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‘COMMERCIAL’ VS. ‘SUBSISTENCE,’ ‘ABORIGINAL’ VS. ‘NONABORIGINAL,’ AND THE CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF JAPANESE COASTAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT

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The International Whaling Commission (IWC) makes a major distinction between commercial whaling — on which a moratorium has been imposed — and aboriginal subsistence whaling (ASW), which is endorsed. This distinction is based on the assumption that there is a fundamental difference between commercial and subsistence activities as well as between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the concepts ‘commercial,’ ‘subsistence,’ and ‘aboriginal people’ — items on which the IWC has based its management of whales since the early 1980s — in order to show that the distinction between ASW and commercial whaling, as defined by IWC, is untenable.

If sustainable use is the aim of our management policies, it matters little whether activities are termed ‘commercial’ or not, but there is, on the other hand, a growing awareness that local participation from the people who traditionally have used renewable natural resources is needed in order to ensure sustainable use. This is the approach taken in the report *Caring for the Earth* (IUCN/UNEP/WWF/1991). It is felt that the IWC in recent years has moved further away from a management regime based on meaningful local participation.

COMMERCIAL VS. SUBSISTENCE WHALING

The untenability of the distinction between subsistence and commercial whaling has been pointed out by a number of social scientists during the last few years and will only be briefly outlined here. The criticism is both of a semantic (e.g. Freeman 1993) and a phenomenological (e.g. ISGSTW 1992; Moeran 1992) character.

At the semantic level it has been pointed out that the term ‘subsistence’ is a complex one and can be used in several ways (Freeman 1993). One interpretation of the term is self-sufficiency. According to this interpretation people are supposed to produce what they need and their products are supposed not to enter the market but to be consumed locally to meet nutritional and cultural requirements. However, anthropologists have shown that a self-sufficient society has hardly ever existed and that whalers in Alaska, Greenland and Russia as well as in Iceland, Japan and Norway are economically firmly integrated into the world economy. Secondly, ‘subsistence’ can mean, according to

The Concise Oxford Dictionary, “a minimal level of existence.” In other words, subsistence might imply poverty and many subscribe to the view that if the people are not poor, they are not engaged in subsistence activities. Being relatively affluent is repeatedly used against Icelandic, Japanese and Norwegian whalers.

At the phenomenological level, it has been pointed out that both subsistence and commercial whalers are embedded in a web of social exchanges: gift-giving, barter and exchanges through the medium of money (Moeran 1992). There are no *logical* differences between the three forms of exchange and whale products must be regarded as commodities produced for exchange and consumption whether the hunt has been classified as ASW or as commercial. What might be different is people’s *moral* evaluation of these various forms of exchange. In Japanese culture money is relatively unproblematic and money has been used in gift-giving since ancient times. Today money rather than an object is the prescribed gift in Japan (Ohnuki-Tierney 1993: 72).

As ‘commercial whaling’ has not been defined by the IWC it must be taken as a residual category to mean ‘non-ASW.’ But empirical research has shown, that small-type whaling in Iceland, Japan and Norway is qualitatively different from both ASW and high-seas industrial whaling but has more in common with the former than with the latter. In a report to the IWC in 1992, for example, many similarities between minke whaling in Greenland on one side and in Iceland, Japan and Norway on the other were pointed out (ISGSTW 1992 [IWC/44/SEST6]). The vessels used in all four countries are relatively small and operate from remote communities with few land-based food resources but with a strong sense of community identity. Most of the boats are owner-operated and are operated under domestic modes of production where household viability and social reproduction are the important rationales. The small crews are recruited through kinship and friendship connections, and there is little specialization among them and they typically participate in a share system which also implies sharing the risk. The main product is whale meat which is gifted, bartered and sold outside of the communities but at the same time this meat is an important local source of nutrition and food culture. In contrast, large-type coastal and pelagic whaling was operated by large fleets and under a capitalist mode of production with a high return on

investment as the primary goal. The highly specialized crews were often recruited through agents and the crew members received salaries. The main product used to be whale oil for which there used to be a great demand.

Hence, in terms of economic rationality the important dividing line between various types of whaling does not go between ASW and commercial whaling as implied by the IWC's usage of the concepts but rather between ASW and STW on the one hand and large-type coastal and pelagic whaling on the other. To bring in the concept 'aboriginal' does not clarify matters.

ABORIGINAL VS. NON-ABORIGINAL WHALING

When the IWC in 1981 decided to permit aboriginal subsistence whaling (ASW), defined as

"... whaling for purposes of local aboriginal consumption carried out by or on behalf of aboriginal, indigenous or native peoples who share strong community, familial social and cultural ties related to a continuing traditional dependence on whaling and the use of whales" (IWC 1981),

preferential treatment was given to aboriginal people when it comes to the exploitation of renewable natural resources.

The concept 'aboriginal' is nowhere defined in IWC documents. However, aboriginal whalers in the IWC context seem to meet some criteria to qualify as 'aboriginal,' 'indigenous' or 'native' — terms which seem to be used interchangeably by IWC. Webster's *New World Dictionary* defines 'aborigines' as the first known inhabitants of a region. Based on this definition the Icelandic, Japanese and Norwegian whalers ought to qualify but it was certainly not these nationals the decision makers at IWC had in mind when they coined the concept of ASW.

Subsequent in-depth studies on the Japanese STCW clarified its characteristics in that it contained elements common with what had been termed by IWC earlier as the ASW.

WHALING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

It is today a widely held notion among bureaucrats, scientists, conservationists and politicians that natural resources are best regulated if local communities, which depend on those resources for their nutritional, economic, social and cultural needs, are brought into active participation. This principle is incorporated into the IUCN/UNEP/WWF report *Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living* and is also laid down both in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, where Article 1 of Part 1 reads:

"All peoples may, for their own ends, freely dispose of their natural wealth and resources without prejudice to any obligations arising out of international economic co-operation based on the

principle of mutual benefit, and international law. In no case may a people be deprived of their means of subsistence."

In order to achieve this objective — which is made to apply generally and is not restricted to aboriginal peoples — we must formulate co-management regimes which allow for sustainable harvest of living natural resources,¹ whales included, whether the local inhabitants are classified as non-commercial aboriginals or not. Today national and international bodies are seeking ways to design new institutions which can ensure local participation in questions related to resources management.

When it comes to management of coastal marine resources, many scientists and bureaucrats have looked to Japan in their search for an alternative model to the one which has been dominant — but not very successful — in western nations for decades. The important premise for the Japanese system of coastal management is the perception of the 'closed' sea which for centuries has enabled the artisanal fishermen in Japan to take an active role in the management of their resources. At a time when the ideology of the 'freedom of the sea' spread in Europe following the publication of Hugo van Grotius' influential book *Mare Liberum* in 1609, the Japanese authorities 'closed' the coastal waters and allocated small, exclusive territories to settlements which were defined as fishing villages. At the beginning of this century these territories became estates for Fisheries Cooperative Associations (FCAs) which were established in each of the fishing villages. This has been one important contributing factor to the rather stable coastal catches of about 2.5 and 3 million tonnes annually during the last 60 years.²

It is here important to stress that the relative success of the Japanese system of sea tenure — at least as seen against the experience in most other countries, and a success which has been paralleled in domestic forestry (Totman 1989) — has been achieved in a coastal sector which has been commercial for centuries. Although the Japanese system of sea tenure is not perfect, it has proved beyond doubt that commercial exploitation of renewable natural resources can be sustainable and does not inevitably lead to ecological disasters.

It is in this context that Japanese small-type coastal whaling ought to be seen. It has, like fishing, had commercial elements for centuries and JSTW must therefore be regarded as 'traditional' in the Japanese context. But having commercial elements does, as pointed out by Moeran (1992), not mean that the whalers can do with their earnings as they pleased. On the contrary, *short term* commercial activities are conducted with outsiders in order to partake in *long term* transactions with insiders, thereby facilitating social and cultural reproduction of the local community. It is this local participation which has enabled Japanese coastal fishermen to play active roles in resource management and enforcement, often imposing stricter regulations than required by the law. Such conditions are precisely what advocates of sustainable

use and co-management are looking for.

Whereas many fisheries management regimes today try to move in the direction of more community participation, the management of whales — as at present pursued by the IWC — moves in the opposite direction; giving more and more attention to people far removed from the natural resources. It is high time that also whales are managed according to the principles of sustainable use and local participation.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Government of Japan thanks Dr. Arne Kalland for his contribution to this paper.

