



International Whaling Commission

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28 April 1998

CIRCULAR COMMUNICATION TO COMMISSIONERS
AND CONTRACTING GOVERNMENTS
IWC.CCG.26

Comments by Japan on JARPA Research

The Commissioner for Japan, Mr. K. Shima, has asked that a paper submitted by his Government "*A Comment on the Pertinence of JARPA Research for Management*" (SC/50/O 12) to the Scientific Committee should also be distributed to Commissioners.

A copy of Mr. Shima's letter and the paper are enclosed with the postal version of this Circular Communication.

Dr. R. Gambell
Secretary to the Commission

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
TOKYO, JAPAN

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21 April 1998

Dear Dr. Gambell,

Attached please find a paper with our corresponding comments to the comment by Australian Commissioner regarding the JARPA surveys at the 49th annual meeting in Monaco.

Australian Commissioner actually misinterpreted the Scientific Committee's view. I therefore would appreciate your distributing copies of the paper to all the Commissioners in order for them to confirm what had been really mentioned at the last Scientific Committee and how the SC comment was misinterpreted by Australian Commissioner.

I am submitting the paper also to the coming Scientific Committee as one of the meeting documents.

I am thanking you for your cooperation in advance and looking forward to seeing you in Oman shortly.

Sincerely,



Kazuo Shima
IWC Commissioner for Japan

**A COMMENT ON THE PERTINENCE OF JARPA
RESEARCH FOR MANAGEMENT**

April 1998
Government of Japan

Last year's Report of the Scientific Committee stated that "Finally, the results of the JARPA program, while not required for management under the RMP... (IWC/49/4, page 66, section 12.2.1.1)." This sentence was totally misinterpreted at the subsequent IWC Commission meeting in Monaco. At that meeting, when introducing a resolution urging the Government of Japan to refrain from issuing special permit for the take of whales, particularly in the Southern Ocean Sanctuary (IWC resolution 1997-5), Australia stated that "The JARPA review concluded that the results are not required for management and this advice from the Scientific Committee should be heeded (Chairman's report of the 49th Annual Meeting, page 32, section 14.2)." Proper clarification on the SC comments is needed and the result of the consideration should be entered into the Scientific Committee's report this year.

The RMP allows management of whale stocks, even under the circumstances that very little information exist, without exposing the stocks to undue risks of extinction. Indeed, in the extreme, the RMP can be workable such management in the complete absence of any such information because it would set the zero-catch limit in this case. But it would clearly be nonsense to infer from this fact that no scientific information is required for management.

Required level of the scientific information for management can be reasonably considered in the context of the Commission's agreed objectives for management appeared in RIWC 40:18:

- (i) stability of catch limits;
- (ii) acceptable risk that a stock not be depleted below some chosen level so that the risk of extinction of the stock is not seriously increased by exploitation; and
- (iii) making possible the highest possible continuing yield from the stock.

The simulations conducted to develop the RMP (RIWC 42:87-136) made it very clear that information about the MSY rate (MSYR) is a critically important requirement to meet objective(iii). Last year's deliberations in the Scientific Committee (IWC/49/4, page 66,

section 12.2.1.1) showed the way how information related to MSYR for Southern Hemisphere minke whales can be obtained from the results of JARPA. There is no other direct information available on MSYR for minke whales, and the age data essential for the analyses in question cannot be obtained other than by lethal sampling.

Information on MSYR for Southern Hemisphere minke whales is also valuable for the management of other whale stocks, particularly for stocks of minke whales in other ocean regions. In addition, it may provide useful information in assessing other baleen whale stocks. The Scientific Committee has adopted Bayesian methods of assessment for example for Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas bowhead population (see IWC/49/4, section 11.2.1.1). These methods are based on the assumption that information on population parameters for some stocks are valuable for developing the prior distributions used in Bayesian assessments of other stocks.

Judging from the above, while it might be possible to address the Commission's management objective (ii) without the results from JARPA, JARPA does provide critically important information required for management in relation to the Commission's objective (iii). The Scientific Committee must bring this to the attention of the Commission to avoid further misunderstandings of the nature reflected in the comments by Australia quoted above.