

Aboriginal harvest of gray and bowhead whales by Russian indigenous people in 2009

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The IWC allocated a block quota of 600 gray and 25 bowhead whales for Chukotka indigenous hunters for a period of 2008-2012.

The harvest of gray and bowhead whales was supervised in 2009 by The Association of Indigenous Small Peoples of the North.

The Fisheries Council of Chukotka Autonomous Region distributed quotas among hunters on 23 March 2009. There was a need for quick regulation and redistributing of quotas during the harvest season. All redistributions were approved by the Council.

A total of 115 gray whales (58 males, 57 females) were harvested in Chukotka waters in 2009. Biological parameters of gray whales taken in 2009 are given in the Annex.

The largest gray whale female was killed near Uelkal settlement on 27 July 2009. It was 13 m long and weighed 23.3 tons.

The largest gray whale male was harvested near Lavrentiya settlement on October 26 2009. It was 13 m long and weighed 23.2 tons.

The furthest trailing distance of a whale was 38 km and the shortest was 0.4 km.

32% of taken gray whales demonstrated aggressive behavior during the hunt.

29 days out of 193 days of harvest season were flat calm in 2009.

1 pregnant female was taken in 2009.

Five cases of killer whale attack were observed.

Six out of 115 gray whales were considered as unfit for consumption in 2009 (samples were taken from 6 animals).

Biological sampling was conducted on 61 gray whales.

The latest data from ChukotTINRO and TINRO reveals that few animals were shorter than 8,0 m, but no milk was found in their stomachs.

1 gray whale was lost due to force majeure conditions in 2009.

All aboriginal whaling data were presented by the Department of Industrial and Agricultural policy of Chukotka Autonomous Region.