

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF
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**OVERSIGHT HEARING IN ADVANCE OF THE
60TH MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION (IWC)**

**BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FISHERIES, WILDLIFE AND OCEANS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

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Thank you, Madam Chair, and good afternoon.

I am Patrick R. Ramage, Global Whale Program Director at the International Fund for Animal Welfare (or IFAW) one of the world's leading animal welfare and conservation organizations. In addition to our headquarters on Cape Cod, Massachusetts where I am based, we have a very active office here in Washington, and a worldwide staff of 500 based here in the United States and 15 other countries including Japan.

Efforts to protect whales comprise our largest program focus. As part of this work, an international team of IFAW scientists and representatives have attended annual meetings of the International Whaling Commission and its Scientific Committee for the past two decades. Several of my colleagues are presently participating together with leading U.S. Government scientists and others at the ongoing meeting of the IWC Scientific Committee in Santiago, Chile in advance of the 60th annual meeting of the Commission later this month.

IFAW is a founding member of "Whales Need US" a coalition of 20 non-governmental organizations in the United States working together to encourage and support strong U.S. leadership on whale conservation inside and outside the IWC. A message from the Whales Need US coalition highlighting the shared concerns and objectives of our organizations and tens of millions of supporters nationwide is featured in today's edition of Roll Call here on Capitol Hill.

I have personally attended ten of the past twelve IWC meetings including the intersessional meeting convened by Dr. Hogarth earlier this year in Heathrow, UK. While I am neither a scientist nor a lawyer, I have worked extensively on international environmental issues here in Washington and abroad over the past twenty years including work with Members of the House and Senate from both parties, facilitating their direct interactions with Japanese and other international parliamentarians and government officials on sometimes contentious environmental issues.

Informed by this experience and reasonably intense involvement with the IWC over the past decade, and mindful of the focus of this hearing, let me begin by offering six very brief observations that may provide additional context and starting points for our discussion:

First, our planet's great whales are not saved. They face more threats today than ever before in history, many of which could not have been envisioned when the original signatories to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW) first met here in Washington six decades ago. Such new and emerging threats include marine pollution, destruction and degradation of critical habitats, entanglements in fishing gear, collisions with high speed vessels, ocean noise pollution from shipping, seismic testing and indiscriminate use of military sonar. There is also the massive looming threat of climate change which IFAW scientists and others tell us may already be affecting breeding, feeding and migration patterns for some these marine mammals. The cumulative impact of these threats poses real challenges to whale populations just beginning to recover from more than two centuries of commercial whaling.

Second, Americans from sea to shining sea and across the political spectrum are united in their support for whale conservation and their opposition to whaling for commercial purposes by Japan, Norway and Iceland. Opinion surveys conducted by leading national Democratic and Republican pollsters over the past decade have repeatedly shown overwhelming majorities of Americans, across demographic and political sub-groups, want their government to take action to end commercial whaling whether that whaling is conducted openly or under the guise of science. And they specifically want to see strong public statements, meaningful diplomatic action and appropriate trade sanctions undertaken by their elected leaders. In this regard I draw the subcommittee's attention to the results of a March 2007 nationwide poll commissioned by IFAW and conducted by Fred Steeper and associates of Market Strategies, Inc.

Third, despite the growing threats to whales and unwavering public support, the United States' leadership role in international whale conservation efforts has eroded significantly in recent years. More engaged and visible U.S. leadership is urgently needed, both within and well beyond the IWC, if the great whales are to be protected from resurgent commercial whaling and other urgent threats.

Fourth, while the whaling issue has again entered public consciousness in recent years, the IWC is a relatively obscure and antiquated international convention. First conceived in 1946 as a sort of whalers club, the IWC, in both substance and style, often seems still to be stuck in the middle of the last century. Its mandate, modalities and mechanisms have not kept pace with either the proliferating threats to whales or with norms for modern international conventions in terms of rules of procedure, enforcement and dispute resolution mechanisms, opportunities for meaningful NGO participation and appropriate coordination with other international bodies.

