

**JAPAN'S OPENING STATEMENT  
TO THE 68th MEETING OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION**

The Government of Japan expresses its utmost appreciation to the Government of Slovenia for hosting the 68<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in Portorož with its outstanding beauty. Our appreciation also goes to all those who have made their efforts to prepare for this meeting, including the IWC Secretariat.

For nearly 40 years since the adoption of Schedule 10(e), the so-called commercial whaling moratorium, Japan had been sincerely engaged in the dialogues in the IWC including the RMS negotiation and the "Future of the IWC" process, in order to seek acceptable solutions to all Member States, based on science, international law and mutual respect.

At the 67th meeting of the IWC in September 2018, Japan made a proposal that could have allowed coexistence of different views of the Member States regarding whales and whaling in the IWC by ensuring that the organization fulfill the objectives of its founding treaty, the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW), namely conservation of whale stocks and orderly development of the whaling industry. This proposal, however, was not adopted at the meeting, and Japan withdrew from the Convention effective on 30 June, 2019.

Despite its withdrawal, Japan has not changed its basic policy that it is committed to international cooperation for the proper management of aquatic living resources. Japan has always been working for the proper conservation and management of whale resources based on scientific evidence, in coordination with international organizations, and it will continue to contribute toward this goal. With respect to the IWC, Japan will continue its cooperation, especially in the Scientific Committee through sharing the results of scientific researches such as the Pacific Ocean Whale and Ecosystem Research Programme (POWER).

Also, Japan would like to emphasize that we maintain its unshakable faith that whale resources should be used sustainably based on the scientific evidence and this is consistent with the objectives of the ICRW. Japan will continue to pursue the science-based sustainable use of whale resources under the proper management, hoping that it will become the common goal of the IWC.

Japan is looking forward to constructive discussions and cooperation with the Member States during the IWC68 meeting.

(Note)

From July 2019, after the withdrawal, Japan resumed commercial whaling within Japan's territorial sea and its exclusive economic zone. The whaling has been conducted in accordance with international law and within the catch limits calculated in line with the RMP to avoid negative impact on cetacean resources. For more details; <https://www.jfa.maff.go.jp/e/whale/index.html>