



## Enoshima Aquarium's Proud Mission: Educating People, Preserving Dolphins

My company, which was founded close to 67 years ago, is in the business of planning and operating public aquariums. Times change and we have entered an era where people have become increasingly aware of the irreplaceability of the environment of our planet and feel acutely the value of living creatures within that environment.

Our company firmly believes that in order to address these concerns it is our mission to offer an innovative form of aquarium exhibits and programs through our “edutainment” (education + entertainment) facilities.

Our core holding is the Enoshima Aquarium (Shin Enoshima Suizokukan or “Enosui” for short). This privately-operated aquarium was established in 2004 within the Shonan Kaigan Prefectural Park in Kanagawa Prefecture. It was the result of a private sector financial initiative (PFI), a method for channeling private capital to projects for social investment.

### Enoshima's Long History with Marine Biology

Actually, the Enoshima area was already well-known since it was here that the famous Harvard University zoologist and amateur archaeologist Dr. Edward Sylvester Morse established Japan's first marine research lab in 1877. He had journeyed all the way to Japan from the United States during the early Meiji period, having heard that Sagami Bay, which Enoshima faces, was a treasure trove of marine life.

This pioneering coastal facility for marine research was where scientific study of marine life in Japan really began.

This was also the site where the original Enoshima Aquarium was built in 1954. It was the precursor of today's “New” Enoshima aquarium, and was dubbed “Japan's first modern aquarium” because it was the country's first aquarium building that has installations of display tanks equipped with life support systems such as water circulation through filtration. It also attracted many visitors as the source of the latest findings and locus of study in the field of marine biology. Ikusaku Amemiya, the aquarium's first director, could also trace his academic lineage directly back to Dr. Morse.

Later, in 1957, the Marineland was built next to the aquarium. It was there that the first real shows featuring dolphins and other cetaceans started and these beautiful animals had the opportunity to display their amazing abilities. That was the inception of the tradition of cetacean shows at Enoshima that continues to this day.

At that time the animals on display were bottlenose dolphins and Risso's dolphins captured by fishermen based in Futo Harbor on the Izu Peninsula. The dolphins were transported by land from the Izu Peninsula over the mountains via the Hakone Pass to Enoshima, where they were released in the Marineland pools.

In other words, our aquarium began its tradition in cetacean shows through close collaboration with fishermen.

For more than six decades since, these shows have been an indispensable part of our work at the aquarium and the dolphins continue to be cherished by our visitors.

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## A Natural Love Of Dolphins and Other Cetaceans

The ocean surrounds Japan on four sides, which means that familiarity with the sea is an integral part of the Japanese national character. It's perhaps not surprising then that Japan devotes a proportionately large amount of land to sites for aquariums.

In fact, there are roughly 100 aquariums nationwide, of which about 40 are raising bottlenose dolphins, pacific white-sided dolphins, false killer whales, finless porpoises, or other cetaceans. The dolphin shows staged by these facilities are the direct result of the good relations of aquariums and fisherman who capture these various cetacean species.

## International Pressure and JAZA

Nearly all of Japan's aquariums as well as its zoos are members of the Japanese Association of Zoos and Aquariums, a public interest incorporated association. JAZA in turn is a member of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA).

In April 2015, WAZA notified its Japanese counterpart JAZA that the acquisition by aquariums of cetaceans which had been caught by "drive" fisheries methods violated the WAZA code of ethics and animal welfare. It then suspended JAZA's membership in the world body.

JAZA acceded to WAZA's unreasonable demand in this regard, and in June 2015 JAZA adopted a measure prohibiting member aquariums from acquiring cetaceans captured by drives. As a result, it was reinstated into the international organization.

However, Japanese aquariums belonging to JAZA could no longer acquire cetaceans from fisherman who had captured them in the wild. Instead they needed to be sourced by captive breeding.