Fifth, stereotypes and assertions from Japan's Fisheries Agency notwithstanding, the Japanese people have little yen for whale meat, though their Government apparently still

has lots of yen for whaling. I returned two weeks ago from my 20th trip to Japan, and I have discussed this issue extensively in recent months with senior Members of the Japanese Diet, Japanese corporate, civil society and media representatives, the Science Advisor to Prime Minister Fukuda, and senior international diplomats based in Tokyo. They assure me, and I can assure you, that whatever the posturing by the few remaining apologists for whaling in Japan, there is little to no support or respect for Japan's ongoing whaling in international waters beyond the bureaucracy at the Japan Fisheries Agency and a dwindling, but vocal minority of politicians with longstanding ties to this outmoded industry. Public surveys conducted by reputable pollsters in Japan bear out this trend.

In fact, national public opinion surveys conducted here and in Japan suggest that whatever our differences on this issue, the good people of Japan and the citizens of the United States share at least one problem in common: the approaches currently pursued by our respective delegations to the IWC do not accurately reflect the will of our people. So while the Japanese delegation is pursuing an aggressive pro-whaling agenda despite the growing ambivalence of its people, the US delegation is pursuing an ambivalent agenda of compromise despite the strong pro-whale views of the American people.

Sixth and finally, Dr. Hogarth, the United States delegation he will lead and other government representatives to the 60th annual IWC meeting he will chair later this month in Santiago, will face critical choices and decisions. Yet the United States delegation will arrive at the meeting in a relatively weak position, seemingly unwilling and definitely unable to lead a coalition of conservation-minded countries to oppose and together end commercial whaling and transform the International Whaling Commission into a whale conservation body, an International Whale Commission for the 21st century.

Over my own years of involvement at the IWC, I have been struck not so much by the actions of the U.S. delegation, but by our seeming inaction on the floor of the meeting. This low key approach in part reflects the quiet moderation and burden of responsibility reserved for a great power, but there are other factors too. After decades at the helm of a significant majority bloc of conservation-minded countries, the United States now finds itself somewhat isolated at the IWC, consistently outmanned and sometimes outmaneuvered by a fifty-person strong Japanese delegation, Iceland, Norway and a steady stream of small island states and landlocked developing countries recruited to the IWC in recent years to vote in lockstep with Japan.

However committed, well-meaning and able, and I can tell you from years of personal observation that Dr. Hogarth and the other hardworking men and women who serve on the U.S. delegation are all these things and more, their room for maneuver and ability to influence outcomes at the IWC is increasingly limited. There are several reasons for this:

Japan's aggressive and expensive "vote consolidation" strategy at the IWC, referred to by some as "vote buying" has created a gross imbalance in the Commission. Japan leverages its fisheries and overseas development assistance budgets to recruit new members to the IWC on a year-round basis and now wields a blocking minority vote which it regularly uses to delay or defeat conservation measures in the forum. The

United States and other countries are not strangers to exerting national influence to achieve desired outcomes on a particular vote in this or that international forum, but Japan's 20 year strategy to take over an international environmental convention is unique.

In 1994, the Southern Ocean Sanctuary for whales was created by the IWC in the waters surrounding Antarctica on a vote of 23 to 1, with Japan as the lone nation voting against the measure. Since that time Japan has diligently recruited more than 20 countries to support its position at the IWC. The implications for the IWC are serious, and for the U.S. position even more so.

At the 2002 meeting of the IWC in Shimonoseki, Japan, the Japanese delegation played brinkmanship with the Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling quota requested by the United States on behalf of our Alaska Natives. The Japanese delegation brought the meeting to a standstill, attempting to hold the fates of these subsistence whalers hostage to U.S. support for its own coastal commercial whaling proposal.

Seared by this experience, which was ultimately resolved following high-level government to government talks at an IWC special meeting months later, the U.S. delegation, somewhat understandably, now seems to view almost every issue arising at the IWC through the prism of the Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling quota. And the current effort, led by Dr. Hogarth, to negotiate a grand package that resolves all outstanding issues at the IWC can also be seen through this lens.