End notes

1. See for example the books edited by Evelyn Pinkerton (1989) and Fikret Berkes (1989)
2. There exist now a large body of literature in English about the Japanese sea tenure system and how it evolved. See for ex. Akimichi (1984); Akimichi and Ruddle (1984); Kada (1984); Kalland (1984, 1990, 1991, 1994); Matsuda and Kaneda (1984); Ruddle (1985, 1987, 1989); Ruddle and Akimichi (1989); Short (1989); Wigen (1989)

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**SMALL-TYPE WHALING AND
THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF A ZERO-CATCH LIMIT
DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED BY JAPAN TO THE IWC
1986-93**

The Government of Japan
1994

1986	TC/38/AS2	Small-type Whaling in Japan's Coastal Seas	1991	TC/43/SEST1	The Cultural Significance of Everyday Food Use
1987	IWC/39/25	Japan's Small-type Subsistence Whaling		TC/43/SEST2	Socio-Economic Implications of Zero-Catch Limit: Some Examples of Small-type Whaling
	IWC/39/26	History of the Consideration of Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling		TC/43/SEST3	Summaries of Documents on Socio-Economic Implications and Small-type Whaling
1988	IWC/40/23	Small-type Coastal Whaling in Japan: Report of an International Workshop		TC/43/SEST4	Age Difference in Food Preference with regard to Whale Meat: Report of a Questionnaire Survey in Oshika Township
	No number	Women's Tales of Whaling: Life Stories of 11 Japanese Women who Live with Whaling			
1989	IWC/41/21	Report to the Working Group on Socio-Economic Implications of a Zero-Catch Limit	1992	IWC/44/SEST2	Summary of Whale Meat as a Component of the Changing Japanese Diet in Hokkaido
	IWC/41/SE1	Socio-Economic Implications of a Zero-Catch Limit on Distribution Channels and Related Activities in Hokkaido and Miyaki Prefectures		IWC/44/SEST3	Commercial Distribution of Whale Meat: An Overview
	IWC/41/SE3	Small-type Coastal Whaling in Ayukawa: Draft Report of Research		IWC/44/SEST4	The Importance of Everyday Food Use
	TC/41/STW1	Contemporary Socio-Cultural Characteristics of Japanese Small-type Coastal Whaling		IWC/44/SEST5	A Critical Evaluation of the Relationship between Cash Economies and Subsistence Activities
	TC/41/STW2	Japanese Whaling Culture: Continuities and Diversities		IWC/44/SEST6	Similarities and Diversity in Coastal Whaling Operations: A Comparison of Small-Scale Whaling Activities in Greenland, Iceland, Japan and Norway
	TC/41/STW3	The Spread of Whaling Culture in Japan		IWC/44/SEST/WP1	Proposal for Definition of Small-type Whaling
1990	TC/42/SEST2	Socio-Economic Impact Countermeasures in the Four Japanese STCW Communities		No number	Whale Meat as a Component of the Changing Japanese Diet in Hokkaido
	TC/42/SEST3	Distinguishing between Japanese STCW and LTCW Relation to Coastal Whale Fishery Management	1993	IWC/45/SEST1	How Different are Small-type and Large-Type Whaling
	TC/42/SEST7	Operational Plan for Japanese Small-type Whaling		IWC/45/SEST2	List of Documents Related to Japanese Small-type Coastal Whaling and the Socio-Economic Implications of a Zero-Catch Limit
	TC/42/SEST8	Quantification of Local Need for Minke Whale for the Ayukawa-Based Minke Whale Fishery		IWC/45/SEST3	Action Plan for Japanese Community-based Whaling (CBW)
	TC/42/SEST9	Japan's Answers to Questions on Japanese STCW		IWC/45/SESTWP1	Statement from Yojiro Toba, Chairman, Japan Small-type Whaling Association
	No number	Whaling Towns and Tourism: Possibilities for Development of Tourism at the Former Whaling Towns — Taiji, Wada and Ayukawa			
	No number	Endangered Culture: Japanese Whaling in Cultural Perspective			

SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF WHALING IN CONTEMPORARY JAPAN: A CASE STUDY OF SMALL-TYPE COASTAL WHALING

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Key Issues in Hunter-Gatherer Research

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17 Social and Cultural Significance of Whaling in Contemporary Japan: A Case Study of Small-Type Coastal Whaling

Masami Iwasaki-Goodman and Milton M. R. Freeman

In contemporary Japan, small-type coastal whaling (STCW), a regulated small-scale coastal fishery that harvests mainly minke whale, continues to demonstrate the historical importance of whaling in the local communities where STCW is based. Abiding by the decision of the International Whaling Commission, the catching of minke whale has been suspended by the Government of Japan since the end of the 1987 whaling season. This paper discusses, the production, distribution, and consumption of whale resources in STCW communities, through which the social, cultural, and economic significance of STCW operations and the various impacts of the international suspension of commercial whaling will be analyzed.

A moratorium on all commercial whaling was adopted by the International Whaling Commission in 1982. This action reflected growth in the political sophistication of those concerned with the protection of whales and, at the same time, marked the beginning of an era of great uncertainty for the small whaling towns in Japan.

Pelagic (open-sea) whaling in Antarctic waters, the best known form of Japanese whaling and large-type coastal whaling (LTCW), the large-scale shore-based commercial operation harvesting large whales in Japanese coastal waters, have both ceased and the operating companies were dissolved in 1987. The third, and least-known form of whaling, namely small-type coastal whaling (STCW), was severely affected by the moratorium. Small-type coastal whaling (STCW), which in previous years harvested about four hundred whales of three or four different species, lost a substantial part of the annual catch quota (see Table 17.1) and, under domestic regulation, has been continuing with a limited harvest of small cetaceans (marine mammals) that are not affected by the international whaling ban.

Table 17.1: Minke whale catch by STCW since 1982

1982–324	1987–304
1983–290	1988–0
1984–367	1990–0
1985–327	1991–0
1986–311	1992–0

SOURCE: Japan Small-type Whaling Association

Despite the end of industrial-scale whaling, which in the past satisfied a national market for whale meat and other products, there persists an intensive effort by the community people in various parts of Japan to conserve their endangered whaling culture for future generations. This tendency is stronger in the communities where STCW is based, due to the localized focus and the sociocultural significance of this particular whaling operation.¹ Besides the efforts of the local people to promote an understanding of the significance of continued whaling, there have been about thirty academic research projects undertaken in order to examine the social, cultural, and economic aspects of STCW. These studies have provided the basis of discussions on Japanese STCW and the socioeconomic implications of the moratorium at the International Whaling Commission since 1988 (see Akimichi et al. 1988; Bestor 1989; Braund et al. 1989; Japan 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992; Kalland 1989; Takahashi et al. 1989).

Current discussions about STCW at the International Whaling Commission are focused on the role of coastal whaling in meeting local residents' 'human needs' in these small, and often remote, whaling communities. 'Human needs' are defined in relation to various social, cultural, nutritional, and economic aspects of contemporary life in these coastal communities. One of the more important

aspects in understanding 'human needs' relates to the use of the whale carcass for human consumption. This use of the whale primarily as food makes Japanese whaling unique among the industrialized whaling countries that have engaged in intensive large-scale commercial whaling in the past primarily for the production of oil for industrial use.

THEORETICAL DISCUSSION

A series of anthropological studies on Japanese STCW have been conducted since 1988, when the issue of the sociocultural dimensions of localized STCW was first discussed extensively at the forty-first annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission. The nature of Japanese STCW had been mostly unknown outside of Japan until a comprehensive research project was undertaken by an international group of anthropologists in 1988 (Akimichi et al. 1988). One major contribution of this collaborative research appears to be the establishment of an important anthropological concept, namely, the Japanese whaling culture complex.

The concept of the whaling culture complex placed localized STCW in an appropriate national and historical context. Focusing on earlier work (Kalland 1986) on the history of Japanese whaling during the late-feudal Tokugawa period (1603-1868), Akimichi et al. (1988) reviewed the historic accounts of Japanese whaling, which revealed the continuation of several forms of coastal whaling through transmission of knowledge and the migration of whalers over the centuries. Such a long history of coastal whaling resulted in the development of three diversified forms of whaling (STCW, LTCW, and pelagic whaling) in the modern period (Akimichi et al.: 10-16).

The geographical spread of the whaling culture over the years was examined more extensively by Kalland (1989), who focused on the migration of whalers out of the established whaling communities in southwestern Japan to the newly opened whaling areas in the north. Thus STCW is the most recently established form of the developing Japanese whaling complex. Dating from the 1930s, STCW focused upon the catching of several small species of whale, thereby ensuring continuity with various traditional whaling-related social and cultural institutions in the local whaling communities. The historical importance of STCW as the most recent operating phase of the long-established Japanese whaling cultural complex is recognized by many Japanese, especially in the various whaling districts.

The concept of a whaling culture also made later research on STCW coherent with respect to verifying the social and cultural interactions occurring in the whaling communities. Akimichi et al. (1988) described all phases of STCW: production, processing, distribution, consumption, and celebration, through which important social and cultural institutions such as gifting and religious observances have been sustained. Akimichi et al. (1988: 75) define the whaling culture:

“[T]he shared knowledge of whaling transmitted

across generations. This shared knowledge consists of a number of different socio-cultural inputs: a common heritage and world view, an understanding of ecological (including spiritual) and technological relations between human beings and whales, special distribution processes, and a food culture.”

This definition was confirmed by Takahashi et al. (1989), who compared the production and processing involved in premodern whaling with three types of modern whaling. Discussion of continuities, similarities, and the linkages among the different forms of whaling demonstrates the existence of an integrated whaling culture in Japan (see also Braund et al. 1989; Kalland and Moeran 1992: 134-73).

The localized nature of STCW, unlike other forms of modern whaling, has also been given attention. Four STCW communities (Abashiri, Ayukawa, Wada, and Taiji) have been examined by anthropologists, some of whom have produced papers on particular communities (e.g. Akimichi et al. 1988: Appendix 2; Iwasaki 1988; Manderson and Hardacre 1989a, 1989b; Takahashi 1987, 1991). These varied studies confirm the important material and symbolic functions of whales and whaling in these communities, and in some cases conclude that “the end of whaling means the end of these towns as viable communities” (Manderson and Hardacre, 1989b: 28).

