

**Statement on the Future of the IWC**  
**Small Working Group on the Future of the IWC, 2-4 March 2010, St. Pete Beach, Florida, USA**  
GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN

1. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to Sir Palmer, the Chair of the Support Group, IWC Chairman, Ambassador Maquieira and the IWC Secretariat for their efforts made thus far concerning the Support Group tasks. Since the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting the process to achieve a comprehensive agreement on the issue of the future of the IWC, started last October with the consultation among the 12-member Support Group including Japan, aiming towards completion at the 62<sup>nd</sup> IWC Annual Meeting scheduled for June, this year.
2. As a product of a series of SG meetings, the Chair's Report was published as of Feb.22, this year. Under the vision of improving the conservation and the management of whale populations, it demonstrates an innovative framework for a 10 year interim period during which different whaling categories shall be removed and whaling activities will be authorized with catch limits reduced from the current levels. For all IWC members, the critical issue we should focus upon is the appropriate approach for conservation and management. The idea to set aside, for a certain period of time, the categorization of whaling that does not contribute at all to this endeavor is extremely innovative and logical. Japan would like to pin our hopes on the potential that this new framework could bring the IWC out from the state of dysfunction and restore its normal function as a multilateral resource management organization.
3. However, this 'Consensus Decision' draft has not been agreed yet, even by Support Group members. Especially, I understand that there still is a big gap on the issue of catch limits among members. Japan has been as active and flexible as possible in trying to reach agreement, including on the issue of catch limits. Therefore, I would like to declare that Japan will continue our diplomatic efforts toward the adoption of this draft document by consensus, in order to realize the normalization of IWC.
4. I have repeatedly pointed out in the past that we should go back to the principle that we had agreed when this process was initiated. In other words, all members would accept some compromise but enjoy some benefits by agreeing on the consensus package. Through this solution, there is neither unilateral victory nor unilateral complete defeat. Both pro-sustainable use nations and anti-whaling members can engage in consultation on an equal footing.
5. Among IWC signatories, there exist fundamental differences in their positions, regarding whaling. It is obvious from the history that resolution of these differences is extremely difficult. Therefore, under the process for "the future of IWC", we must set aside one's own principles and adopt a package of agreement by consensus, even if it didn't fully satisfy everyone. Without any reference to the principles, we have to put the highest priority on avoiding a crisis for the IWC.
6. Japan has made a series of major compromises in this process of "the future of IWC". For instance, although Japan's basic stance regarding scientific research is that it is a right of our country clearly provided for in Article VIII of the ICRW,

and that it should not be infringed, we have accepted and engaged constructively in an open discussion on this matter for the sake of this process. To date, we have expanded the target species and sample size of research whaling. However, to cooperate with this process we have discussed the reduction of the catch internally and made a specific proposal for the reduced figure without sacrificing the scientific credibility of our research. With regards to the sanctuary, in principle, Japan opposes the establishment of sanctuaries without scientific grounds. And yet, to form consensus, we are not opposing this idea, as we consider it as an acceptable compromise.

7. Within the current process, adhering to a proposal that completely negates the other parties' fundamental position is a total contradiction of the intention and the spirit of the process, and as a result it could lead to the collapse of the process. It is quite regrettable if there are members in the group that stick to demands that clearly will not see agreement at the end of the day and will simply invite conflicts. Such proposals are utterly unacceptable, as they will undermine the cumulative results and efforts made through negotiations among SG members and through difficult adjustments of domestic opinions.
8. Furthermore, there is another important issue. The acts of harassment and interference by Sea Shepherd to Japanese research vessels. In the published "Consensus Decision" document, there is a paragraph showing commitment of IWC members to ensure safety at sea. Japan places importance on fulfilling such commitment. A number of resolutions have been adopted in the part which condemned obstructive acts. However, acts of harassment and interference by S/S have not subsided. Rather, they are getting more radical and malicious, year by year, thereby causing actual damages. During the meeting this time, I would like to have an opportunity to show you one of the actual attacks (acts of harassment and interference) by S/S that occurred this season. I am sure that you will be convinced how their activities could jeopardize the safe navigation of vessels and threaten the lives of the crew. You will see with your own eyes that their acts are exceedingly dangerous and that the International Community should never allow such deeds.
9. If I may repeat, Japan's intention is to carry out the discussion cool-headedly and constructively for the diplomatic solution of the issues concerning the process for the future of IWC. I hope that all other members will show flexibility accordingly.