At the 2006 annual meeting in St. Kitts and Nevis, where Dr. Hogarth and Minomoru Morimoto of Japan were elected Chair and Vice Chair of the IWC, the pro-whaling bloc actually secured a single vote majority on a resolution calling for the resumption of commercial whaling and blaming whales for the global decline in fish stocks. Intense efforts by our delegation and the U.S. Department of State during the meeting narrowly averted similar outcomes on other, substantive votes.

At last year's annual meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, despite familiar attempts by Japan to equate its coastal commercial whaling proposal with that of our Alaska Natives, a resurgent conservation majority led by the countries of Latin America, Australia, New Zealand and others, quietly supported by the U.S., achieved positive outcomes including smooth passage of our Alaska Native whaling quota.

I cite these several examples to illustrate two simple points: that United States influence inside the IWC is on the wane, and that the Government of Japan is far more focused, engaged and aggressive, inside and outside the IWC 24/7, 365 days a year in pursuit of its declared objectives.

I commend you Madam Chair and members of the Committee for holding this hearing. It is right for you as Members of Congress, for me as an NGO representative, and for the great majority of Americans who oppose commercial whaling to scrutinize, question and even criticize the actions and behavior of our Commissioner and delegation to the IWC. And I assure you my colleagues and I are very critical of Dr. Hogarth's recent efforts to

broker a compromise that would likely, whatever its other elements, legitimize commercial whaling in the 21st century. In fact, I personally believe this is a quixotic and potentially dangerous quest. And even Dr. Hogarth admits it may well result in a package that the U.S. delegation could probably never support.

But let's be honest and fair. Bill Hogarth didn't create the current stalemate at the IWC, he inherited it. It is the fundamental reluctance of the Bush Administration, and the Clinton Administration before it, to put serious diplomatic, economic and moral muscle behind U.S. rhetoric on whales that delivers our delegation bound and gagged to the floor of the annual IWC meeting.

The United States, if it takes the issue seriously, has the power to change the situation in the IWC and in the water for our planet's great whales. At present, however, our elected leaders seem content to mouth the right positions on this issue, to write a letter, hold a hearing and move on.

We are a country proud of our whaling heritage. Of iron men in wooden boats who set to sea to hunt for whales and returned with the oil that lit the lamps of the western world. Our country's subsequent transition from whaling to whale watching was a uniquely American journey.

We also have a legacy of national and international leadership in whale conservation of which we can all be proud. And U.S. marine mammal science and science-based management, consistently championed by Dr. Hogarth until his retirement from Government service last year, still lead the world.

Federal and state officials, scientists, fishermen, mariners, advocacy organizations and concerned citizens up and down our coasts are undertaking leviathan efforts to protect and ensure the survival of whale populations and the welfare of the individual whales off our shores – often at significant expense and inconvenience.

But when it comes to the International Whaling Commission, the global body responsible for the fate and future of these magnificent creatures, the Governments of Japan, Iceland and Norway now appear to care more about killing whales than the United States Government cares about conserving and protecting them.

Madam Chair, in your invitation to testify today, you specifically asked for my views in three critical areas: the value and need for a scientific whaling program, how an additional category of whaling could directly or indirectly affect the management of whale populations over time, and whether and how the IWC is at a critical juncture in its development. I will now address each of these areas.

Scientific Whaling

First, with respect to scientific whaling: put simply, it has nothing to do with science and a lot to do with whaling. There is neither any need for nor value in killing whales to study them in the 21st century. The best whale research in the world today is conducted

by IFAW scientists and others studying live whales in their ocean habitats, using visual, photographic, acoustic and other non-lethal research techniques. The research whaling administered by Japan's Institute for Cetacean Research (ICR) is disgracefully poor in quality and a disgrace to other high quality Japanese science including ocean science.

I am not a scientist, so don't take my word for it. I have presented the committee with copies of a forthcoming report from a gathering of 25 leading scientists from nine countries who came together this past March to consider scientific issues relating to whales, particularly in the context of the IWC Scientific Committee. Between them, meeting participants had some 350 years of attendance at the IWC and had authored or co-authored approximately 940 referred publications.

