

*Japan Information Center*  
CONSULATE GENERAL OF JAPAN  
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Ms. Jennifer Olney  
ABC 7 News

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Dear Ms. Olney,

Thank you for making an inquiry to our office on Japan's stance on whaling. We have included the Japanese Government's response in regards to the following four questions:

1. What is Japan's opinion on whaling?
  - Japan has been a signatory of the International Whaling Commission since 1951.
  - As an IWC member nation, we are committed to appropriate conservation of whales on a scientific basis, which are an important marine resource. While Japan strongly believes that endangered species whose population has drastically depleted should be protected, it also believes that sustainable use (of whales) should be duly permitted.
  - Based on this fundamental stance, Japan has been proactively contributing to the discussions for the future of the IWC (International Whaling Commission) together with the United States and related countries.
  
2. What is Japan's position on the Proposed Consensus Decision from the Chair and Vice Chair?
  - Elements of Japan's stance have been incorporated in the recent Proposed Consensus Decision by the Chair and Vice Chair of the IWC, released on April 22; however, the overall number of catch limits differs from Japan's view.
  
3. What is Japan's opinion on whaling on a scientific basis ("scientific whaling")?
  - Japan's scientific whaling is in active compliance with the rules set forth in Article 8 of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling. In this regard, there is no legal problem from the perspective of international laws.
  
4. Is Japan's basis for scientific whaling justified, or is it just an excuse to hunt whales for food?
  - Japan collects more than 100 different entries of scientific data from each whale obtained through scientific whaling. The results of the data analysis are reported to the IWC's Scientific Committee each year and the scientific knowledge observed in these results has been highly praised, and they contribute to the discussions in the Scientific Committee.

- After the scientific research, whale meat is processed in compliance with the rules set forth in Article 8, Section 2 of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling.

(Note: Article 8, Section 2: “Any whales taken under these special [scientific research] permits shall so far as practicable be processed and the proceeds shall be dealt with in accordance with directions issued by the Government by which the permit was granted.”)

We hope that our answers can aid your story.

Please do not hesitate to contact our offices in the future.

Best regards,

Midori Yamamitsu  
Director and Consul  
Japan Information Center  
Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco