importance for communities to continue customary resource use practices on a sustainable basis.

Recalling also that between 1986 and 1995, Japan submitted 37 academic anthropological and socio-economic papers by international experts documenting the history, culture and traditions that are the essence of small-type coastal whaling communities and that the whaling culture of Japan is comprised of many aspects including those related to processing techniques, kinship and specialized labour and distribution systems, methods of preparation/cooking and consumption, accompanying religious rituals, festivals and performing arts that have been developed over centuries.

Aware that an allowable take for small-type community based whaling with a restriction that the meat and products of such whales are to be used exclusively for local consumption would provide for the reinstatement of traditional and local practices associated with catching, processing, distribution and consumption of whale meat, and revitalization of traditional festivals and rituals of the regions.

NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION

Reaffirms its recognition of the socio-economic and cultural needs of the small-type coastal whaling communities in Japan and its commitment to work expeditiously to alleviate their distress and;

Requests the Scientific Committee to develop a species specific method for calculating sustainable catch limits for North Pacific minke whales taking into account its review of the JARPN program for consideration by the Commission at its annual meeting in 2008.

Agrees that it will consider implementation of interim arrangements that would alleviate the distress of small-type coastal whaling communities in Japan.