



THE INSTITUTE OF CETACEAN RESEARCH

4-5 TOYOMI-CHO, CHUO-KU, TOKYO 104-0055 JAPAN

PHONE: +81-3-3536-6521 FAX: +81-3536-6522

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New Zealand's Minister of Conservation misleading the public

The Institute of Cetacean Research (ICR), which carries out Japan's research whaling in the Antarctic, said today that New Zealand's Minister of Conservation, Hon Chris Carter, is misleading the public.

Mr Carter's Dec. 22 release of a critique of Japan's whale research in the Antarctic is nothing new, the ICR Director General, Dr Hiroshi Hatanaka, said today. "It is a recycling of politically motivated arguments we heard from the same New Zealand scientists at the meeting of the IWC's Scientific Committee last June. We have already responded to this in detail."

"Of course we know that Greenpeace has been misleading the public on issues related to whaling for many years, but it is unfortunate that the Minister has now chosen to use the same tactics. He is mixing science and advocacy to promote a politically motivated anti-whaling position in a way that degrades the credibility of his scientists. The critique is simply not objective science," Dr. Hatanaka added.

Dr. Hatanaka said that nothing in the critique is news. Detailed responses to comments made by scientists from New Zealand were presented to the IWC's Scientific Committee. Even the authors of the critique say it is based on documents provided to the Scientific Committee.

"Japan has always been accepting of constructive scientific criticism of its research but the comments from the New Zealand scientists are not science – they are advocacy opinions and statements in support of New Zealand's political position on whaling," Dr. Hatanaka said. "Contrary to the views of the New Zealand scientists, the IWC Scientific Committee has said that Japan's whale research program conducted for the last 18 years in the Antarctic is providing valuable data that will improve the management of whales."

"We have also demonstrated to the scientific committee that our research is based on sound scientific principles and that the takes will in no way threaten stocks," he said.

For more information, contact:

Mr. Hideki MORONUKI, Far Seas Fisheries Division, Fisheries Agency,
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Tel: +81 3 3502 2443

Note to Editors – a record of the IWC's Scientific Committee's discussion of JARPA II is included in the "Report of the Scientific Committee IWC/57" (document IWC/57/REP 1 beginning on page 56.

The report is available on the website of the IWC: <http://www.iwcoffice.org/index.htm>