

**ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION IN
2014 AND 2015 years.**

IWC allocated blocked quota for subsistence whaling including needs of Chukotka indigenous hunters in 2013-2018 years. The total of 720 gray and 30 bowhead whales supposed to be taken in Russian waters in a 6-year period with a limit of 135 Gray and 7 Bowhead whales strikes annually.

The Fisheries Council of Chukotka Autonomous Region Administration distributed the quota on Gray and Bowhead whales among local whaling communities. 13 local communities were involved in whaling in 2014 and 15 local communities in 2015. Subsistence harvest was supervised by Department of Industrial and Agricultural Policy of the Administration of Chukotka Autonomous Region.

A total of 124 Gray whales were struck in 2014 and 125 in 2015. Bowhead whales were neither landed nor struck during 2014-2015 hunting seasons.

The majority of whales use to be struck by indigenous hunters of Lorino settlement (59 in 2014 and 56 in 2015). A total of landed Gray whales were 122 in 2014 and 124 in 2015. Also 2 whales were struck but lost in 2014 and 1 whale – in 2015. None of taken whales was stinky (inedible) in 2014, while there was one such whale in the harvest in 2015.

Harpoons, darting guns and rifles are used during hunt. Normally about half of the whales demonstrate aggressive behavior (44% in 2014 and 47% in 2015). Mean amount of ammunition spent to each whale use to be approximately same between the recent years. The whale towing distance to coast generally varies between 0.3 and 40 km. Indigenous hunters of Chukotka take Gray whales with body length of 8 to 14 meters with an average of about 10 m and body weights of those whales are between 6 and 32 tons with mean weight of about 11 tons. Fetuses usually found in one or two females taken in the harvest. Also about 10% of taken whales in each year have various injuries and traumas caused by Killer whale attacks.

Ice coverage of Chukchi Sea and adjacent waters in recent years is average in multiannual trend; ice density generally is not high and in most cases (except May and December) ice is absent during the hunting season.

Scientific supervision of aboriginal whaling is performed by TINRO-Center (Vladivostok) and ChukotTINRO (Anadyr) scientists. About 50 samples of tissues are usually taken in each year. All whaling products are also registered in logbooks before use for local subsistence purposes.

All aboriginal whaling data are collected and presented yearly by Department of Industrial and Agricultural policy of the Administration of Chukotka Autonomous Region.