Social scientists have also investigated the local and nationwide impact associated with the current pause in commercial whaling that affected coastal whaling operations in Japan after the end of the 1987 season. A thorough assessment of the socioeconomic impact of the moratorium on all modern forms of whaling operations in Japan was completed (Japan 1989). This study reported a series of negative impacts at the individual, family, community, and national levels. At the conclusion of a discussion of this report at the 1989 International Whaling Commission meeting, it was noted in the International Whaling Commission Chairman's Report of the 41st Meeting that “the impacts pose a serious threat to the continued survival of these traditional small communities” (International Whaling Commission 1989: 4). This report further concludes that the impacts are more seriously damaging to STCW communities because of the localized nature of the whaling operation and the limited economic alternatives for the laid-off whalers in this particular fishery (see also Takahashi 1991).

An intensive discussion on the issue of whale-based local food culture took place at the forty-second and forty-third annual meetings of the International Whaling Commission. Various academic papers provided the bases for critical discussion of the issue, the principal paper being a detailed quantitative assessment of the social and cultural significance of the consumption of whale meat in several STCW-dependent communities in Miyagi Prefecture (Braund et al. 1990).

In response to questions raised at the forty-second

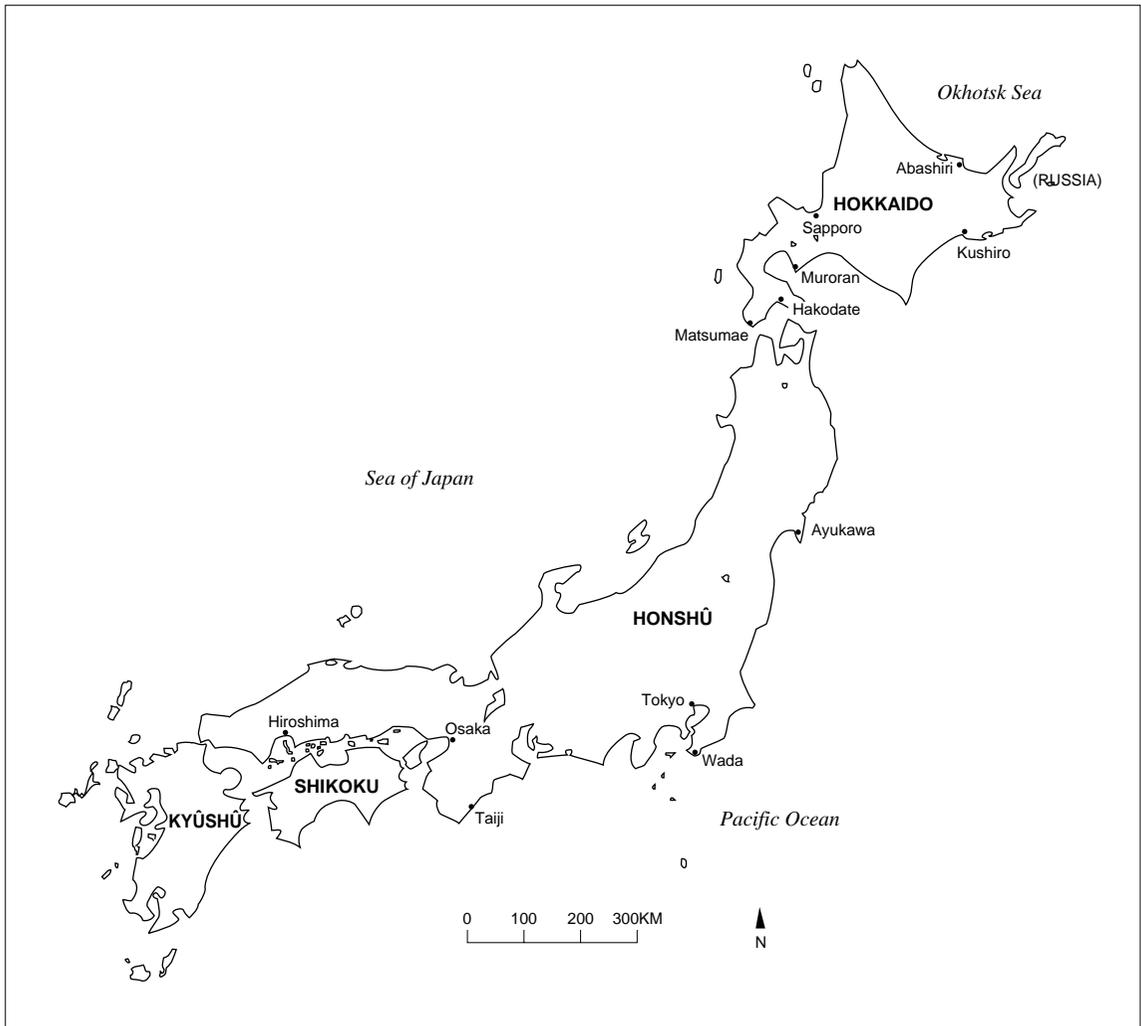
annual meeting, further examination of the cultural significance of the consumption of whale meat in everyday meals occurred at the forty-third International Whaling Commission meeting. Theoretical and empirical analysis of the social and cultural importance of everyday meals indicated the critical role played by whale meat and blubber. The report concluded: “[T]hese cultural values are rooted in a variety of historical, symbolic, aesthetic, social, and locational considerations” (Japan 1991: 13). Ashkenazi and Jacob (1991) have independently examined the general Japanese dietary patterns; their study confirms the role of whale meat as an integral part of the Japanese customary diet, and the fact that whale-based cuisine provides the basis for the distinctive regional identity of members of Japanese STCW communities.

More recently, an international study group for small-type whaling examined small-scale whaling activities in Greenland, Iceland, Japan, and Norway, and reported their

findings at the forty-fourth meeting of the International Whaling Commission (Japan 1992). This report proposed a resource management strategy directed at minke whale and founded upon two principles, namely “the widely-recognized goal of sustainable development [which] requires broadening our understanding of human/environment relations” and “greater sensitivity toward the importance of marine living resources in the livelihoods of diverse coastal communities” (Japan 1992: 1). The study group, having demonstrated significant similarities in small-scale whaling in these four countries, points out that, while the International Whaling Commission recognizes the Greenlandic whaling operation a subsistence whaling, it has failed to recognize the similar nature of small-scale whaling operations in Japan, Norway, and Iceland.

This intensive anthropological research conducted recently on Japanese whaling and summarized above provides a theoretical framework for future studies on different aspects

Figure 17.1: Place names mentioned in the text



of the three distinct forms of Japanese whaling. More important, an accumulation of the social science data on Japanese whaling has confirmed two major roles that modern whaling, and especially STCW, have played in the contemporary Japanese context. First, whaling plays a strong integrative role in the economic, social, and cultural institutions in these small whaling communities, making continued whaling indispensable for the social vitality and economic viability of these communities. And second, modern whaling continues to fulfill its traditional role as a human food supplier, which is one of the key elements in satisfying 'human needs' in these particular communities.

SMALL-TYPE COASTAL WHALING

Small-scale coastal whaling operations, harvesting about 350 minke whales each year within fifty miles of shore (until the zero-catch quota was imposed in 1988) has its major whaling bases in three communities along the Japanese Pacific coast and one on the Okhotsk Sea coast (see Figure 17.1). Small-type coastal whaling has been a stable supplier of fresh (unfrozen) minke whale meat, Baird's beaked whale meat, and pilot whale meat — the necessary ingredients for the distinctive local cuisine and various important ceremonial dishes (see Akimichi et al. 1988: 66-74, 92-95; Braund et al. 1990; Kalland and Moeran 1992: 145-49). Considering the harvest level and the number of participating boats, STCW has been a notably stable fishery, regulated by both the national government and the International Whaling Commission.

It is the localized nature of this whaling operation, and particularly the sociocultural significance of the consumption, distribution, and production phases of this type of whaling operation that critically distinguishes it from industrial-scale whaling.

CONSUMPTION OF WHALE MEAT

The whale, a locally available and relatively abundant natural resource, has been long valued, hunted, and utilized in numerous ways in order to satisfy the varied needs of society throughout Japanese history. However, the primary and most consistent use of the whale has been as human food (Baba 1942; Fukumoto 1960; Maeda and Teraoka 1952; Toyo Hoge 1989). The following comment made

by a sixty-year-old male local historian (field notes 1986) provides a common description of whale consumption among the Japanese: "We don't waste any part of whale. We eat meat and blubber and use bone for fertilizer. Every part is used."

Small-type coastal whaling was started around 1930 to supply the local needs for whale meat and blubber, and since that time it has been the sole supplier of fresh minke whale meat. Minke whale meat produced in the STCW fishery is distinguished from that produced by pelagic whaling by the fact that it is cut from the freshly killed carcass and kept chilled with ice from the time of butchering (shortly after harvesting) until it reaches the local retail stores, where it is labelled as *nama kujira* (fresh whale) to differentiate it from frozen minke whale meat.

Five Parts of the Minke Whale

In the recent past, minke whale was consumed mostly in Hokkaido and the area around Ayukawa in Miyagi prefecture. Although the consumption patterns differ from one region to the other, some generalities can be identified. Minke whale is divided roughly into five parts according to its preparation (see Figure 17.2).