Throughout the three-day session, which I had the privilege of attending, participants including scientists from Japan, stressed their concern that "science and the scientific method were being grossly abused and misused by pro-whaling interests within and outside the International Whaling Commission. Beyond issues of disagreement with data and opinions, there were fundamental problems with the nature of some of the research itself. Furthermore, there was concern that the extent of the problems with this research was not being communicated adequately to the public or to policy makers, either inside or outside the whaling nations."

Regarding scientific whaling, the gathering noted that "since 1987, Japan has killed more than 10,000 whales under Article VIII of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW). The Government of Japan is by no means the only country to make use of the Article VIII provision; however, the scale of its use dwarfs that of any other nation. Between 1952 and 1986, all nations combined (including Japan) took a total of approximately 2,100 whales for "research" purposes; Japan presently takes more than half that number each year and has increased the number of whales it kills in the name of science five fold over the past 15 years."

The meeting report further notes that "the Government of Japan defends the size of its catches by arguing that they are driven by considerations of sample size and statistical robustness. There are, however, two fundamental problems with this argument. The first is that the intention behind Article VIII was never to allow such large catches. The second problem is that, notwithstanding Japanese claims to the contrary, its "research" program has yet to provide viable results, no matter how large the sample size.

To date, Japan has ignored repeated observations by scientists not associated with whaling nations that the quality of its underlying research was inherently abysmal. These were again borne out by a 2006 IWC Scientific Committee Workshop to review the eighteen years of JARPA, Japan's scientific whaling program. The review found that the program had failed to achieve any of its stated objectives.

For example, of JARPA's intention to address population trends in Antarctic minke whales, the Workshop's report noted that it "has not developed any agreed estimates of abundance and trend ... The Workshop noted that the current confidence intervals for the

estimates of trend are relatively wide. These results are, therefore, consistent with a substantial decline, a substantial increase, or approximate stability in minke whale abundance in these geographic areas over the period of JARPA ...” In other words, according to the findings of JARPA, minke whales in the Antarctic may be increasing or decreasing significantly in numbers. Or they may not. In short, despite two decades of Japanese research, we have no clue what is actually happening to the population.

Similarly, efforts to estimate natural mortality had produced results of such low precision “that the natural mortality rate had, for practical purposes, not been determined. In particular, even a zero value was not excluded by the analysis.” In layman’s terms, despite all of Japan’s efforts, they could not exclude even the possibility that minke whales are immortal.

And efforts to elucidate the role of whales in the Antarctic marine ecosystem had led to “relatively little progress, even allowing for the complexities of the subject.””

Not to add complexity, but I should note that respected international panels of independent legal experts have found the whaling currently conducted by Japan – which is killing some 1,400 whales this year in North Pacific and Antarctic waters -- to be illegal. Ongoing unlawful whaling and threats to kill even more whales under the guise of science are being used as negotiating leverage in an effort to legitimize and expand commercial whaling in the 21st century. I have provided copies of the London and Paris Panel Reports of Legal Experts to sub-committee staff.

Overall, with respect to the value of scientific whaling, the scientists’ meeting report concludes “although this dynamic is frequently portrayed in media accounts as a legitimate debate between two competing scientific viewpoints, the pro-whaling science is frequently not only sub-standard in its execution but disingenuous in its conception: devised not to find answers to scientific questions but to find evidence in support of a predetermined answer. That it is so demonstrably unable even to succeed in that goal is testament to the poverty of its approach.”

How can an additional category of whaling effect whale populations over time?

Two colleagues of mine in the Whales Need US coalition, Sue Fisher and Susan Millward, have analyzed Japan’s latest Small Type Coastal Whaling (STCW) proposal and I have incorporated their thoughtful analysis into my presentation to you today.

