

Revision of catch limit and allocation of TAC for minke whale

1. In 2019, prior to the resumption of commercial whaling for large cetaceans, Japan calculated the catch limits for minke, Bryde's and sei whales. The calculation results were reviewed by the group of independent scientists (Review Panel) and the catch limits were set to the level which was deemed acceptable. However, as for minke whales, the Review Panel recommended that "the catch limit calculation should be updated as soon as the new abundance estimate [...] becomes available, and a revised catch limit should then be set".

For reference:

"Report from the group of independent scientists requested to review the proposal from Japanese scientists for catch limits for Japanese commercial whaling"

(<http://www.jfa.maff.go.jp/e/whale/attach/pdf/index-11.pdf>)

2. Since new abundance estimates have been obtained for minke whales, taking into account the above recommendation, the catch limit for minke whale was updated and allocation of Total Allowable Catch (TAC)^{*1} has been revised through the following process, which is the same process as the one used previously.
 - (1) Japan's RMP Team (JRT) calculated a catch limit, in line with the Revised Management Procedure (RMP) developed by the International Whaling Commission (IWC).
 - (2) The Review Panel reviewed the data, methodology, process, and results of the calculation of catch limit by the JRT and confirmed their plausibility.
 - (3) The Fisheries Agency of Japan (FAJ) set the catch limit taking into consideration the report from the Review Panel.
 - (4) The FAJ set TAC by deducting the average number of bycatch caught by set nets in the past 5 years from the catch limit.
 - (5) The number of Government reserves^{*2} was deducted from the TAC

and the remaining number was allocated for whale fishing managers.

*1 TAC has been set for Whaling since 2022 due to the amendment of the Fishery Act.

*2 When the FAJ sets TAC, a part of TAC is reserved by the FAJ to facilitate necessary adjustments, if necessary, such as a transfer of TAC allocated to different fishery types, and/or to control operation periods during the fishery season.

3. The updated catch limit and revised allocation of TAC for minke whale are as shown in “Revised “Allocation of TAC” of minke whale for 2022” on the website of the Fisheries Agency of Japan (see “Whaling Affairs” page). (<http://www.jfa.maff.go.jp/e/whale/index.html>)
4. The details of calculations for update of catch limit of minke whale by the JRT can be seen in Appendix 1 “Revision of the catch limit for western North Pacific common minke whales calculated in line with the Revised Management Procedure (RMP)”.
5. The report of the scientific review conducted by the Review Panel on calculation methods and results on update of catch limit of minke whale by the JRT can be seen in Appendix 2 “Report of a panel appointed to review a proposed revision of the catch limit for Western North Pacific common minke whales”.
6. The review provided by the Review Panel was considered by the JRT to be fair and balanced in general.
7. Taking into account the technical recommendations provided by the Review Panel, Japan will further promote relevant scientific research in order to ensure sustainable use of whales based on scientific evidence.