



FISHERIES AGENCY

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES, GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN

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21 January 2015

Dr. Simon Brockington
Executive Secretary
International Whaling Commission
The Red House, 135 Station Road
Impington, Cambridge
UK CB4 9NP

Japan's Proposal on Small-type Coastal Whaling (Questionnaire)

Dear Dr. Brockington:

As you will recall, at the 65th meeting of the Commission, Japan submitted a proposal for a schedule amendment to permit its small-type coastal whaling vessels to catch minke whales from the Okhotsk Sea-West Pacific Stock (IWC/65/09). While the proposal incorporated MCS (monitoring compliance and surveillance) measures and was based on the *Implementation Review* of the Revised Management Procedure (RMP) completed by the Scientific Committee in 2013, the proposal was not adopted (19 votes in favor, 39 votes against and two abstentions). IWC members that opposed this proposal referred to, as reasons of their opposition, existence of the commercial whaling moratorium, doubt about the scientific basis for establishing the catch quota, opposition to creating a new category of whaling, and unconditional opposition to commercial whaling. Japan responded to these points in detail at the 65th meeting of the Commission addressing the issues in dispute. However, we believe that there are remaining arguments and issues that need further discussion.

By making the remaining arguments clear it is possible to clarify conflictive points and differences in the positions among IWC members which may be useful for making progress on the issue of Japan's small-type coastal whaling. It may also be possible to avoid wasting time by repetition of arguments at the IWC meeting and to discuss the issue with mutual understanding of positions among IWC members.

At the 65th meeting of the Commission, Japan suggested the establishment of an intersessional working group to discuss various issues of small-type coastal whaling. However, based on careful consideration after the meeting, we have concluded that a transparent process through the Secretariat with Circular Communications will more positively facilitate understanding among all IWC Members and be more effective than an intersessional working group. We believe this will be an important and useful first step to clarify issues surrounding small-type coastal whaling.

Therefore, the Government of Japan requests that this letter together with the attached list of questions be circulated to all IWC Commissioners and Contracting Governments. Also, the Government of Japan would like to ask all IWC Commissioners and Contracting Governments to submit their answers to the questions to Japan through the IWC Secretariat by the end of April 2015. To ensure transparency, the Government of Japan requests that these answers be circulated to all Commissioners and Contracting Governments unless an answering party is opposed to doing so.

After having received answers, Japan will consider further action to make a progress on the issue of its small-type coastal whaling such as circulating a follow-up letter to Commissioners and Contracting Governments through the Secretariat.

I would appreciate your continued cooperation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read '森下 丈二' (Morishita Joji).

Joji Morishita
IWC Commissioner for Japan