## Preserving Unbroken Ties of Historical Trust

In response to this order from JAZA, Enosui made its own decision to leave JAZA effective at the end of March 2017. Our reason for doing so was not that we needed to immediately acquire dolphins from ocean; rather it was because we concluded that preservation of the existing trilateral relationship — the government(Fisheries Agency), fishermen, and aquariums — was fundamental of aquariums who exhibit cetaceans in their facility.

These triangular ties represent a symbiotic relationship that was forged before JAZA ever became a member of WAZA. They were developed through a process of constructing unbroken ties of mutual trust. This historical background needs to be kept in mind when considering Enosui's exhibition of dolphins.

A justification for the owning of wild marine animals by aquariums is their mission to "preserve species." But at the same time the public has great expectations from them as facilities that can facilitate "sustainable use of marine animal resources" based on the scientific basis established by the government (Fisheries Agency).

As I noted earlier, if it had not been for the fishermen who provided cetaceans they had captured, our aquarium would never have been able to display these animals. That is how we started out. For that reason, we were strongly resolved not to be the party that destroyed this triangular relationship, which left us no choice but to part ways with JAZA.

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## Enoshima's Highly Successful Species Preservation Program

Of course, we fully realize that “species preservation” is another core reason for our activities. This is evidenced by the fact that we have sought to utilize a variety of techniques in our research on cetacean breeding.

It is further demonstrated by the fact that in 1959 Enoshima Aquarium, as it existed then, became the first facility in Japan to successfully breed bottlenose dolphins in captivity.

This success was followed up in 1988 when Enoshima became the first facility in Japan to breed a third generation of bottlenose dolphins, and in 2000 when it became the first facility worldwide to do the same with a fourth generation of the same species.

Building on this earlier research, Enosui in 2012 became the first facility worldwide to breed a fifth generation of bottlenose dolphins in captivity. This shows that, as a matter of course, we are doing as much as we can to allow marine animals to carry on in their existing environment — in other words, to “preserve the species.”

The most important consideration for our aquarium is to maintain a balance in our work. That includes finding a balance between the promotion of research concerning breeding these marine animals and ensuring continuation of the productive triangular relationship. We firmly believe that is what our aquarium is all about.

Source: **Enoshima Aquarium's Proud Mission: Educating People, Preserving Dolphins**  
<http://japan-forward.com/enoshima-aquariums-proud-mission-educating-people-preserving-dolphins/>

## 江ノ島水族館の本質とは

弊社は現在、3つの水族館の企画・運営業務に従事し、設立67年を迎える。時代の変遷に伴い、かけがえのない地球環境をめぐる人々の意識がより一層高まる中、環境やつながる命の大切さを体感できる、エデュテインメント（エデュケーションとエンターテインメントを組み合わせた合成語）型施設として、新しい水族館像を提示することが弊社の使命である。

その中核となる新江ノ島水族館は、2004年に神奈川県立湘南海岸公園内に、PFI（Private Financial Initiative～民間資金を活用した社会資本整備）の手法を用いて設立された民間運営の水族館である。その歴史を振り返ってみると、1877年、動物学者であるエドワード・シルベスター・モース博士（アメリカ・ハーバード大学教授）が、江の島を囲む相模湾が海洋生物の宝庫であることを聞き、はるばる日本へやってきて江の島に研究所を設立したことに遡る。

この研究所が日本で初となる臨海実験所とされ、江の島は我が国の海洋生物学発祥の地となった。この発祥の地である江の島において、江の島水族館が1954年に設立された。現在の新江ノ島水族館の前身である。江の島水族館は、設立当初より日本初となる躯体式ならびに濾過循環形式の展示水槽を施したことから、当時日本の水族館の歴史において「近代的水族館第一号」と称され、海洋生物の研究成果ならびに学びを発信する施設として多くのお客様が訪れることになった。当館の初代館長である雨宮育作は、モース博士直系の弟子であった。

