



# America's Whale Alliance

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact : Tamara Drake 541.552-0502

ATTN: Environmental Editor/News Desk

## Bush Administration Cozy With Whale Killers Charges Conservation Groups

WASHINGTON DC - (November 8, 2005) - Japan continues to kill whales and despite international outrage, the Bush Administration not only fails to act, but is actively advancing US-Japanese relations, and facilitating the killing of more whales in the future, charges US conservation groups,

"Japan has now added endangered humpback and fin whales to its growing list of whale species killed under the guise of "scientific research," a widely acknowledged cover for commercial whaling," said Tamara Drake, Campaign Director for America's Whale Alliance (AWA), a coalition of nearly 100 US groups, "Japan plans to double their self-appointed quota of minke whales to 900 in the Southern Ocean Sanctuary and add 10 fin whales this whaling season. By 2007, Japan will add 50 humpback whales and increase the fin whale quota to 50.

Japan also kills 150 minke, 10 sperm, 50 sei and 50 Bryde's whales in the North Pacific under the guise of 'scientific' research each year. The whale meat ends up in supermarkets and expensive restaurants selling for up to \$300 per pound.



With New Zealand, Australia and the UK squaring up to Japan over this mass slaughter, the US is pushing for increased diplomatic and trade relations with Japan and is actually supportive of moves to remove the current ban on commercial whaling - a ban initiated by the US in the 1980s.

"To stand by and do nothing would be bad enough, but to be actively courting favor with Japan and facilitating a return to the dark ages of mass whale killing is outrageous, and clearly not reflective of the wishes of the majority of the American people." Drake added.

Recent polls show that 75% of Americans support the international whaling ban and 66% approve of applying trade sanctions against Japan, yet the Bush Administration continues with its policy of support for Japanese relations while ignoring the sentiment of its own constituency.

The US recently praised Japan for opening parts of its economy to US trade and also for requesting the quick resumption of American beef imports by the country two years after the ban was imposed during the mad cow disease scare. In October, the US acquiesced to Japanese demands to relocate a US military base on the Japanese island of Okinawa, with US Deputy Under-secretary of Defense Richard Lawless citing the "importance of the Japan-US alliance".

The US has also been working to facilitate a resumption of commercial whaling by urging completion of a Revised Management Scheme, the rules to govern commercial whaling if the two-decade old ban is lifted. AWA sees completion of the RMS a huge step towards removal of the whaling ban. It seems the US concurs as the former US Commissioner to the International Whaling Commissioner, Rollie Schmitten is on record as stating in 2003 that the US "supports the completion of a sound RMS for commercial whaling and recognizes that the completion of the RMS may result in the lifting of the IWC's commercial whaling moratorium."

'Japan is getting away with murder on the high seas while the US cozies up and kowtows to the Japanese on every issue. The US is desperate to bend over backwards for Japan and refuses to do anything meaningful to stop it' said Drake. 'The US could use domestic fisheries laws to apply sanctions against Japanese imports and stop this cruel slaughter overnight. That's what we and the vast majority of the American people want.'

AWA said the U.S. has never effectively opposed the killing of about 25,000 whales during the 19-year ban, 7,000 of which have been killed under "scientific whaling" programs. AWA asserts that inaction by the U.S. has encouraged Japan to expand its "scientific" whaling.

'How many more whales must die before the US Government takes action?' said Drake



America's Whale Alliance  
P.O. Box 3040  
Ashland, OR 97520  
E-Mail: [info@americaswhalealliance.org](mailto:info@americaswhalealliance.org)  
Phone #: (541) 482-1200

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