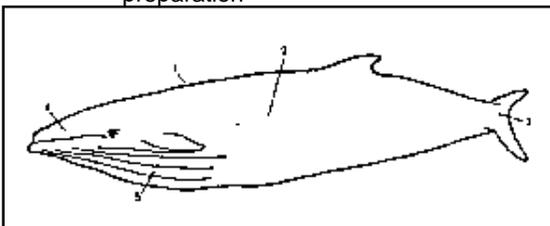
- 1) *Kawa* (blubber) is eaten both raw and cooked. Some blubber is salted for preservation, and then becomes an ingredient for a New Year's ceremonial dish called *Kujirajiru* (a vegetable stew cooked with salted blubber). Although in the past whale oil was extracted from blubber for industrial use, in recent years blubber has been sold exclusively as human food (Kalland and Moeran 1992: 110).
- 2) *Kujiraniku* (whale meat) is cut up and graded into four ranks, depending on the shape of the cuts and the quality of the meat. In addition to these four ranks of meat, occasionally minke whales provide a small quantity of localized marbled meat called *onomi*. However, *onomi* is usually associated with larger species of whale than the minke whale. Whale meat is enjoyed mostly as sashimi (raw slices).
- 3) *Oba*, *obaïke*, *obaki*, or *obake* (tail fluke) is sliced thinly and made into a dish called *sarashikujira*. Fluke is also used as an offering on the whaleboat's Shinto altar where, in accordance with tradition, the distal three centimeters of the fluke is placed on the altar each time a whale is caught.
- 4) *Saezuri* (tongue) is a local delicacy, especially in the Osaka region.
- 5) *Unesu* (ventral groove) is processed into whale bacon. In some cases, *unesu* is eaten raw as sashimi.

Whalers and their families also enjoy other parts of the whale, such as the internal organs and meat scraped from the chin bone. In Ayukawa, such parts are cooked for sale at the local fish stores, as well as for private consumption by the crew and boat owners (see also Akimichi et al. 1988: 66-74 for further variation in STCW town diets).

Whale Dishes

The above-mentioned five parts of the minke whale

Figure 17.2: The five main parts of the minke whale according to the type of preparation



have significantly different texture and flavor, and are prepared in order to satisfy the nutritional, social, and cultural needs of consumers. In whaling communities, sashimi has been the major preparation choice for minke whale meat and blubber since late Meiji times (1868-1912), when whaling became established in the region. *Kujiraniku* is sliced thinly (roughly 0.5 centimeters thick) into bite-size pieces, which are placed on a bed of shredded cabbage or a few pieces of roughly cut crispy lettuce. In Ayukawa, red meat is often served with white blubber, presenting an aesthetically pleasing and appetizing color contrast.

The data gathered through interviews as well as research results published by other social scientists (Akimichi et al. 1988; Iwasaki 1988; Manderson and Hardacre 1989a, 1989b; Braund et al. 1990; Japan 1991) demonstrate that minke whale has been eaten for three principle purposes: for ceremonial occasions, such as New Year's eve and day, weddings, and local festivals; for marking visits and community gatherings; and for everyday meals at home and in such public institutions as schools and hospitals. Within these broad categories, Braund et al. (1990) identified 30 culturally significant food occasions requiring the use of minke whale meat in STCW-associated communities in Miyagi Prefecture.

At wedding receptions, for example, a large plate of assorted sashimi, in which *kujiraniku* and *kawa* are placed as a centerpiece, is served to highlight the occasion. Whale dishes are a significant part of the menu served at local shrine festivities and religious gatherings. The local priest in Ayukawa states: "From the old days we have had whale meat and regard this as necessary: we offer to the gods whale meat despite the usual injunction [against] red meat. ... so it's necessary to have whale meat for this [ritual] meal" (Manderson and Hardacre 1989a: 39).

Kujirajiru has been a regional New Year's meal in Hokkaido. This regional dish has been passed down through several generations in the southwestern part of Hokkaido. The subsequent migration of people to other areas on Hokkaido has resulted in the widespread appeal of *kujirajiru* throughout the island. Presently, those with ancestral ties to the Matsumae and Esashi areas, but not presently living in geographical proximity to those areas, continue to value *kujirajiru* as a necessary dish at New Year's celebrations. *Kujirajiru* is also symbolically appropriate for the occasion because whales are normally associated with wealth, growth and happiness. For the same reason, *sarashikujira* is enjoyed as a necessary part of the New Year's meal.

Whale dishes are served when local people gather together for private or public purposes, or when relatives and guests from distant communities visit the whaling communities. Fresh *kujiraniku* or *unesu*, or frozen reserves of these foods in the whaling off-season, are prepared in order to welcome guests to whaling towns where whale dishes are considered *meibutsu* (the local speciality), and therefore appropriate food for these occasions (see Kalland

and Moeran 1992: 147-48).

Substantial use is made of minke whale products as a part of everyday meals during the whaling season. *Kujiraniku* is often served at dinner as sashimi while fresh meat is abundant and reasonably priced. People are motivated to prepare whale dishes because of their familiarity with the taste of whale, a result of having lived in the whaling towns and of having been exposed to the local whale-based cuisine. Whale meat provided the major source of animal protein during the period of food shortage immediately after World War II. At that time, people relied heavily upon whale meat for maintenance of their nutritional balance, and some people in Abashiri still recall the hardship of daily life during that period (field notes 1986): "At that time, whale was almost a staple food. There was not enough of other food to eat. If it had not been for whale, we would have been starved." However, some who associate whale dishes with the food shortages of those times tend to have a negative image of whale meat as a cheap and tasteless meat substitute.

In Ayukawa, apart from its extensive use in everyday meals, minke whale meat is served at public institutions as a part of the regular menu. Whale dishes are considered nutritionally and culturally appropriate food to be served to those with special needs in places such as hospitals and schools.

DISTRIBUTION

Consumers, including whalers and their families, generally acquire whale meat through two distribution channels: customary sharing and gifting, and commercial distribution.

Customary Sharing and Gifting

Formal gift-giving is an established social and cultural institution observed throughout Japan (Befu 1968). In the case of STCW communities, whale meat and blubber perform a key function in the exercise of this important institution. The first of a series of whaling-associated gifting ceremonies is carried out at the beginning of the whaling season. Gifts given to boat owners to celebrate *funaoroshi* (bringing a boat to the harbor) and *hatsuryoiwai* (the first-catch celebration) are reciprocated by the gift of a share of the first whale caught for that year (Akimichi et al. 1988: 43-51).

Gifting of whale products continues throughout the whaling season. Whaling crews, factory workers, and boat owners each receive their share of whale meat and blubber when a whale is caught. Further distribution also takes place from these original recipients to their relatives, neighbors, friends, and business partners: One elderly woman expressed the importance of such exchanges (field notes 1986): "We are farmers. So we give next door neighbors our vegetables. They give us some whale meat and blubber."

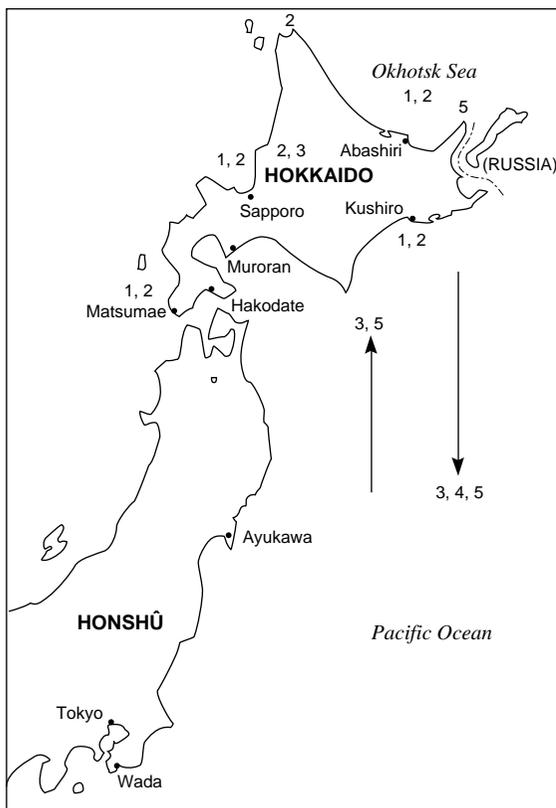
Seasonal gifting, such as *seibo* (the end of year gift) and *chugen* (the mid summer gift), are also important occasions when whale products are exchanged, as are other

gift items. Customary sharing of whale products is more common locally in the whaling communities, but also extends outside of the local community, functioning as a mechanism to promote social solidarity, alliance, and identity (Akimichi et al. 1988: 41-51; Iwasaki 1988: 47-55; Manderson and Hardacre 1989b: 19-22; Kalland and Moeran 1992: 141-45, 156):

“I have relatives in Yoichi where people have to have *kujirajiru* for New Year’s. Every year they wait for me to send them some salted blubber. My son, a whaler, buys me some from *oyakata* (boss) so that I can send it to my relatives” (seventy-year-old wife of a whaler, quoted in Iwasaki 1988: 49).