For almost 20 years, Japan has submitted an annual request to the IWC for a “small type coastal whaling” (STCW) quota of minke, and previously, Bryde’s whales - for four coastal communities of Abashiri, Ayukawa, Wada and Taiji which Japan claims have suffered as a result of the moratorium on commercial whaling. The IWC has repeatedly rejected the proposal; arguing that the operation would be commercial in nature and purpose and would, accordingly, overturn the moratorium. Japan has regularly amended the proposal, adding management components and removing commercial elements to make it more palatable to the IWC. This iteration of the request attempts to blur the distinction between commercial and Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (ASW), with the

intention of creating a new category of ‘traditional cultural whaling’ or ‘community-based whaling’ that would be exempt from the moratorium on commercial whaling. It should be opposed for the following reasons:

STCW is not ASW - ASW is a long-established (since 1931), distinct, category of whaling which is not commercial in purpose or practice. It exists to meet the longstanding cultural and subsistence need for whale meat of certain indigenous people. By contrast, people in the four Japanese towns are not indigenous people and do not rely on whale meat as a primary source of nutritional sustenance or income, all four towns are prosperous communities with many other economic enterprises; they have a tradition of whaling for *commercial* purposes: Since the moratorium banned their minke whaling, they have hunted Baird’s beaked whales, short-finned pilot whales and Risso’s dolphins; continuing to catch, process, distribute and sell the whales on a commercial basis. Since 2002, the Institute of Cetacean Research has commissioned STCW whaling companies to participate in the coastal component of Japan’s North Pacific hunt (JARPN II) for minke whales; licensing them to take up to 120 minke whales annually since 2006.

Approving this proposal would lift the moratorium - The IWC Schedule only regulates whaling for commercial purposes and whaling to meet aboriginal subsistence needs. There is no right enshrined in the Convention to conduct “small type coastal whaling,” or any other kind of whaling, for the purposes of cultural recovery or to alleviate economic hardship. Japan’s proposal is simply a request to conduct whaling for commercial purposes in its coastal waters. Even if the exclusive or primary purpose of the STCW operation is not to commercialize STCW products, Japan anticipates “domestic transactions” of the meat. This suggests an exchange of the meat for something of economic value – presumably money. Indeed, how else could the proposal alleviate economic hardship if the ships’ crews, processors and distributors were not compensated for their efforts through sales of whale meat? Furthermore, it will be impossible to physically separate the STCW operation from the ongoing commercial hunting, processing and distribution of small cetaceans in the towns.

Other countries will want to benefit from this proposal - If this proposal, or some variation on it, is adopted, Japan’s longstanding abuse of the moratorium will be rewarded with the legal approval of its whaling. The new category of whaling created, and the resulting legitimacy for whaling will encourage other countries or territories with coastal whaling communities to use defiance of the moratorium as leverage.

This proposal will encourage international trade in whale meat – Another Convention – the Convention on International trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora – or CITES - banned international commercial trade in whale products in direct response to the IWC’s ban on commercial whaling and could reauthorize trade if the moratorium were removed or amended to grant an exemption for STCW, or if some commercial whaling were permitted under a new category. This proposal might initially restrict use to domestic transactions only, but if CITES permits international trade in whale meat, the IWC would be unable to prevent such trade (or trade under Japan’s CITES reservations) from occurring. If Japan is serious about restricting its use of whales

taken in STCW to domestic transactions only, it should immediately lift its reservations to the Appendix I listing of whales.

Poor supervision and control - Japan proposes that the IWC would set STCW quotas and establish an oversight committee. However, no compliance measures are contemplated and monitoring, supervision, control would be voluntary by Japan. The IWC would have little more control over Japan's STCW than it currently has over its scientific whaling. Japan could take objections to STCW quotas set by the IWC, and not be bound by them and it could continue scientific whaling at whatever level it chose. Furthermore, the IWC would have no control over welfare aspects of the hunt.

Critically endangered 'J' stock minke whales at risk - The whales around Japan are not one simple population but rather a complex mixture of different groups and populations, some of which are extremely endangered. Thus, at certain times of the year, whales from the critically endangered J-stock of minke whales mix with animals from the target O-stock in the North Pacific. The proportion of J/O-stock mixing is much higher within 10 nautical miles of the coast. Japan claims that STCW would "have negligible impact on the stocks", but refuses to provide raw DNA data to the IWC to allow analysis.

For all these reasons, Madam Chair, it is critically important that the United States and other conservation-minded delegations to the Santiago IWC meeting resist any temptation or inducement to legitimize a new category of whaling by supporting Japan's misleading and unsound Small Type Coastal Whaling proposal.

