

Whaling meeting votes against Japan's hunt (Update)

September 18 2014, by Dusan Stojanovic

An international whaling conference voted Thursday against Japan's highly criticized plans to resume whaling in the Antarctic next year, but Japan vowed to go ahead anyway.

A resolution adopted at the International Whaling Commission meeting in Portoroz, Slovenia, said Japan should abide by the International Court of Justice's ruling that its whaling program is illegal because it isn't for research purposes.

Immediately after the resolution was adopted by a 35-20 vote, Japan announced it will launch a new "research" program that will resume hunting in the Antarctic in 2015. The U.N. court ruling said some "scientific" whaling is allowed under very strict conditions, which Japan said it would meet.

"We will be providing and submitting a new research plan in the Antarctic Ocean so that we implement research activities starting from 2015," said Joji Morishita, head of Japan's delegation. "And all these activities are perfectly in accordance with international law, scientific basis as well as the ICJ judgment."

Approval from the commission's scientific committee isn't mandatory, but Japan's resumption of Antarctic whaling without the body's specific consent after a one-year pause would likely face intense scrutiny. Japanese boats caught 252 minke whales in the Southern Oceans in 2013, according to the IWC figures.

Australia led the opposition. Many conference member countries believe Japan's whaling program is not for research, but commercial purposes—producing meat and oil.

Animal protection groups welcomed the passage of the resolution, but denounced Japan's decision to ignore it.

"Additional action is needed to encourage and persuade the government of Japan to reconcile itself to the emerging global consensus for whale conservation, instead of whale killing, in the name of science in the 21st century," said Patrick Ramage, director of the whales program for the International Fund for Animal Welfare.

© 2014 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Whaling meeting votes against Japan's hunt (Update) (2014, September 18) retrieved 27 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-09-whaling-votes-japan.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.