Customary gifting may involve both commercial and noncommercial distribution. Producers of whale meat and those in their gifting network engage in exchanges involving whale meat; such transactions do not involve cash, and thus are essentially noncommercial in nature. However, the commercial distribution of whale products may itself fulfill socially and culturally important roles when, for example, a person is required to buy whale meat and blubber in order to give an appropriate gift to his or her gifting partner. Therefore, edible whale products, whether obtained through

Figure 17.3: Consumption and distribution patterns of minke whale in Hokkaido according to whale product categories (see p. 274 for number descriptions)



noncommercial or commercial channels may be functionally similar in social and cultural terms in ensuring that customary gifting is appropriately celebrated.

Commercial Distribution

Whale products are mostly distributed through established commercial networks, with a very small portion sold directly by the whalers to the consumers, when, for example, the local people visit the flensing station or the meat-boxing factory. (However, changes are occurring as a result of the whaling moratorium; see Takahashi 1991). In Ayukawa, the local Fishery Cooperative Association, which is responsible for distributing whale products, auctions variable-sized lots to local wholesalers. The Abashiri whaling companies on the other hand, sell their products directly to local distributors who deal with the local markets as well as other markets throughout Hokkaido (Bestor 1989).

An important feature in the commercial distribution of the STCW- produced whale product is that it represents a highly localized distribution, which differs significantly from the centralized marketing systems that distributed whale products formerly produced by the large-scale whaling corporations. (For differences between the distribution system operating in Japanese STCW and LTCW, see Japan 1990.) In the case of STCW, the small geographical distance from the flensing station or landing port to the local market enables the local distributors to maintain a regular supply of high quality fresh (unfrozen) minke whale meat throughout the whaling season. As mentioned above, it is the nature of this ‘fresh minke’ that clearly separates the STCW-derived minke whale meat from the other minke whale meat (from the Antarctic), which is held, shipped and, sold frozen.

The commercial distribution of whale products is closely connected with regionally specific events having social and cultural significance. In Hokkaido, most of the whale products are consumed within the Hokkaido region, with high demand in Abashiri and the neighboring communities. A small quantity of *oba*, *unesu*, and *saezuri* are sent out to those areas where the demands are especially great (see Figure 17.3). In the Matsumae and Esashi area, *kujirajiru* is the traditional dinner for New Year’s Eve and Day. Throughout Hokkaido, *kujirajiru* is often served on these occasions and salted blubber is one of the gift items at *seibo*. Salted blubber is sold at fish stores or supermarkets in most cities and towns in Hokkaido just before New Year’s Eve. While some salted blubber is sold directly to the fishermen from Matsumae and Esashi who fish from Abashiri port, the remainder is sold through the distributors in Abashiri and Kushiro, which are both government-designated landing ports for minke whale.

Oba is another item that is sold just before New Year’s Eve at local fish stores or supermarkets in the cities and towns in Hokkaido for use in *osechi* (the New Year’s dish).

Kujiraniku constitutes a major part of total minke whale production. To be distributed to consumers, *kujiraniku* is

further divided into four grades according to the shape and quality of the meat: highest grade A, second highest B, third highest C, and the lowest D. Meat judged to be of A or C quality is likely sold to the central cities in Hokkaido, and meat of B or D quality tends to be sold locally or in the neighboring communities around Abashiri.

In the case of Hokkaido, the localities where whale consumption is most pronounced are widely scattered around the coastal area throughout the prefecture. The reason for this is that there have been a large number of whaling bases for both large-type coastal whaling and small-type coastal whaling all around the coastal area in Hokkaido during the last fifty years (see Figure 17.4; see also Tato 1985). Whale dishes therefore, were adopted into the local diet and continue to be favored dishes for people living in these former whaling districts up to the present day.

One minke whale product is exported from Hokkaido. This is *saezuri*, especially favored in the Osaka region in central Japan. However, in terms of both product weight and value, the quantity of export is quite small. It is also important to note that some proportion of the whale product exported from Hokkaido returns, as in the case of *sarashikujira* and *unesu*.

PRODUCTION

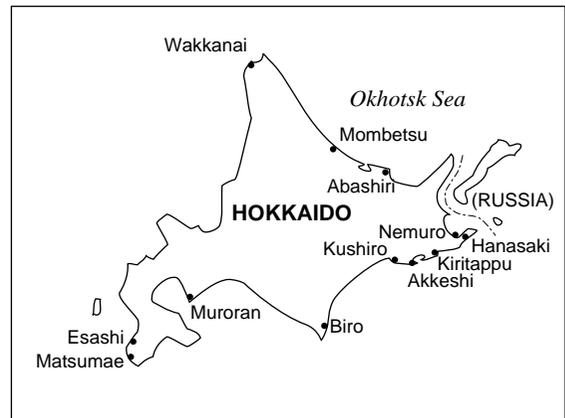
The STCW operational strategy has been dictated by weather, variable whale distribution and behavior patterns and, to a large degree, by the national government's Ministerial Ordinance for Licenses and Regulation of Designated Fisheries. This ordinance defines permissible operational details, including, for example, the length of the whaling season, the caliber of the cannons, specifications of landing and flensing stations, and prohibitions about catching lactating female whales.

In STCW the scale of production is extremely limited compared to the other forms of whaling in Japan. Consistent with the consumption and distribution patterns of STCW, the production phase is also localized, in that a high degree of social, cultural, and economic integration occurs within the local community. A description of crew composition, company structure, and hunting activities will be presented in order to provide a better understanding of operational aspects of this fishery.

Crew Composition

The STCW boat crew usually includes a harpooner, captain, engineer, a few deck hands, and a cook. In addition to the boat crew, there are a small number of specialized flensers and temporary assistants who process the carcass at the land station. Before the ban on minke whaling, seventy-five full-time workers and thirty-eight seasonal helpers were employed by the eight companies engaged in STCW in Japan (Japan 1989: 6). The social characteristics of the STCW employees characteristically differ from those of whalers engaged in both LTCW and pelagic whaling. First, the crews generally consist of local people having their permanent residence in a STCW

Figure 17.4: Whaling station locations in Hokkaido from 1990 to the present (after Terry 1950)



community. Second, kinship appears to play an important role in crew composition, for often crew members are related to others on the boat or to the boat owner's family. Kin ties are frequent in the wider network that includes the crew, the boat owners, and their immediate and extended families (see Kalland and Moeran 1992: 123-133 for discussion of recruitment patterns in STCW).

Traditionally, promotion over the years from cook to deck hand, and, in some cases, finally to harpooner took place on a STCW boat, though the succession could involve various employment moves between STCW, LTCW, and pelagic whaling boats. However, as the number of whaling boats in all three forms of whaling in Japan was successively reduced due to domestic as well as international regulation, the total number of whaling-crew openings also became reduced. Thus, chances for promotion became scarce. A decided status hierarchy exists in the crew, with the position of harpooner being the most prestigious.

STCW Companies

The nine STCW boats are mostly owned by small, family-business enterprises established in the whaling communities. For the past several years, seven of the eight companies each owned one boat, and one company owned two boats. One of the nine boats is operated by the local Fishery Cooperative Association.

The STCW boat owners are mostly heirs of the family business: their continued dedication to the whaling enterprise consequently stems from the pride and obligation boat owners have toward maintaining the family business that their ancestors have established. Such feelings are expressed in statements like the following: "If the time comes that whaling must stop completely, then I feel that my ancestor's work and history and culture will be gone" (former Taiji harpooner with 30 years of whaling experience, as reported in San Francisco Examiner 1988: 36).

The family tradition involves harpooners and other whaling boat crewmen as well as meat processors, flensers,

and retailers. Manderson and Hardacre (1989a: 49-52) report on an Ayukawa area family of specialized processors of *kabura* (a dish prepared from whale cartilage) who learned the techniques from Taiji whalers. This family passed on their business for four generations through adoptions, in the absence of biological sons, to maintain the family line. Small-scale family businesses such as this, involved with processing whale products, constitute an integral and important part of the local economy in STCW communities by providing stable employment opportunities to local people.

Through socialization, the younger members of the whaling communities develop understanding and knowledge involved in whaling and other whaling-related work, as a seventy-year-old widow of a whaler explained (field notes 1986):

“Two of my sons, now both whalers, loved visiting their father on the boat. They spent hours and hours playing around the boat and dreamt to be whalers just like their father... [and] when their father was hospitalized for three months before he died, these sons went to ask him more about whaling. I remember my husband giving directions to them in his bed.”

It is through this process of occupational socialization that the continued recruitment and maintenance of STCW in the whaling towns has been assured.

Small-type coastal whaling also helped the financial wellbeing of the whaling towns by providing predictability and stability for the local economy; a steady harvest of the strictly controlled annual quota and a guaranteed local market for the product ensured economic stability. The local community clearly benefited from such economic security, especially when the other coastal fishing industries have shown recent evidence of serious decline. Another apparent economic gain from STCW was the revenue to the local Fishery Cooperative Association that STCW provided in some whaling towns. The most noticeable case is found in Ayukawa, where STCW companies provided the Oshika Fishery Cooperative Association 79 percent of its total annual revenues in 1987 (Bestor 1989; see also Japan 1989: 24-32 for data on similar situations in other STCW communities).

