

# AWI Comments on Norway's Whaling and Trade in Whale Products



The Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) notes with concern that Norwegian whalers have killed more minke whales in 2014 than in any season since Norway resumed commercial whaling under objection in 1993. As of August 22, 2014, 729 minke whales had been killed out of a total self-allocated quota of 1,286. Twenty-three whaling vessels applied for permits in 2014, the highest number since 2008.

The kill rate in 2014 is significantly above the average catch of 539 whales a year for 2005 to 2013 (see Table 1).

Table 1: Norwegian data on whaling kills, whaling

Year	#Boats	Quota	Catch	% of Quota Used
2005	31	796	639	80%
2006	28	1052	545	52%
2007	28	1052	593	56%
2008	27	1052	535	51%
2009	21	885	483	55%
2010	18	1286	468	36%
2011	19	1286	533	41%
2012	18	1286	465	36%
2013	17	1286	590	45%
2014	23	1286	729*	56 %*

boat numbers, and quotas (2005-2014)

\* As of August 22, 2014

Since IWC64, there has been a concerted effort in Norway to increase the marketing and marketability of whale meat, clearly to stimulate domestic consumption. It has also resumed exports of whale products to Japan, imported whale meat and blubber from Iceland, and continued its trade with the Faroe Islands. Norwegian Minister for Fisheries, Elisabeth Aspaker, indicated to the Norwegian media in May 2014 that Norway will work to promote continued

whale exports to Japan.<sup>1</sup> Norwegian whale bacon is now on sale in Japan, advertised as “being available for the first time in 30 years.”<sup>2</sup>

Though there is no specific agenda item at IWC65 that relates to Norway, AWI encourages contracting governments to the IWC to take advantage of the following agenda items to raise the following concerns about Norway's commercial whaling.

## Agenda Item 12: Whale Killing Methods and Associated Welfare Issues

Although Norway continued through IWC64 to provide generic information on the numbers of whales killed in its whaling operations, and struck and lost rates,<sup>3</sup> it stopped collecting data on Time To Death (TTD) rates, Instantaneous Death Rate (IDR), and other welfare related issues in 2004. At the last meeting of the Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Associated Welfare Issues in 2012, Norway announced that it would bring data on whale killing methods to the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO), rather than the IWC.

Dr. Egil Ole Øen, Special Advisor to the Norwegian government on whale hunting methods reported to the Fisheries Directorate in April 2014 on the use of the rifle as a secondary weapon for the killing of whales; the report contained an analysis of information from 1981 to 2004, with recommendations on the caliber of ammunition that is most effective as a secondary killing method.<sup>4</sup>

**RECOMMENDATION:** Encourage Norway to participate fully in the WKM&AWI Working Group, and to continue to both collect and provide data to

<sup>1</sup>[http://www.nrk.no/nordland/\\_hvalfangsten-blir-en-nisjenaering-1.11727537](http://www.nrk.no/nordland/_hvalfangsten-blir-en-nisjenaering-1.11727537)

<sup>2</sup> <http://kujirabiyori.jp/SHOP/3848.html>

<sup>3</sup> IWC/64/Rep 6 Agenda item 11

<sup>4</sup> Dato:# Drøbak, 11. april 2014 Til:# Fiskeridirektoratet v/seniorrådgiver. H. Ynnestdal Fra:#Dr. med. vet. Egil Ole Øen, Wildlife Management Service – Sweden.Regjeringens spesialrådgiver på fangstmetoder for hval. Sak:# Rifle og ammunisjon som reservevåpen (back-up) til avlving av vågehval

the IWC related to TTD and IDR in its minke whale hunt to the IWC. See also AWI's comments on general welfare concerns raised in our response to IWC/65/WKM&AWI05.

### **Agenda Item 13: Revised Management Procedure**

Norway continues to self-allocate quotas under its reservation to the commercial whaling moratorium using a "tuning level" that is not precautionary, and far less than the .72 level agreed by the IWC. From 1997 to 2000, Norway set catch limits using the .72 tuning, but dropped to a lower .66 tuning in 2001 in order to increase catch limits.

Since 2005, Norwegian scientists have run Implementation Simulation Trials for minke whales in the northeast Atlantic using a 0.6 tuning level, but these calculations were not undertaken nor reviewed in detail by the Scientific Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Remind Norway of IWC Resolution 2001-5 (Resolution on Commercial Whaling) which calls on it to reconsider its use of the less conservative tuning level in the setting of its national quotas, and also to reconsider its objection to Schedule paragraph 10(e).

### **Agenda Item 17: Infractions**

Schedule Paragraph 27.b calls on governments to notify the Commission as to the "aggregate amounts of oil of each grade and quantities of meal, fertiliser (guano), and other products derived from them..." Further, the Commission has adopted numerous resolutions calling on member governments to report to the Commission on the availability, source and extent of trade in whale products (Resolutions 1994-7, 1995-7, 1996-3, 1997-2, 1998-8 and 2007-4). Norway has not complied with Schedule paragraph 27.b, nor with the information requested in the various resolutions identified above.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Raise Norway's lack of reporting both during the meeting of the Infractions Sub-committee on September 11, and under Agenda item 17 during the plenary sessions; call on Norway to provide the data called for, particularly in Schedule Paragraph 27.b.

### **Agenda Item 20: Cooperation With Other Organizations**

Since IWC64, two Norwegian companies have resumed exports of whale meat and blubber to Japan (Lofothval and Myklebust Hvalprodukter).<sup>5</sup> Lofothval has also exported whale meat to the Faroe Islands, most recently in July of 2014. Myklebust Hvalprodukter was also implicated in a January 2014 illegal export of whale meat to Germany during the "Green Week" tourism convention; the meat was subsequently illegally offered for sale to attendees.<sup>6</sup> Norway is also known to have imported Icelandic whale products on two occasions, in February and December of 2013.

In addition, AWI notes that CITES Res. Conf. 11.4 (Rev. CoP12) calls on governments to supply information on stockpiles of whale products. Norway has not complied with this request.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Note concern with Norway's resumption of trade in whale products to Japan under their respective reservations to the CITES Appendix I listing of minke whales, as well as its imports of whale meat and blubber from Iceland and exports to the Faroe Islands.

Remind Norway of Resolution 2007-4 (Resolution on CITES) and to note the call in that Resolution for those countries engaged in international trade in whale products to remove their reservations to the listing of great whale species on Appendix 1 of CITES.

Remind Norway of its obligations under CITES to provide the information on stockpiles of whale products as per Res. Conf. 11.4 (Rev. CoP 12).

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<sup>5</sup> A test run of 30 kgs of minke whale meat was sent to Japan by the Myklebust company in December of 2012, followed by a shipment of 4,250 kg of whale products arrived in Japan in April of 2013. In January 2014 Myklebust shipped 34,282 kg of minke whale meat to Japan. Lofothval exported a combined Icelandic/Norwegian shipment of 3100 kg of whale blubber to Japan totaled 3100 kg (see Annex 3) and was sent to Kyodo Senpaku Kaisha, and arrived in Tokyo on 18 February 2014. Lofothval has exported at least 15 shipments of whale meat to the Faroe Islands since 2003, totaling more than 11,000 kg.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.smp.no/nyheter/article9007207.ece>