



Ms. Mizuho Fukushima
Minister of the Consumer Affairs Agency
Sanno Park Tower
2-11-1 Nagatacho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo
Japan 100-6178

Re: Letter regarding contaminated whale, dolphin and porpoise products from ongoing drive hunts in Japan

6th December 2009

Dear Minister,

Scientific studies have demonstrated that dolphin and whale meat is highly toxic and not fit for human consumption due to contamination from methylmercury, mercury, PCBs, and other poisons. Please prevent any further damage to the health of the Japanese people by banning the sale of dolphin and whale meat immediately.

The annual drive hunt of toothed whales has disturbed many German citizens. We have lots of inquiries of citizens asking us what they can do to inform Japanese people about the health risks and what they can do to save the whales that are being killed in such a cruel way.

In the name of all these people we kindly ask the Government of Japan to inform the public about the health risks and to do something about this unnecessary slaughter - The prompt implementation of an official ban of drive hunts and whale meat in supermarkets could be a first measure.

Reasons are obvious: Standards of humane slaughter cannot be met during the hunt, high contamination levels are threatening the Japanese population (especially children) and Japans' international image is being damaged constantly.

Everybody accepts the traditions of different cultures - Including the Japanese traditions. But from time to time it can be better to change traditions for the own benefit. Eighty years ago harbour seals used to be killed in Germany. But as we found out that the populations were severely dropping and that this harmed the whole marine ecosystem it was decided not to keep up such a tradition. Today there still are the so called 'seal hunters' - They are keeping up the tradition not by killing seals but by conserving them. By that they ensure a healthy marine system with lots of fish. The 'seal-hunters' also inform the public about the seals and their biology which generates massive profits in tourism. People come from all over Germany to see and enjoy the seals (from a 'non-disturbing' distance of course).

We kindly ask you to consider a prompt ban of the drive hunt on toothed whales.

We thank you in advance for considering our letter.

Yours sincerely,

Petra Deimer

Marine Biologist and Journalist
President - Society for the Conservation of Marine Mammals (Hamburg, Germany)

This letter has been sent to:

Keiko Ueda
Legislative Aide to Ms. Mizuho Fukushima

Member of the House of Councillors
Social Democratic Party E-mail: ukgo@jca.apc.org

CC:

Dr. Takahiro Shinyo
Japanese ambassador to Germany

Hiroshimastraße 6
10785 Berlin, Germany
Email: info@botschaft-japan.de