Harvest Activities

In STCW, the catching operation is usually completed in one day. On rare occasions, when weather and ocean conditions permit, boats may stay overnight on the whaling ground if the hunt has been unsuccessful during the day. Small-type coastal whaling boats hunt whales within about fifty miles of the coast, due to the boats' limited range and in order to avoid possible accidents caused by sudden sea or weather changes. Another reason for limiting the area of operation is that STCW boats generally return immediately to the flensing station (or to the government-approved landing port when sailing in Hokkaido waters), so the whale meat reaches consumers in as fresh a condition as possible.

Whaling operations start with the search for a whale. Because STCW boats are not equipped with the electronic whale-locating devices used on LTCW and pelagic whaling boats, human eye-sight and binoculars are the means used to locate whales from the masthead. Thus, good weather and relatively calm sea conditions are essential for a successful whale search. Sighting the whale is of great importance in STCW operations, as it grants a boat the exclusive right to harvest that particular whale. Therefore, a differential bonus system has been developed to reward a crew for sighting different species of whale (Japan 1989: Appendix II).

Once a whale is sighted, a boat moves into the area near the whale to enable the harpooner to aim at it. In approaching a whale, a small motorboat may be used to help turn the whale toward the whaling boat, thus reducing pursuit time and the chance of missing the whale, and overall, significantly increasing the efficiency of the whaling operation (Kalland and Moeran 1992: 105-106).

Shooting a harpoon successfully requires long-term training and experience. The prestige associated with success as a harpooner is consistent throughout the history of Japanese whaling (Fukumoto 1960). Similarly, harpooners on STCW boats are granted exclusive authority to coordinate the details of all sailing and hunting activities once a whale is being pursued. At the moment of shooting a harpoon, other crew members on board assist the harpooner, who aims at the whale and pulls the trigger with a silent prayer.

Flensing is carried out in two different ways, depending on the whaling ground. In coastal areas near Ayukawa, the whales are towed to the designated flensing station where land workers who specialize in flensing expertly cut up the whale. In Hokkaido waters, initial butchering is done on board,² with the whale meat subsequently shaped and boxed in a factory near the government-designated landing port. Workers who are engaged in flensing or boxing are often retired whalers, or women or neighbors who come to help on a part-time or seasonal basis in order to receive a share of whale meat as payment, in addition to cash, for the work performed.

SMALL-TYPE COASTAL WHALING SINCE THE MORATORIUM

In 1985 the International Whaling Commission instituted a ban on the commercial harvest of those species internationally accepted as falling under the Commission's management competence. The Japanese government agreed to implement this decision at the close of the 1987 season for the STCW minke whale fishery. As a consequence of this decision, the minke whale quota for the Japanese small-scale coastal whale fishery was reduced to zero, resulting in an overall harvest reduction of about 46 percent by weight in 1988 compared to the previous year (Japan 1989: 1). As a further consequence, the annual harvest activity of STCW became concentrated on the catch of Baird's beaked whale

and pilot whale, both of which continue to be regulated by the Japanese government. The number of registered boats and STCW licenses have not changed: eight STCW companies continue to operate and nine STCW boats are licensed to operate, as in the past twenty years.

However, in order to rationalize operating costs under the currently reduced harvest quota, the STCW operators have been operating a reduced number of boats: six boats in the 1988 whaling season, and four in the 1989, 1990, and 1991 seasons. This reduced number of boats is sufficient to harvest the authorized annual quota of sixty Baird's beaked whale (reduced to fifty-four in 1990 and 1991) and fifty pilot whales. In 1989, a newly opened southern whaling ground, also with quota of fifty pilot whales, was authorized by the Japanese authorities. However, so far the hunt in this new area has proved unsuccessful.

The supply of minke whale meat is extremely limited at present. Currently, the only source comes from the national distribution of the by-products from the annual Antarctic scientific research program (see Japan [1989: Appendix I] for organization details of this distribution system, and Ward [1992: 30-33] for an economic analysis of this activity).

However, frozen minke whale meat from the Antarctic is not an appropriate substitute for fresh minke whale meat because of the difference in quality. Furthermore, the limited amount of meat resulting from the research is insufficient to satisfy both the local demand in STCW communities and the total national demand for whale meat. Whale dishes are now often referred to as *natsukashii tabemono* (nostalgic food). Strong sentiments concerning whale dishes were repeatedly expressed by consumers like this sixty-five-year-old male (nonwhaler) who reported (field notes 1986): "We never get tired of whale dishes. It makes me feel sad to think it is no longer available. We really miss the taste of minke whale."

The interruption in supplies of whale products has compromised the integrity of various local community institutions. The exchange of gifts necessarily occurs less frequently since the ban on minke whaling, with a consequent weakening of social solidarity. Some of the other ceremonies ordinarily strengthening the symbolic function of whale and whaling in some STCW communities have been dramatically reduced in the absence of whaling activities in their coastal waters. In the case of Ayukawa, where the whale-based cuisine and whaling provided the basis for local tourism, the loss of whaling has negatively affected a wide range of local businesses, such as shops, inns, and restaurants. With the ensuing economic distress caused by the loss of jobs and reduced revenues of the Fishery Cooperative Association and local businesses, consequent social dislocations have variously and seriously undermined the continued vitality and viability of these whaling communities (Japan 1989: 40).

Despite the drastic changes occasioned by the restricted supply of minke whale meat, the local people in STCW

communities continue to seek ways to normalize the small-scale whaling operations. The request for an exemption from the moratorium on commercial whaling was first presented at the International Whaling Commission meeting in 1986, at which time the many social and cultural similarities between small-scale Japanese coastal whaling and North American and Greenlandic subsistence whaling (carried out by aboriginal people) were presented (Japan 1986). In 1988, a thorough documentation of Japanese STCW accompanied by a petition from the local townspeople was presented at the International Whaling Commission meeting. A special effort was made at the forty-first International Whaling Commission meeting in 1989 by the mayor of Oshika township, within which the Ayukawa whaling community is situated. The mayor presented a plea for the resumption of minke whaling and was accompanied at that meeting by all eight whaling boat owners. Statements by the mayor and boat owners included detailed explanations of the impacts of zero quotas, and these explanation were again offered at the forty-second, forty-third and forty-fourth meetings in the three following years. The persistence with which efforts are made to continue STCW signals the importance of whaling and whaling-related activities in these coastal communities.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

An examination of three phases of STCW operations — consumption, distribution, and production — as well as the description of the current situation during the hiatus in minke whaling caused by the moratorium, has indicated some important characteristics found in this form of whaling. An examination of consumption patterns of minke whale meat and blubber demonstrates the total utilization of the whale carcass for human consumption. Five main parts of the minke whale carcass are prepared and subsequently consumed in various localities where whale products are favored. The most common preparation of STCW products at present is sashimi, which is eaten both as a ceremonial dish and as an everyday meal during the whaling season. Small-type coastal whaling is the sole supplier of fresh minke meat, the most preferred ingredient for *kujira* sashimi, which consumers distinguish from frozen minke whale meat produced in other whaling operations. It was also noted that minke whale consumption patterns are deeply rooted in the historical, social, and cultural accounts of the local peoples' lives. Not only does the preferred taste for whale dishes motivate consumers to prepare them, but symbolic values attached to the whale make such dishes appropriate for particular social or ceremonial occasions. This is often reinforced by means of a past and present association with a whale-meat diet and with whaling. The whale-based cuisine involves important social dimensions, as socially and ceremonially important gatherings and visiting in whaling towns are often celebrated by sharing whale dishes.

Whale products are distributed through commercial and

noncommercial means, allowing consumers to satisfy a variety of socially and culturally significant consumption needs. People who have both direct and indirect ties with the whalers participate in gift exchanging, during which whale is the main gift item. Though such social interaction with the whalers, local people have access to whale meat and blubber. Another means of access is provided by middlemen who distribute the meat commercially. Regardless of the degree of commercialism involved in the means of distribution, the consumers are socially, and culturally motivated to make use of the STCW products, which, in turn, sustain traditional institutions and values.

The most important characteristic of the commercial distribution of STCW products is that it is highly localized. The initial distribution takes place at the landing port and involves local distributors who market the products primarily in the whaling community, and also in those neighboring communities that have historic, social and cultural links with the whaling community. Such an efficient distribution system enables fresh minke whale meat to reach consumers in the best condition. The localized nature of the distribution, furthermore, makes STCW an integral and essential part of the local economy.

The production phase of the STCW operation can be characterized by its high efficiency. STCW production operations are small-scale in order to achieve optimal production, during which a whale carcass is kept chilled to maintain the high quality required to meet exacting culinary standards. Harvest activities are conducted within a limited coastal area involving a minimum number of local crews so that efficiency in production is maximized. The social dimension of the production phase of whaling is also noteworthy; an intimate work situation creates a close unity among the crew members. Such unity is further reinforced by the fact that kinship has traditionally, and currently to a certain degree, played an important role in recruitment of whalers. Such intimate social unity is a vehicle for the transmission whaling knowledge and technology from generation to generation.

What, then, is the social and cultural significance of the STCW operation in present-day Japan? The answer becomes more apparent when the three phases of STCW are viewed in the context of the Japanese whaling cultural complex. The activities in three phases of STCW operations are concentrated in the present STCW communities and extend to other areas identifiable within the whaling cultural complex. The analysis of consumption patterns demonstrates the existence of a diversified regional minke whale-based cuisine maintained in the northern part of Japan. Historical development of Japanese whaling has

fostered widespread whale-eating customs in different regions. The minke whale cuisine forms a part of this historical diversity, and remains vital for the maintenance of the continually changing Japanese whaling culture.

