

Iceland to resume commercial whaling

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Iceland plans to begin commercial whaling, defying the international moratorium that has been in place for 20 years.

Officials said that Icelandic whalers would have a quota of 30 minke whales and 9 fin whales between now and August 2007, The Independent reported. Norway is the only other country where taking of whales commercially is legal.

In the past, Iceland, like Japan, has caught whales every year for scientific purposes. Critics say that both countries were using science as a cover.

The International Whaling Commission came close to ending the moratorium at its most recent meeting. Iceland, Norway and Japan all argue that some species, especially the relatively small minke, are not endangered.

The fin whale, second in size only to the blue whale, is still listed as endangered, although Icelandic scientists contend there are now more than 25,000 in the North Atlantic.

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