

New Zealand's stance on aid not squeaky clean

July 24, 2001.

Japan's Alternate Commissioner to the International Whaling Commission, Masayuki Komatsu, said today that New Zealand's accusations at today's IWC meeting in London show a complete inability to comprehend a very simple notion. It is on record that New Zealand is not innocent in these matters.

"Sandra Lee completely fails to understand that Japan gives foreign aid to more than 150 nations around the world and that includes strong anti-whaling nations such as Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico and others who receive far more aid than the Caribbean nations."

Interestingly, the IWC Commissioner from St Lucia, in the Caribbean, said at today's meeting that a New Zealand Government delegate had gone to the Caribbean only a couple of months ago and put heavy political pressure on them to vote for the South Pacific whale sanctuary proposal.

"If Japan was buying votes, you would see 150 nations in the IWC and as a consequence the unnecessary moratorium would have been lifted years ago," Mr Komatsu said.

"No-one should be surprised that Caribbean nations support sustainable use in the IWC. One of them, St Vincent and the Grenadines, is a whaling country and others take small whales not managed by the IWC. This has been clearly demonstrated at the first day of the 53rd annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission."

The Governments of the Caribbean all today made categorical statements their vote is not for sale and that they would vote on sustainable use regardless of whether or not they received aid from Japan, Mr Komatsu said.

"Unfortunately, New Zealand cannot accept that this is not an issue here at the IWC. Japan suggests their time would be better spent on working towards completion of the Revised Management Scheme instead of continuing to invent fairy stories," Mr Komatsu said.