

Resumption of Commercial Whaling

1 July 2019

Fisheries Agency of Japan

1 Japan's basic policy

- (1) Japan's position on commercial whaling*
 - (i) Japan resumes commercial whaling on 1 July 2019 in accordance with its basic policy of promoting sustainable use of aquatic living resources based on scientific evidence.
 - (ii) The commercial whaling will be conducted within Japan's territorial sea and its exclusive economic zone. In the Antarctic Ocean /the Southern Hemisphere, Japan has suspended the taking of whales including that under scientific research programs.

*Please refer to the following URL for further information on Japan's basic policy on whaling:

https://www.mofa.go.jp/ecm/fsh/page4e_000969.html

- (2) Calculation of the catch limits based on scientific evidence
 - (i) The catch limits have been calculated in line with the scientific method developed and adopted by the International Whaling Commission (IWC).
 - (ii) This calculation method is extremely conservative, and it has been confirmed by the IWC Scientific Committee that continuous harvest of calculated number of animals for 100 years would have no harmful effect on the targeted stock.
 - (iii) The catch limit calculated by this method is always less than 1% of the estimated abundance of the targeted stock*.

*The level of catch limits calculated by the method applied to other fishery resources in the Japanese coasts and offshores are usually around 3-30% of their estimated abundance.

- (iv) The catch limits have been determined through the scientific review by a group of international eminent scientists.

2 Setting of the catch quotas for Commercial Whaling

The catch quotas for the period from 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2019 are as follows. In calculating the catch quotas, the following numbers are deducted from the catch limits calculated by the scientific method; i) number of whales caught through Japanese scientific research program in 2019, ii) number of bycatch caught by set net, and iii) number of reserved animals by the Government.

		Catch quotas for Commercial Whaling 1 July 2019 to 31 December 2019	
Minke whale	Factory ship type whaling		52
	Costal whaling		
Bryde's whale	Factory ship type whaling		150
Sei whale	Factory ship type whaling		25

3 Compliance measures

Whaling operations, including the number of whales caught and area operated, will be strictly monitored and controlled by the following measures:

- i) daily reporting by all whalers of the number of whales caught,
- ii) placement of government official(s) at each landing base and on board the factory ship, and
- iii) monitoring of vessels' locations through satellite communication devices.

【Note 1 : Catch limits calculated】

	Estimated abundance (a)	Catch limit (b) (only in EEZ & territorial sea)	Ratio (b/a)
Minke whale (Western North Pacific)	20,513	171	0.8%
Bryde's whale (North Pacific)	34,473	187	0.5%
Sei whale (North Pacific)	34,718	25	0.07%

【Note 2 : Sample sizes in Japan’s scientific research programs】

Antarctic Ocean	Antarctic Minke whale	333
Western North Pacific	Minke whale	170
	Bryde’s whale	0
	Sei whale	134

Sample sizes in Research Plan for New Scientific Whale Research Program in the Antarctic Ocean (NEWREP-A) and Research Plan for New Scientific Whale Research Program in the western North Pacific (NEWREP-NP). Japan will not conduct these two programs after July 2019.

【Note 3 : Catch quota of other countries in 2018】

		Annual catch quota
Iceland	Minke whale	217
	Fin whale	161
Norway	Minke whale	1,278
Denmark (Greenland)	Minke whale	176
USA	Bowhead whale	51
Russian Federation	Gray whale	120

Data: IWC etc.

【Note 4 : Commercial whaling operations from 1 July 2019】

(1) Factory ship type whaling

- Number of vessels permitted: 1 fleet (1 factory ship and 3 catcher vessels)
- Home port: Shimonoseki (Yamaguchi)
- Operation in Pelagic areas within EEZ for several months
- Targeted species: Minke whale, Bryde’s whale and Sei whale

(2) Coastal whaling

- Number of vessels permitted: 5 vessels
- Daily operation within coastal areas around its landing base.

- Landing base: Abashiri (Hokkaido), Kushiro (Hokkaido), Hachinohe (Aomori), Ishinomaki (Miyagi), Minami-Boso (Chiba), Taiji (Wakayama) etc.
- Targeted species: Minke whale and other small cetaceans such as Baird's beaked whale