STCW provides a regular and reliable supply of fresh minke whale meat in these regions through localized commercial and noncommercial distribution networks. Distribution of minke whale products originated in the local whaling community and extended to the area where socially and culturally identifiable needs for minke whale meat and blubber were maintained. The STCW distribution system ensured a continuous supply of fresh minke whale meat in the area where whaling and the associated whale-based food culture has fostered consumption needs for whale meat.

Practical considerations involved in producing fresh minke whale meat place limitations upon the scale and area of operation. STCW boats operate from the government-designated ports within a limited distance, which allows them to return to port while the meat stays fresh.

A locally developed distinctive whale-based cuisine, efficient coastal whaling operations, and localized distribution network together form a cohesive system that sustains important social, cultural, economic, and nutritional needs of the local community. Such an adaptive system, though relatively recent in origin and technologically modern in some important respects, nevertheless serves to maintain the long-established, culturally varied, and yet clearly identifiable Japanese whaling culture in contemporary Japan.

The present distress observed in the STCW communities demonstrates the obvious negative impacts of the International Whaling Commission's decision to prolong the pause imposed on all commercial whaling. The persistence with which the local people have been appealing for the normalization of their small-scale coastal minke whale fishery has its roots in all of the critical social, cultural, and economic relationships linking this fishery to the survival of these small distinctive coastal communities.

End notes

1. Kalland and Moeran (1992: 18) define a whaling community as "a group of people directly or indirectly involved in whaling related activities (such as the catching, flensing, processing, and/or marketing of whales and whale products), and for whom whaling related activities are important elements in the establishment of their self-identity." In the case of the STCW fishery, the whaling communities are the subcultural groups within an administrative unit (Abashiri, Oshika, Wada, and Taiji) that are identifiable within the concept of the Japanese whaling cultural complex.

2. Special permission is granted by the Japanese whaling authorities for on-board flensing during minke whaling operations only in Hokkaido waters.

ACTION PLAN FOR JAPANESE COMMUNITY-BASED WHALING (CBW) (IWC/45/SEST3 REV.)

The Government of Japan
1994

1. DEFINITION

Community-based whaling is small scale yet having significant socioeconomic, cultural and dietary importance within local communities. This community-based whaling shares to a large degree socio-cultural characteristics found in many subsistence-based societies. These characteristics include, e.g. local residence of boat owners and crew members, the widespread gift and ritual exchanges of whale products within the community, and gifts to kin members and friends residing outside the community, and the transmission of whaling lore and skills from generation to generation within the community. As with other hunting societies practicing subsistence, profound social and cultural significance is associated with catching, processing, distributing, consuming and celebrating the catch in conformity with local tradition (IWC/44/SEST5) to the extent that interference with these practices seriously endangers the viability and vitality of these traditional societies (e.g. IWC/41/SEI; IWC/41/SE3).

The products of community-based whaling are primarily to be consumed in these existing whaling communities. The sizes of the vessels used by the community-based whaling are not more than 26 metres in length, less than 50 tons in weight. The area in which the community-based whaling operates does not exceed 50 nautical miles off the Japanese coasts.

2. IDENTIFICATION OF THE COMMUNITY-BASED WHALING COMMUNITIES

The following four coastal communities are identified as the community-based whaling communities. The whale products taken by the community-based whaling are exclusively for local and consumption by the four communities identified below.

- 1) Abashiri in north-eastern Hokkaido
- 2) Ayukawa on the north-eastern tip of Oshika Peninsula in Miyagi Prefecture, Honshu
- 3) Wada on the Pacific coast of Chiba Prefecture, Honshu
- 4) Taiji on the Pacific coast of Kii Peninsula, Wakayama Prefecture, Honshu

3. SPECIFICATION FOR OPERATIONS OF THE CBW

(1) The port of landing the whale products:

- 1) Abashiri City on the north-east coast of Hokkaido in the Sea of Okhotsk in the Sub-Area 11 specified by the North Pacific minke whale trial by IWC Scientific Committee (IWC/45/4)
- 2) Hamanaka-cho off south-east coast of Hokkaido, provided the products landed there are immediately transferred to Ayukawa, Taiji and Wada in the Sub-Area 7
- 3) Ayukawa off Sanriku, on the Pacific Coast of Oshika Peninsula in the Sub-Area 7

(2) Areas of Operation

Areas of operation are generally identified as shaded area in the Annex to this paper. They are all within 50 n. miles off the coastal line of Japan.

4. DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION OF MINKE WHALES TAKEN BY THE CBW

The minke whales caught by the CBW shall be exclusively distributed and consumed in the local communities specified in the Paragraph 2 above. The term and the conditions for such distribution and consumption shall be as follows:

- 1) 80% of the whale meat should be consumed in the respective community identified in the Paragraph 2 above for the exclusive use by the community.
- 2) 20% of the whale meat may be distributed and consumed in the adjacent areas of the respective community identified in the Paragraph 2 above by the relatives and the related facilities and locations which have historical adherence to the CBW communities.
- 3) The Government of Japan shall ensure that administrative guidance is provided to the authorities of the four communities which would eliminate any commercial distribution of whale products (further explanation is shown in IWC/46/31).

5. ESTABLISHMENT OF CATCH LIMITS

- 1) The catch limit of 50 North Pacific Minke whales for the interim Relief Allocation (IRA) has no harmful effect on the stock. A take of 50 whales is less than the replacement yield of 209 (Rep. Int. Whal. Commn. 42: 162, 11.2).
- 2) Catch Limits to be established for the IRA as specified above are as follows:
 - (1) Sub-Area 11.....13 animals (July-September)
 - (2) Sub-Area 7..... 37 animals (April-September)

Those catch limits are set fully taking into account of best available information on stock identity and fishing season in which no mixing occur from the Sea of Japan stock to Sub-Area 11 and Sub-Area 7.

6. SUPERVISION AND CONTROL

Each land station shall accept a national inspector and an international observer to fully make sure the operations comply with the Revised Management System. Such an inspector shall collect the data specified in RMS.

7. SURVEY AND MONITORING

Japanese Government shall continuously conduct

research on the stock abundance and monitoring in accordance with the Guideline for Conducting Survey of RMS.

8. NUMBER OF VESSELS

A maximum of 9 vessels only belonging to the CBW communities identified in the foregoing Paragraph 2 and licensed since 1954 shall be used.

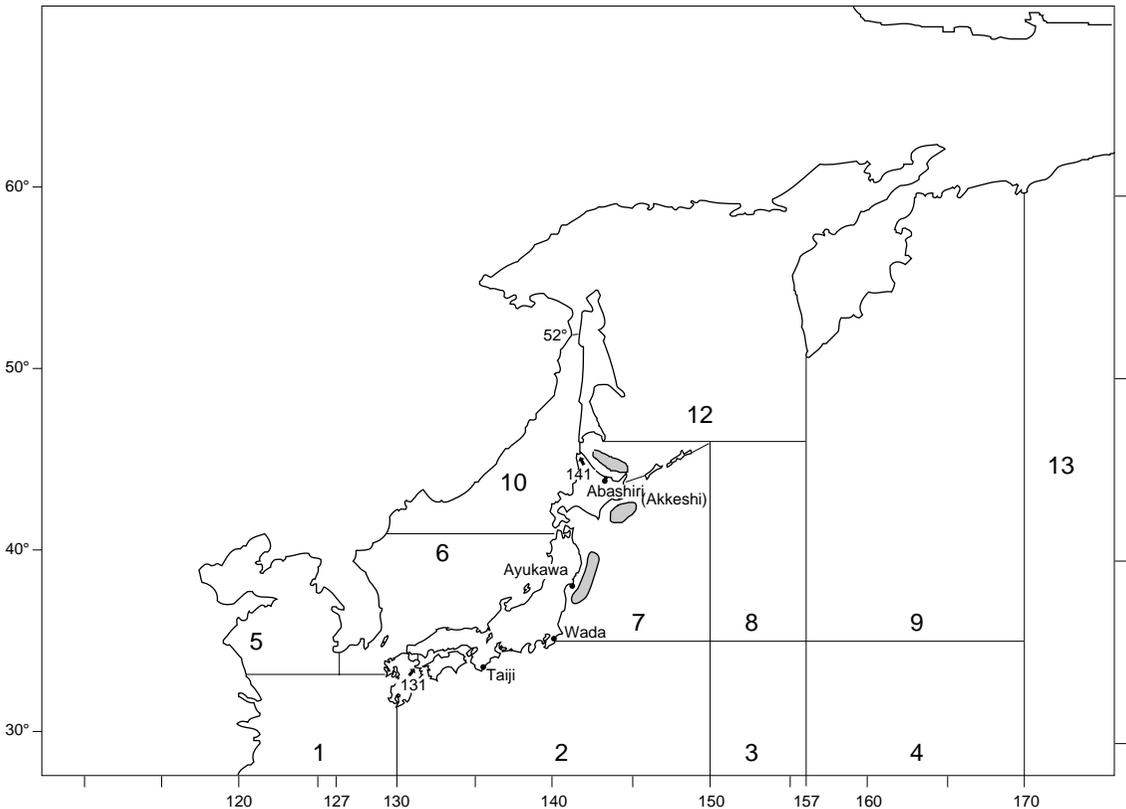
9. VERIFICATION

Each vessel shall be equipped with the Global Positioning System (GPS) to identify the location of the operating vessel on real-time basis and the location shall be monitored by a national inspector at all times.

