

MEDIA RELEASE

2 February 2014

Harassment / Sabotage by Sea Shepherd vessels Steve Irwin and Bob Barker

On February 1st around 2230JST until about 0830JST February 2 the Antarctic whale research (JARPAII) vessels Yushin Maru (YS1), Yushin Maru No. 2 (YS2) and Yushin Maru No. 3 (YS3) were subject to sabotage by the Sea Shepherd ships Steve Irwin (SI) and Bob Barker (BB). Both the SI and the BB are sailing under the flag of the Netherlands.

During the Sea Shepherd attack, two rigid inflatable boats (RIBs) sent from the BB came to the YS1 releasing ropes just in front of her bow. One of the ropes entangled in the YS1 propeller. Further, the BB approached abnormally close to the YS3 colliding with her stern. The YS3 received bending damage to her railing and hull from this collision. The ability for navigation of the two research vessels was not affected by these damages.

Furthermore, three RIBs sent from the SI and the BB came to the YS2 deploying ropes just in front of her bow. Also, one RIB sent either from the SI or the BB released one rope just in front of the YS3 bow.

The YS1, YS2 and YS3 repeatedly broadcasted a message which warns the SS vessels to stop their approach and their attack. There were no injuries to the crews of the three research vessels.

On 17 December 2012 the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals issued an Injunction Order enjoining SSCS, 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 SSCS in violation of the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Injunction Order.

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). Sea Shepherd actions threaten safety of our research ships and lives of crews on it and is therefore unacceptable. 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 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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