

Sustainable eNews

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IWMC
World Conservation Trust

Editorial: Windows on Whales and Whaling

by Janice Henke, Anthropologist

Each of us sees the world through the window of our own experience and culture. The lights that shine through that window are the many kinds of information that inform us about what we see "on the other side", as well as those "facts" that inform us about the world of our own lives, on our own side of the window. In modern times, people have developed ways of sharing their differing views of our common world, through the lenses of diplomacy, negotiation, and attempts at mutual understanding and cooperation. This strategy for having working relationships outside one's own culture was formed when it dawned on many people that the old ways of persuasion, through force and violence, were not all that effective or beneficial over time.



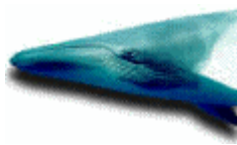
The ICRW was formed as an effective way for many nations to find mutual benefit from blending the perspectives of whale conservation with those of whale utilization. Thus we recall that famous phrase in the ICRW preamble which states: "Having decided to conclude a convention to provide for the proper conservation of whale stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry;"

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Anti-whaling proponents resist all attempts by those in other cultural houses to remove the clouds that cast shadows of prejudice and suspicion. They refuse to admit the lights of science and cultural tolerance. Their view of whaling is seen through the lens of political power to be gained at home through strategies of coercion and political blackmail. What national leader would decide to make pro-whaling decisions based on science and respect for cultural differences when he or she is aware that at home, the opposition party and green NGOs will use all manner of untrue, negative information to cause a loss of office at election time? No national leader wishes to be labeled "anti-environment", which is just what happens any time that there is a possibility that decisions would be made in accordance with the mandates of the Convention; i.e., all whale management decisions are to be made on the basis of science.



If the leader's own citizens do not participate in whaling, or do not derive some cultural or economic benefit from it, then the national policy of obstructionism at IWC will not change, regardless of words written long ago in a Convention preamble, and regardless of increasing and overwhelming evidence that a cooperative, multi-species approach to whale and fisheries management is the only scientifically justifiable answer to newly perceived problems in the marine environment.

Our world is viewed through many windows. The lights of science and the lights of tolerance for human differences are still beacons for many people. We at IWMC fervently hope that the darkness of intolerance and hatred can be overcome in the future so that all people can work together towards the goals of sustainability and lasting conservation of all the earth's natural resources. □

Humour Corner: Philadelphia Quaker School Students Demonstrate Peaceful and Respectful Coexistence

Perhaps those of us who are accustomed to a drastically polarized world should pause long enough to observe some youngsters who are demonstrating the value of diversity through humor.

Students in a Quaker school in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, US, are members of that student body by choice. Admittedly, the majority of those students are liberal-leaning, many being vegetarian or vegan in their lifestyles. However, a few students are not of that ilk, and they began to object to the fact that their school cafeteria menu was

becoming more and more vegetarian and served less meat choices at lunchtime.

Some of these students formed a student organization, MEAT, which is an acronym for Mammals Eating Animals Today. Club members designed and wear red T-shirts with the logo, "COW: The world's tastiest renewable resource". The \$500 raised from the sale of these shirts has been donated to Heifer Project International, which provides dairy animals to those in third world countries who wish to produce their own dairy products for their families.

So far, no serious repercussions from the vegetarian sector of the Quaker school have been experienced. Perhaps this small demonstration of humorous dissent by a minority is being regarded as a normal response to lack of representation of that minority in the decision making process of those who direct the school lunch program. The T-shirts have not been banned, the students did find a faculty member as an advisor, and the MEAT organization continues to exist and to stimulate healthy dialog. No one is attempting to convert anyone else to the opposite life choices. Both sides recognize the rights of others to practice their cultural preferences, without violence, ridicule, or harassment. Perhaps most



importantly, neither side is using its own expression of diversity as an avenue to power over others.

