



Japan Moves Toward Revision of Whaling Law

There is broad political support in Japan for revising the nation's whaling law, including measures for promoting whale products and preserving whale as part of Japan's traditional food culture.

A group of National Diet members, from parties across the political spectrum, decided this month to craft a bill aimed at revising the country's law related to whaling activities. The new bill, to be submitted to the upper house of the National Diet, comes after Japan's first commercial whaling hunts in 31 years took place in July.

The bill would revise the law, shifting its focus from promoting scientific research whaling to providing for the sustainable use of whale resources. At the same time, it would keep Japan's whaling industry in line with international regulations. It would also include measures aimed at explaining domestic whaling activities to countries opposed to commercial whaling.

The lawmakers have begun holding meetings with the goal of passing a bill through the current National Diet session. The bill would revise the current "Scientific Whale Research Law" (passed in June of 2017) to become a "Law Related to the Sustainable Use of Whales." Under the revised law, the government would be responsible for "all aspects of planning and implementing measures for the sustainable use" of whale resources.

As a basic principle under the revised law, the whaling industry would follow international regulations, with whaling carried out according to annual quotas scientifically calculated on a per-species basis. Research would be carried out as necessary to determine how to effectively manage whale stocks, with results publicly released to promote international understanding.

New Law to Include Support for School Lunches

The bill is being crafted to facilitate Japan's smooth transition back to commercial whaling. It is expected to include measures to ensure adequate numbers of whaling ships and crew members, as well as promote ongoing technological research.

To prevent the sale of meat from whales that were hunted illegally, the revised law is slated to include provisions for the strict management of data on every whale that is captured. Government aid to whalers for responding to interference from anti-whaling organizations would be expanded from those involved in research operations to include commercial whalers.

Support for the consumption of whale products, including serving whale meat in school lunches, would be incorporated as part of an effort to pass Japan's food culture on to future generations.

Japan has long aimed to conduct sustainable commercial whaling based on scientific data. However, the International Whaling Commission (IWC), the body responsible for managing global whale resources, has become biased against allowing hunts of any kind, due to the majority of its membership now consisting of anti-whaling countries.

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Because of this bias, the Japanese government decided that there was no longer any possibility for countries with differing opinions to coexist within the commission and, on June 30, 2019, officially exited the organization.

Japanese commercial whaling began in the country's Economic Exclusive Zone (EEZ) in July 2019 for the first time in over three decades.

Source: **Japan Moves Toward Revision of Whaling Law**
<https://japan-forward.com/japan-moves-toward-revision-of-whaling-law/>

商業捕鯨再開で法改正へ 超党派で提出 食文化継承、利用促進

今年7月、31年ぶりに商業捕鯨が再開されたのを受け、超党派の国会議員が調査捕鯨に関する法律の改正案を参院に提出する方針を固めたことが11日、分かった。目的をクジラ資源の科学調査から「持続的な利用の確保」に切り替え、国際法に基づき捕鯨業を適切な範囲で行うことが柱。商業捕鯨に反発する欧米諸国などの理解を得る狙いもあるとみられる。今国会中に全会一致の成立を目指し、13日に超党派の会合を開く。

改正案は、現行の鯨類科学調査実施法（平成29年6月施行）を「鯨類の持続的な利用の確保に関する法律」に改め、国の責務に関し「持続的な利用の確保のための施策を総合的に策定し、実施する」と明記する。

基本原則として捕鯨業は国際法に基づき、科学的に算出した種類ごとの年間捕獲可能量の範囲内で実施する。調査は持続的な利用に必要な科学的知見を得るために行い、研究成果の公表を通じた国際協力の推進を掲げる。

捕鯨業の円滑な実施に向け、政府が船や乗組員の確保、技術開発に必要な措置を講ずるほか、違法に捕獲された鯨類の流通防止のため個体識別に関わる情報を適正に管理すると定める。反捕鯨団体の妨害に対応するため、国が支援する対象に調査実施者に加えて捕鯨業者を追加。食文化継承に向け、学校給食などでの鯨類の利用促進も盛り込む

日本はこれまで科学的データに基づく持続的な商業捕鯨を目指してきた。しかし、クジラ資源を管理する国際捕鯨委員会（IWC）は反捕鯨国が加盟国の過半数を占めて保護に偏っている。このため、政府は「異なる意見が共存する可能性すらない」と判断し、6月30日にIWCを脱退。7月から日本の領海と排他的経済水域（EEZ）に限定して商業捕鯨を再開した。

出典:商業捕鯨再開で法改正へ 超党派で提出 食文化継承、利用促進

<https://www.sankei.com/economy/news/191111/ecn1911110031-n1.html>