その後、1957年には、マリンランドを併設。鯨類の行動展示を開始し、その能力を紹介する日本初の本格的なショーを開催した。これが、現在に至るまでの当館における鯨類展示の起源である。当時、鯨類については、静岡県の伊豆・富戸漁港にて漁師によってバンドウイルカやハナゴンドウが捕獲され、陸送にて伊豆から箱根の山を越えて、江の島まで運搬し、マリンランドのプールへ搬入した。つまり、富戸漁港の漁師達との関係性から我が江の島水族館の鯨類展示が始まったのである。以来、現在に至るまで60余年に亘り、鯨類展示は我が水族館にとっては欠かせないものとなり、イルカたちは常にご来場されるお客様方に愛され続けてきた。

日本は、四方を海で囲まれており、とても海に親しみを持つ国民性から、国土面積に対する水族館の数は諸外国に比べて多く、現在約100施設ほどの水族館が存在する中で、その内約40施設においてバンドウイルカやカマイルカ、オキゴンドウ、スナメリ等の鯨類を展示飼育している。それらの施設の鯨類展示は、いずれも鯨類を捕獲する漁師との良好な関係性が起源となっているのである。

日本の水族館の殆どの施設が、公益社団法人日本動物園水族館協会（Japanese Association of Zoos and Aquariums=JAZA）へ動物園と共に加盟している。これに対し、世界では、世界動物園水族館協会（World Association of Zoos and Aquariums=WAZA）が存在し、JAZAはWAZAに加盟し、WAZAの一会員でもある。

2015年4月、WAZAからJAZAに対し、「追い込み漁により捕獲したイルカを水族館が取得していることはWAZAの規範に反する」との通告があり、JAZAはWAZAより会員資格の除名勧告を受けることになった。

JAZAは、このWAZAによる理不尽な要求に屈することとなり、2015年6月、「追い込み漁により捕獲された鯨類をJAZA会員が入手することを禁止する」との採択をした。これにより、JAZAに加盟する水族館は漁師による自然海からの鯨類の入手ができなくなったのである。

この採択を受け、新江ノ島水族館は、自らの判断のもと、2017年3月末をもってJAZAを退会した。その理由は、自然海からのイルカの入手をすぐにでも必要としていたというわけではない。国(水産庁)、漁師、水族館の「三位一体の関係性」を維持することが鯨類を飼育する水族館の本質であると捉えたためである。

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この三位一体の関係性は、JAZAがWAZAの会員となった時点よりも更に以前から構築されてきた関係性で、これまで連綿と築き上げてきた相互の信頼関係のもと、我々の鯨類展示というものが成立してきた経緯と歴史がある。水族館は、生物を預かる立場から、その使命として「種の保存」が掲げられるが、一方で、国（水産庁）が示す科学的な根拠に基づく「海洋生物資源の持続可能な利用」の一翼を担う施設として、大きな期待を込められてもいる。

先にも述べたが、かつて我々は自然海から鯨類を捕獲する漁師の存在がなければ、水族館として鯨類を展示することができなかった。その起源があるからこそ、この三位一体の関係性を自ら崩してはならないという強い決意により、我々はやむなくJAZAを退会したのである。

もちろん「種の保存」というもう一方の本質にも軸足を置き、あらゆる技術を投じて繁殖研究に注力してきた。その査証として、江の島水族館では、1959年に日本で初めてバンドウイルカの飼育下繁殖に成功した他、1988年には日本初となる飼育下三世のバンドウイルカの繁殖、2000年には世界初となる飼育下四世のバンドウイルカの繁殖に成功している。この繁殖研究への注力は更に奏功し、新江ノ島水族館になってからは、2012年に世界初となる飼育下五世のバンドウイルカの繁殖に成功している。このように、自らの環境のもとに生物の命の継承、すなわち「種の保存」にも当然ながら最大限の力を注いでいる。

つまりは、繁殖に関する研究の推進と、三位一体の関係性の継続をバランス良く継承していくことが水族館として最も肝要であり、これこそが現在における我が水族館が究める本質であると考え次第である。

出典:江ノ島水族館の本質とは

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