

MEDIA RELEASE

26 February 2013

Sea Shepherd new attempt to sabotage research vessels

On February 25 around 1930JST until about 2350JST the Antarctic whale research (JARPAII) mother ship Nisshin Maru (NM) and the research vessel Yushin Maru (YS) were subject to sabotage attempts by rigid inflatable boats (RIB) sent from the Sea Shepherd (SS) ships Steve Irwin (SI) and Bob Barker (BB). Both SS ships are registered in the Netherlands.

1. As the YS was sailing in sighting survey mode, three RIBs sent from the SI and BB came to close-range distance and deployed wire-entwined ropes aiming to entangle the rudder and propeller of the research vessel. Thereafter, the RIBs came next to the mother ship and fixed contrivances intended to plug the draining outlets located on the NM hull.
 2. There were no injuries to the NM and YS crews or damage to the vessels from this attack.
 3. During the attack, the NM and YS used their water pump as a preventive measure to make SS activists desist from their sabotage attempts and repeatedly broadcasted a warning message to stop them.
- On 17 December 2012 the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals issued an Injunction Order enjoining Sea Shepherd, Paul Watson and anyone acting in concert with them from physically attacking the Japanese research vessels or any person on them and from navigating in a manner that is likely to endanger the safe navigation at sea of any such vessel. The Injunction Order also prohibits them from approaching any vessel engaged by the Institute of Cetacean Research (ICR) or Kyodo Senpaku (KS) any closer than 500 yards (about 457 meters) when the research vessels are navigating on the open sea.
 - The ICR and KS filed a Motion for Contempt against Sea Shepherd for approaching the research vessels last January in violation of the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Injunction Order. In addition to obstruction actions by SS on February 15, 20 and the February 25 obstruction of the NM refueling operations the ICR and KS will provide the Court with additional evidence concerning today's obstruction actions by Sea Shepherd.

- Japan's research whaling in the Antarctic (JARPAII) is a perfectly legal activity carried out under the International Whaling Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW). These sabotage actions by SS are extremely dangerous and threaten the safety of Japan's Antarctic whale research vessels and the lives of crews on them and are therefore absolutely inexcusable. Over and over again, we call on all related countries including the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand which are flag states and/or port State of SS vessels, and the United States in which headquarter of SS is based to take every measure available to restrain them and deal with their criminal actions in a strict and objective manner.

NOTE: Images to be attributed to THE INSTITUTE OF CETACEAN RESEARCH, TOKYO, JAPAN (<http://www.icrwhale.org/gpandsea.html>)

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