10. REPORTING

A national inspector shall report catch data and other data collected from each vessel required by the data required as input to the Catch Limit Algorithm (Rep. Int. Whal. Commn. 45: 44) as well as the guideline for data collection and analysis under the RMS other than those direct input for the catch limit algorithm (46 IWC SC Report, Annex X) to IWC Secretariat.

Figure 1: Map showing location of past whaling grounds and the 13 sub-areas chosen for the implementation trials (see text)



ACTION PLAN FOR JAPANESE COMMUNITY-BASED WHALING (CBW): DISTRIBUTION AND CONSUMPTION OF WHALE PRODUCTS

The Government of Japan
1994

The International Whaling Commission, at its 45th annual meeting in Kyoto, adopted by consensus a Resolution (IWC/45/), resolving "to work expeditiously to alleviate the distress to CBW communities."

The Action Plan (IWC/46/31) was presented to the Working Group on Socio-Economic Implication and Small-Type whaling at the 46th IWC. Numbers of comments were received as a result of the discussion. The Government of Japan has addressed these comments and specific changes are shown by underline in this revised Action Plan (IWC/46/31 Rev. 2).

In order that the whale meat obtained from an Interim Relief Allocation may most effectively alleviate the hardship experienced by CBW communities, until the moratorium ends or third category is accepted, this Action Plan sought the following objectives:

- 1) to ensure that the edible whale products will be exclusively consumed in the local communities specified in IWC/46/SEST4;
- 2) to organize the distribution and consumption of whale products so as to alleviate the distress caused by the moratorium in these four CBW communities;
- 3) to utilize a non-market distribution system in order to remove the profit motivation from production and distribution of whale products.

The active participation of the local government and community citizens is indispensable to the functioning of this Action Plan. What the plan sets out to establish is a unique interim whaling operation for which the local government and community members will work cooperatively and from which the local community members will be enabled to alleviate their distress caused by the whaling moratorium whilst, through an equitable scale of levies, financially supporting these measures. This kind of operation, incorporating local community members and organizations, will be instituted only in those Japanese coastal whaling areas having an established whaling cultural tradition. This Action Plan is a sincere response from Japan to the difficult demand to remove commercial elements from Japanese CBW and is an interim measure taken to alleviate profound social, cultural and dietary hardship caused by the imposition of the zero quota on traditional community-based minke whaling operations.

CONTENT OF THE ACTION PLAN

1. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SMALL-TYPE WHALERS

- (1) The small-type whalers shall catch no more than 50 minke whales in accordance with the terms and conditions established by the IWC and relevant Japanese laws and regulations (as specified in IWC/46/SEST4).
- (2) The small-type whalers shall land the catches at the ports specified in IWC/46/SEST4.
- (3) The small-type whalers shall flense the landed carcasses and process them into products specified by a Management Council for Whale Meat Production and Distribution (hereinafter referred to as 'the Council').
- (4) The small-type whalers shall hand over all the whale products to the Council.
- (5) The small-type whalers may request the reimbursement only for the actual cost incurred by the catching of minke whales and associated handling charges, which expenses shall be received from the Council.

2. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MANAGEMENT COUNCIL FOR WHALE MEAT PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION

- (1) The establishment of the Council
 - A. A council shall be established in each of the four CBW communities: Abashiri, Oshika, Wada and Taiji.
 - B. Fully aware of the distress of the above-mentioned communities that has been imposed by the cessation of minke whaling; conscious of the long whaling history in these communities; and noting the unique social, ceremonial, symbolic, nutritional, and economic significance which whaling and whale meat have rendered to these communities, and the important role these elements have played for the solidarity of the community and the maintenance of the community members' relationships; the Council shall manage the whale meat distribution in a way necessary and suitable to the requirement of the community. This will be done in recognition of the fact that the resumption of minke whaling under the Interim Relief Allocation, and the distribution of its products, will make possible, to

the greatest extent, the continuation of the CBW communities' historical traditions and cultural customs and the welfare of the community members.

- C. The Council shall consist of the following members so that it will manage, in light of the purpose of the Interim Relief Allocation, the distribution of whale meat in each CBW community in a suitable and equitable manner, thus making the activities of the Council reach the highest possible level of credibility and transparency.
- 1) The head of each CBW community (mayor) or his/her alternate
 - 2) Local civil servant(s) of each CBW community's local executive government in charge of fisheries, health, education, and /or tourism
 - 3) Representative(s) of national government
 - 4) Representative(s) of local fishing cooperative
 - 5) Representative(s) of local community citizens
 - 6) Representative(s) of local women's community
 - 7) Representative(s) of local youth community
 - 8) Representative(s) of local schools and hospitals
 - 9) Representative(s) of small-type whalers
 - 10) Representative(s) of distributors of whale products
 - 11) Representative(s) of processors of whale products
 - 12) Academic advisors with experience in cetology and/or anthropology in whaling and whale-related culture
 - 13) Among the 1) through 12) listed above and internal auditor of accounts and all activities shall be elected.

***NOTE:

- * The auditor designated by the local government shall be appointed as an external auditor to inspect the overall activities and to audit accounts.
 - * In addition to the one referred to in 13) above, a certified public accountant shall oversee the contents of the small-type whalers' request for the reimbursement of the cost, and report the results to the Council.
- (2) Activities of the Council
- A. The council shall receive the processed whale meat from the small-type whalers.
 - B. The Council shall reimburse the small-whalers the direct/variable costs incurred to catch minke whales and recover associated handling expenses. Any costs relating to other operations shall not be reimbursed. These costs (exhaustively listed below) shall be calculated for each whaling vessel, examined and verified by a certified public accountant or licensed tax auditor in contract with the Council. Such items of cost as listed below shall be approved by the Council.
 - fuel costs
 - repair costs
 - pro-rated interest charge on the loan incurred by the vessel

- labor costs
- harpoon costs
- insurance fees
- freezing and storage costs
- processing costs
- transportation costs
- administrative overhead costs

- C. The Council shall plan, in a manner suitable and equitable, the distribution of whale products in light of the fundamental objectives of this Action Plan, which is an alleviation of the CBW communities' distress. In so doing, the following priorities shall be applied in accordance with traditional practice:
 - (a) Meat shares for the boat owners, crews and flensers. This is a traditional practice and right entitled to all of them and must continue to be practiced;
 - (b) Public consumption: To provide meals for nursery school, elementary schools and junior high schools, hospitals and nursing homes;
 - (c) Consumption for community festivals and rites; e.g. Shinto festivals and rites and Buddhist festivals and rites;
 - (d) Consumption by community members, based upon fair and equitable distribution.
- * Distribution to the adjacent areas of each CBW community, where former traditional whaling communities are located, shall be limited to (b) and (c) above.
- D. The Council shall collect levies from the recipients of the whale products in order to cover the costs of these interim measures. The Council shall decide the amount of each levy, considering the actual costs incurred to produce, flence, process, refrigerate and distribute the whale meat. The amount of each levy shall be publicly announced to the local citizens before the distribution.
- E. Incidental catches shall not count against the quota. Distribution of whale meat from other legitimate sources, shall be distributed through normal distribution channel so as not to mix with the whale products distributed by the Council during the CBW operation.
- F. In order to discourage any sales to outside of the communities and any re-sale of whale products, the size of the whale meat which will be distributed should be as small a block as practical; e.g. 1 kg, and distributed on more than one occasion.
- G. In discovering any injustice or irregularity in the proscribed distribution of whale products, such as a secondary trading or trading outside of the communities, the Council shall exclude offenders from future whale product distribution. Such offender(s) shall not receive an allocation of whale product in the year following the offense.
- H. The Council shall make an effort, to the extent possible, to promote the understanding of the

importance of the conservation of whale resources among the community citizens.

- (3) A secretariat for the Council shall be established within a suitable section of each local municipality office. It shall deal with office work such as accounting and general administration to assist the work of the Council.
- (4) The funding of the Council: The cost for the management of the Council and its Secretariat shall be borne by the levies collected from the local government (city or town as applicable).
- (5) Based upon the framework laid down above, each Council shall adopt its own rules.

3. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

- (1) The Government of Japan shall be a member of a Management Council for Whale Meat Production and Distribution and extend appropriate oversight, guidance as necessary, and give advice to each Council, in order to ensure the smooth operation of the Action Plan.

- (2) Each Council shall report its own activities by a specified annual date to the national government.

- (3) The Government of Japan shall submit a report to the IWC as required by the Commission.

4. THE ROLE OF THE PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT

In consultation with the national government, the prefectural government shall extend appropriate oversight, guidance as necessary, and give advice to each Council as well as to local government.

5. THE ROLE OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT

- (1) The Mayor and civil servants in charge shall participate as members in the Council.

- (2) The local government shall co-operate with the Council by establishing its Secretariat in the municipality office.

- (3) The local government shall provide the Secretariat with necessary administrative support.

- (4) The local government shall financially support the management of the Council.

- (5) Fulfillment of any other tasks as required.