May we all consider this a lesson from good children who have found that it is possible to peacefully co-exist, even while expressing and practicing widely diverse food preferences. Perhaps those of us who observe the whaling dispute, or the anti-sealing campaigns, or the numerous international clashes over fishing and aquaculture, may find ways to be at peace with one another as we strive to feed our own, and to care for the earth's renewable resources. □

National Honor (should) begin at Home

While the United States government insists that "the rule of law" must be the model for other nations to follow, the world's most powerful democracy does not heed its own counsel in the respectful and legal treatment of those Indian Nations with whom it has concluded treaties.

The Treaty of Neah Bay was conducted as are all treaties with other nations, and was ratified by the US Senate. It states that the Makah tribe shall have the right to utilize fish and whales for their sustenance and livelihood. Here's the interesting thing about American treaty law: A treaty supersedes any domestic or contrary legislation. It is legally the ultimate ruling and it can not be declared of lesser importance than domestic laws such as the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

The United States broke the Treaty of Neah Bay by bullying the Makah tribe into believing that they could not whale until the IWC approved their resumption, and now, the 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that they may not resume their whale hunt until such time as the federal government conducts an environmental impact statement on such resumption, and until the government also grants them an exemption from compliance with the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The Act forbids Americans the use of any marine mammals such as seals or whales. Sealing also was a mainstay of the historic Makah way of living out on the Olympic Peninsula, where they prospered for thousands of years, until white men came and depleted their resources to the point where they could no longer subsist on them.

The US government is ignoring the legal priority of treaty law in this case. The Fund for Animals and other animal rights groups are suing the government in order to prevent the Makah from ever legally whaling again. This power play is shameful because the government has allowed it to continue instead of declaring once and for all that the Treaty is the ultimate authority. We can only assume that the reason why the government itself did not declare the Treaty to be of primary authority in this case, is probably because of fears that animal rights propaganda would weaken each current administration's political strength. No administration wants animal rights or environmentalist organizations to target its policies and decisions, thus making the government the focus of unfavorable media/Internet attention. Animal rights groups are happy about this deplorable situation, because for them, it is the ultimate on-going fund- raiser. They have elevated their image

with their supporters because they have demonstrated power over people who cannot take whales because of this unconscionable lawsuit.



IWMC deplors this shameful situation. The Makah people deserve to be granted their legal right to resume their subsistence whale hunt, for whatever purposes are important to their culture.

There is no legal or environmental reason why these people should not use gray whales for the cultural and nutritional benefits that sustained them spiritually and physically in times past. Good luck and best wishes to the Makah Nation. May they find their destiny once again in their homeland on the Olympic Peninsula. □

Victories in the War on (Green) Terrorism Terrorists caught, exposed and defeated

Never believe that there is no good news. Sometimes the worst of the bad actors are caught and treated to the media exposure they deserve. The only bad news is that the worst of the worst, Paul Watson, has not yet been detained, judged and jailed for his alleged criminal acts. The bright light, however, is that sometimes media attention to Watson's exploits calls it like it is. Thomas Ryan, of Frontpagemagazine.com, on May 4 of this year, compared Watson with



Islamic terrorists, and noted that while their ideology and politics are different, the underlying disregard for humanity and the brutal tactics, are identical. Ryan asserts that Watson and the 911 terrorists are "soulmates". While Watson has reveled in other media accounts, we are betting that this one has not pleased him, if he has been made aware of it at all. The piece is thorough, chronicling his criminal exploits and using a number of his quotes about disregard for people as he has rammed vessels, endangered human life, scoffed at all laws, and jumped bail in Costa Rica in 2002 when he was charged with the attempted murder of a fisherman in a 12 foot boat.

Greenpeace might not be pleased at repeated other media references to Watson's being one of its founders. The June 3 volume of Liberty Matters News Service cites Greenpeace involvement in protests against logging operations in Oregon, where salvage of burned-over timber acres is taking place. Some activist(s) vandalized \$100,000 worth of heavy logging equipment by sabotaging engines, fuel tanks and hydraulic systems of the machines. Greenpeace's "Forest Campaigner" has "set up camp" in the southern part of the state to protest the cleaning up by logging of other burned-over, diseased forests. While the Liberty Matters piece does not mention Watson, Ryan notes that he may be the originator of the concept of logging operation sabotage, as he claims to have invented the practice of tree spiking. The FBI has declared that the Oregon vandalism is ecoterrorism, and agents are presently searching for the perpetrators.

