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Strictly confidential until after the discussion in the Scientific Committee of the 50th IWC Annual Meeting

**The 1999 Research Plan for the Japanese Whale Research Program
under Special Permit in the Northwestern Part of the North Pacific (JARPN)**

Government of Japan
February 1998

I. INTRODUCTION

Research plan in 1999 is a continuation of the original research program submitted to the 45th annual meeting of the IWC Scientific Committee (IWC/SC) in 1994 (Government of Japan, 1994). The full research program started in 1995, after a feasibility study in 1994. The results have been submitted to the Scientific Committee in each year.

The western North Pacific area was divided into 13 sub-areas by the IWC/SC (IWC, 1994). The research is covering 2-3 sub-areas in each year to examine the following points:

- (1) Whether sub-stocks exist in the Okhotsk Sea-Western Pacific Stock (O Stock) of minke whale
- (2) Whether an additional stock (W Stock) of minke whale exist in the central part of the North Pacific. On the assumption that it does, it is necessary to estimate the rate of mixing with the O Stock.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

Same as in the previous research plan (Government of Japan, 1996).

III. NUMBER, SEX, SAMPLING SIZE AND AREA

One hundred (100) minke whales will be sampled in some of Sub-areas 7,8,9,11 and 12. The choice on the exact sub-areas will be finalised after the analyses of the research results to be obtained in 1998. At this time the sub-areas for this research in 1998 also remain unfinalised because a response from the Russian Federation on an application to conduct research in Sub-area 12 is still awaited. The selection of sub-areas for 1999 depends upon which Sub-areas are eventually researched in 1998.

IV. RESEARCH NEEDS AND APPLICABILITY OF NON-LETHAL METHODS

This issue has already been addressed in detail in previous proposals (Government of Japan, 1994; 1996) and considered by the Scientific Committee.

V. POSSIBLE EFFECT ON THE STOCK

This issue has already been addressed in detail in previous proposals (Government of Japan, 1994; 1996) and considered by the Scientific Committee.

VI. OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPATION BY FOREIGN SCIENTISTS

No change from the previous research plan (Government of Japan, 1996).

VII. OUTLINE OF THE 1999 RESEARCH

(i) Research method

Same as in the previous research plan (Government of Japan, 1996).

(ii) Research items

Same as in the previous research plan (Government of Japan, 1996). The following information will be collected; 1) morphometric measurements, 2) data on conception date 3) samples for genetic analysis (skin, liver, muscle, etc. for isozyme and DNA analysis), 4) samples for measurement of heavy metals and pollutants, 5) parasite samples, 6) analysis through stable isotope, 7) materials on length composition, sex ratio, etc., 8) marking experiment, 9) research on feeding habits, 10) sighting survey.

(iii) Research vessels

Same as in the previous research (Government of Japan, 1996); three sampling vessels and one research factory ship.

(iv) Research organisations

Experts and staff from 1) National Research Institute of Far Seas Fisheries, 2) Institute of Cetacean Research, and 3) Scientists from other universities and research institutions will take part in the research:

(v) Need for joint research with the Russian Federation

As regards research in Sub-areas 7, 8, 9 and 12, it is desirable to cover the Russian waters along the Kurile Islands, off the Kamchatska Peninsula and in the Okhotsk Sea by means of a joint research with the Russian Federation.

(vi) Report

The preliminary results of this special permit shall be made available for the Scientific Committee meeting after completion of the research as a special report.

VIII. REFERENCES

Government of Japan. 1994. Research program for clarification of minke whale stock structure in the northwestern part of the North Pacific. Paper SC/46/NP1 presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, June 1994 (unpublished) 35pp.

Government of Japan. 1996. The 1996 and 1997 research plan for the Japanese whale research program to elucidate the stock structure of the minke whale in the northwestern part of the North Pacific. Paper SC/48/NP1 presented to the IWC Scientific Committee, June 1996 (unpublished) 14pp.

International Whaling Commission. 1994. Report of the working group on North Pacific minke whale management trials. *Rep. int. Whal. Commn* 44:120-44.