

Beat: Miscellaneous

JAPANESE WHALING FLEET TO SET SAIL FOR ANTARTIC DESPITE U.N. COURT RULING

TO CARRY OUT -LETHAL RESEARCH-

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USPA NEWS - The Japanese fisheries agency said the fleet would conduct 'lethal research', despite a UN court ruling last year that the hunts were a cover for commercial whaling and have no proven scientific merit. It called for the hunts to be stopped immediately...

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Sea Shepherd and other anti-whaling groups have called on the Australian government, which brought the international court of justice's (ICJ) case, to put more diplomatic pressure on Japan to abandon hunting in an area of the Southern Ocean that Australia recognises as a whale sanctuary.

The hunt will aim to capture 333 Antarctic minke whales, about one-third of what it used to kill. It will also conduct non-lethal research, including sighting surveys and the collection of biopsy samples. Four ships will be involved in the hunt, including the 8,000 tonne mother ship, the Nisshin Maru... In 1982, the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the global body that regulates whaling, agreed a pause - often referred to as a moratorium - on commercial whaling from the 1985/1986 season. (BBC)

In a statement released on Monday, the Fisheries Agency said a four-strong whaling fleet would depart on December 1 for a 'research period' that would last until early March. The fleet is made up of a factory ship for processing the whales and three faster vessels that carry out the hunt. Tokyo has for years come under intense global pressure to stop hunts that opponents decry as inhumane but that Japan says are an inherent part of its traditional culture. (Telegraph)

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