

Japan kills 30 whales in 1st hunt since ICJ ruling

June 13 2014

(AP)—Japan has caught 30 whales off its northern coast in its first hunt since an international court ordered the halt of its annual expedition in the Antarctic, officials said Friday.

The Fisheries Agency said a coastal whaling fleet killed 30 [minke whales](#) during the April-June season as part of Japan's northwestern Pacific research hunt. Another group of whalers is still at work in a more distant area of the Pacific.

The northwestern Pacific hunt is one of two research whaling programs that Japan has conducted since a 1986 international ban on [commercial whaling](#).

In March, the International Court of Justice ruled that Japan's Antarctic whaling program was not scientific as Japan had claimed and must stop.

Japan has suspended next season's Antarctic hunt but is seeking to revise and resume it.

During the 2013-14 season, Japan caught 251 minke whales in the Antarctic, or just a quarter of its target, and 224 others in the northern Pacific program. Japan has slashed the Pacific catch target by nearly half—to about 210—for this year.

The court said Japan's Antarctic research program produced little actual research and failed to explain why it needed to kill so many [whales](#) for

the study. The ruling left Japan the option of retooling its Antarctic program, but any new plan is likely to face intense scrutiny.

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