

**NGO Opening Statement for IWC65**  
**Japan Small-Type Whaling Association**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Twenty-seven years ago IWC forced Japan's small-type coastal whalers to stop minke whaling. For our small-type coastal whalers and our whaling communities--Taiji, Wada, Ayukawa, and Abashiri--minke whaling is an integral part not only of our history, but also of our own lives. For nearly three decades, for reasons entirely unrelated to science, IWC has wantonly diminished our communities.

Mr. Chairman, you, and all the members of IWC know that our small-type minke whaling operations are just that: small. You also know, from all the research Japan has provided over the years, that our coastal minke whale resources are healthy and abundant. We are proud that Japan's small-type coastal minke whaling has always been a sustainable fishery. Our fishery has not negatively impacted the ecosystem and it never will.

We, yet again, remind this body of how extensively we have documented to IWC the importance of the socio-economic, cultural, religious, and dietary elements of minke whaling in our communities. No IWC Member State can truthfully assert that it is unaware of the problems that the moratorium is causing for us and for our communities.

Each and every one of you knows that that IWC has itself repeatedly acknowledged in its own resolutions that the moratorium is causing our communities serious distress. Further, you must in fairness acknowledge that IWC has several times voted to alleviate the distress to our communities, and yet this scientifically insupportable moratorium continues.

Mr. Chairman, Members, despite all this history of professed good intentions, IWC, for a generation's lifetime, has continued to ignore its own voted-upon commitments.

In failing to act on Japan's coastal whaling, IWC continues seriously to damage its already-questionable credibility in its claim to be a responsible natural resources management organisation.

Why does IWC, year after year, continue to insist on positions that clearly run counter to customary international practice as regards sustainable use of natural resources? We still do not understand how, alleging to be a responsible manager, IWC continues to acknowledge, and then to disregard the needs and interests of our whaling communities.

After more than a quarter-century of its flagrantly inconsistent positions, we anticipate that IWC at its 65<sup>th</sup> meeting is no more likely to work with us than it has in the past. Nonetheless, Japan still--despite the odds against us here--supports the principle of international conservation cooperation. We continue to hope that IWC will, before it renders itself entirely irrelevant on this issue, finally establish a minke whale quota for our communities. We remain committed to restoring this way of life that is vital to us.

Surely, by now, you must recognise that our communities have not given up, and neither will we.