In better news, Liberty Matters for June 3 has disclosed that the FBI has caught the worst of the worst ecoterrorists who have been

committing arson, stalking people, and threatening them with bodily harm, because they are employees or clients of Huntingdon Life Sciences, a lab that uses animals in medical research. Seven suspects have been arrested and charged with "conspiracy to violate a federal law that bans terrorism against animal enterprises." Among those apprehended are the president of SHAC, (Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty) Kevin Kjonaas, Lauren Gazzola and Jacob Conroy, who all additionally "face charges of interstate stalking and using the Internet to instill fear."

IWMC urges that steps be continually taken to remove the tax-exempt status of all organizations that in any way, support those committing these antisocial and criminal acts. That certainly includes PETA, the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, and ultimately, even some mainstream environmentalist organizations that have been occasionally implicated in giving aid to these enemies of mankind. □

Whale On, Iceland!

The current Greenpeace siege of Iceland is only the latest NGO tactic of pseudo-pressure against this island nation's decision to take matters into their own hands, and resume scientific research whaling in 2004. A Greenpeace ship has been dispatched from its Amsterdam headquarters to ports in Iceland, with the intent to bully and harass Icelanders into giving up their



program. Campaigners are hoping that the visits will appear as credible threats to Iceland's tourism industry, that includes whale watch tours, and to Iceland's fish exports, which are a mainstay of the economy. This pseudo-siege of Iceland is not likely to make any difference at all to the success of Icelandic tourism or to its fishing businesses.

Last year, despite efforts on the part of anti-whaling campaigners to adversely affect tourism from mainland Europe, more people than ever visited beautiful Iceland, and enjoyed the scenery, the local fish and whale cuisine, the opera and other cultural attractions, and most of all, the whale watch tours, which are famous for the number of whales that may be observed from the many tour boats that are available. The fishing industry did not suffer in the least.

Icelanders are a modern, vigorous society of courageous people who refuse to be bullied by those who would exercise power over their decisions to conduct their own livelihood. Iceland's scientists and political leaders recognized that something had to be done to assess and then control the hoards of minke

and perhaps, other whales that abound in their own waters. To ignore the impact of cetaceans on Icelandic fish resources would be irresponsible, given the state of scientific knowledge about whale abundance and the capacity of cetaceans to deplete fish stocks.

According to highly reliable sources, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) is also moving on to the Icelandic front, which has become the privileged playground of wealthy organizations.

IWMC congratulates Icelandic leaders for their courage and foresight in this matter. May Iceland continue to prevail in advancing the legitimate interests of their own society against each pseudo-siege that comes along. □

Noteworthy

New Website: IWMC invites you to visit Sturgeon Stewardship Council (SSC) website at www.sturgeoncouncil.org - The SSC encourages consumers to continue eating caviar. But they should make every effort to ensure that the caviar they buy is legal. The SSC is planning to make this easier through a system of verification and labelling.

eNewsletter: Please note that the IWMC July eNews will be published directly from the IWC56th Annual Meeting held in Sorrento, Italy. □

The Bookstore at IWMC.org

In the Bookstore Section of the IWMC.org Website, you will find the following publications:

- The Chinese version of the book "Embracing the Earth's Wild Resources" by Eugene Lapointe.
- "Whaling around the world" by the World Council of Whalers. □

The Forum at IWMC.org

Under the Forum Section of the IWMC.org Website, we are pleased to feature the following new articles:

- The Stench of Corruption - by James M. Beers, Biologist
- Migratory Birds Adieu - by James M. Beers, Biologist
- Seal hunting : a multi-millenary activity
by Paul Charest, Anthropologist
- A Northern Honey Hole by Don H. Meredith,
Professional writer, Outdoors, Environment and Fiction
- Why Hunt, by Don H. Meredith,
Professional writer, Outdoors, Environment and Fiction



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