

Annual Report of the International Whaling Commission 2004
56th Annual Meeting, 2004

Resolution 2004-2

RESOLUTION ON JAPANESE COMMUNITY-BASED WHALING

WHEREAS, since 1986, the International Whaling Commission has repeatedly discussed in-depth the importance of history and culture of Japanese traditional whaling at its various working groups and the Commission itself;

Whereas the International Whaling Commission, recognising the socio-economic and cultural needs of the four community-based whaling communities in Japan (Abashiri, Ayukawa, Wadoura and Taiji), has repeatedly resolved to work expeditiously to alleviate the distress to the communities which has resulted from the cessation of minke whaling (first, IWC/45/51; most recently, IWC Resolution 2001-6);

WHEREAS, more recently, the Summits of Japanese Traditional Whaling Communities were held in three consecutive years in Japan (Nagato, Yamaguchi in 2002, Ikitsuki, Nagasaki in 2003, and Muroto, Kochi in 2004) and they have further examined the long-lasting whaling history and culture which are deeply rooted in various places of Japan, not only in four community-based whaling communities but also throughout Japan;

WHEREAS the Summits acknowledged that archaeological findings have shown that the ancient Japanese could have started to utilise beached whales at least 9,000 years ago, could have begun active hunting of dolphins and porpoises at least 5,000 years ago, and could have launched grand-scale active hunting of large whales at least 2,000 years ago;

WHEREAS the Summits emphasised that, among others, holding the philosophy and having skills to utilise whales fully was and is the core essence of the Japanese whaling culture;

WHEREAS the Declarations adopted at the Summits (the 2002 Nagato Declaration, the 2003 Ikitsuki Declaration, and the 2004 Muroto Declaration) pledged that Japanese time-honoured whaling traditions and culture are to be passed onto the future generations; and

WHEREAS various UN conventions, treaties, and other documents upheld the importance of sustainable use of natural resources in general and the significance of continued customary resource use for communities;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COMMISSION:

REAFFIRMS the Commission's commitment to work expeditiously to alleviate the continued difficulties caused by the cessation of minke whaling to the communities of Abashiri, Ayukawa, Wadoura and Taiji, and

ENCOURAGES IWC members to co-operate towards a resolution of this matter.