

# The causes and effects of whaling

[Environment](#), [Animals](#)



## The Causes and Effects of Whaling 1 The Causes and Effects of Whaling

Whale is the current name for diverse marine mammals of the order Cetacea, having the general shape of a fish with forelimbs modified as fins, a tail with level flukes, and one or two blowholes on top of the head. ("Whale", 2010). Whaling dates back to prehistoric times, but it became an important industry in the nineteenth century. Whales have been hunted for meat or made into lighting oil.

Until the international injunction on commercially hunting whales was enacted in 1982 by International Whaling Commission (effective from 1986), some species were seriously endangered. Although commercial whaling was forbidden, several countries were unwilling to follow it such as Norway and Japan. They developed whaling industry for the sake of economic benefits and because the cost is low with free marine resources. But whaling has serious effects on both the environment as well as the society. Japanese are the leading whale hunters at present, now we use Japan as a typical example and we will mainly talk about Japan's whaling.

Commercial whaling is lucrative, the prosperous fishing industry in Japan also affects the economic interests of other industries such as tourism and Catering Industry. This is the first reason why Japan insists on whaling. According to a statistics of Japan's Institute of Cetacean Research in 2000, the production of whale meat in Japan is 2849 tons, and the whale skin is 1051 tons. The revenue generated by whaling activities is more than US\$32 million each year. Whaling What's more, Japan has natural and vast amount of marine resources.

The 2 whaling industry was also driven by the free marine resources. Japan was facing the pressure from public opinion especially the West about hunting whales unrestrictedly and excessively. But why Japan was still persisting in whaling? The most significant reason comes to my mind is cultural conflict. Put it this way, Japanese hate the way Europe and the United States imposes their values to them. They feel unfair and have no intention of lying down under those accusations, and they want to show their cultural identity through whaling.

That is their subconscious action and they would like to take this way against "cultural imperialism" in order to safeguard their own interests. However, due to their continuous whaling, more than 2 million whales were killed in the early 20th century. Some species of whales are close to extinction. Whaling sounds nothing to do with us, how does whaling affect us? Japanese whaling in the northern Pacific Ocean has caused international objections, according to Reuben (2001), the potential full-scale trade war led by U. S. will become true if Japan still refuses to reform Japan's whaling practices. Another thing, the excessive whaling disturbs the balance of the ecosystem they belong to, it will also diminish the marine ecosystems, and even the whole could collapse. The worst influence is the people in Taiji, Japan were detected their mercury levels exceed standards which stipulated by World Health Organization because of eating whale meat in excess. It has Whaling come to light that mercury is the most toxic element on earth. It is very dangerous for us to eat whale meat. 3

In conclusion, the excessive whaling caused by economic benefits and cultural conflict resulted in terrible impacts on oceanic environment and

human beings. To save whales, Environmental protection organizations like Greenpeace or individuals are campaigning to end commercial whaling and the governments should also go to great lengths to end it. Whaling 4

References

Whale. (October 8, 2009). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved April 17, 2010, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whale>

Whaling. (February 12, 2009). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved April 17, 2010, from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whaling>

The Cove. April 25, 2009). In Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Retrieved April 17, 2010, from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Cove\\_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Cove_(film))

Reuben B. Ackerman. (2001, January) 'Japanese Whaling in the Pacific Ocean: Defiance of International Whaling Norms in the name of 'Scientific Research', Culture, and Traditional', Boston College, Retrieved April 17, 2010, from [http://www.bc.edu/bc\\_org/avp/law/lwsch/journals/bciclr/25\\_2/07\\_TXT.htm](http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/avp/law/lwsch/journals/bciclr/25_2/07_TXT.htm)

Japan's Institute of Cetacean Research, In Baidupedia, Retrieved April 17, 2010, from <http://baike.baidu.com/view/1632862.html>