IWC at a critical juncture?

Regarding the question of whether the IWC is at a critical juncture. As I have indicated, there is an ongoing struggle for the heart and soul of the IWC, waged between three countries which still cling to the founding philosophy from 1946 and want to carve up the world's remaining whales and the countries representing an emerging global consensus for whale conservation and habitat protection in the 21st century.

The original objective of the International Conservation for the Regulation of Whaling - the conservation of whale populations for the benefit of future generations – is as relevant today as when the Convention was signed in 1946. However the world for whales has changed profoundly over the intervening 60 years.

Non-lethal use of whales has outstripped the lethal exploitation of whales in terms of its social and economic importance. Responsible whale watching operations now generate more than one billion dollars in revenue each year for coastal communities and businesses in more than 90 countries and territories worldwide. There has also been a great expansion in whale research in recent decades, nearly all of it non-lethal.

IFAW believes that rather than seek compromise, the US should instead focus its efforts to ensure that the IWC becomes a modern organisation working for the conservation of whales by completing the transition that was started with the Berlin Initiative of 2003. The following changes to the IWC should be made:

Restructure the IWC agenda so that it reflects the major threats to whales in the 21st Century. Beyond efforts to expand whaling for commercial purposes, these include:

Retain the IWC Conservation Committee, but ensure its agenda items also become plenary items, to reflect their importance. The Committee's role should be to prepare proposals for plenary decisions, based on the work of expert working groups.

Expand collaboration with other relevant organisations, both inter-governmental and non-governmental, by including their experts on intersessional IWC Working Groups

Not allow the Commission proceedings to be dominated by the demands of the few countries still hunting whales. Only limited plenary time should be given to catch-related issues.

Give at least equal priority in the Commission agenda to the management of non-lethal uses of whales.

Cease to accept the arbitrary invocation of Article VIII by whaling countries to bypass Schedule regulations; supposedly "scientific" whaling that has not been approved by the IWC Scientific Committee should be treated as ordinary commercial whaling and as an infraction against the moratorium.

The US delegation to Santiago should actively and visibly support, both through interventions, votes and other means initiatives by conservation countries to expand the conservation role of the IWC and to establish regional sanctuaries for whales.

Conclusion

Madam Chair and Members of the Committee, as my long-time friend and mentor, Dr. Sidney Holt, who attended his first IWC meeting in 1960 likes to say, what we need to focus on is not managing whales. They can manage themselves. What we need to focus on is managing whaling and the many other threats to their survival.

Any apparent relaxation of U.S. determination to bring an end to all types of Japanese commercial whaling will be taken as a green light by larger scale whaling interests in Japan and those who would trade whale meat internationally to continue their current consideration of bringing a new, bigger factory ship and new associated catcher boats into service. Amortization of such an investment – with a view to increasing the scale of commercial whaling as some whale stocks gradually recover will drive the industry, exactly as it was driven in the 1960s when repayment of huge bank loans entered by Japanese industry made it practically impossible for the international community, through the IWC, to reduce catch limits and thus prevent the virtual extermination of the blue, fin and humpback whales in the Southern Hemisphere. That this happened is explicit in Japanese statements to the IWC in the 1960s that economic interests had to take

precedence over conservation, and that investments recently made had to bear fruit, in a few years. Forty years on, this is a very present danger.

The news is not all bad. Scientists are now observing increases in some whale species that have been protected for decades, including some populations of humpback whales, perhaps the most charismatic and familiar great whale species, southern right whales and some fin whales. This is welcome proof that long-term conservation and whale protection work. But these initial increases do not mean recovery. If we maintain and strengthen protections for whales over the next decades, we will discover whether our hopes for their recovery and the Antarctic ecosystem are fulfilled, and what the effects of climate change and other urgent threats really are.

Meanwhile, the three whaling countries continue their last gasp efforts to resuscitate the industry. Just last week, Iceland and Norway confirmed the recent shipment of 60 tons of fin whale and Minke whale meat to Japan, the first such trade in these protected species for almost twenty years. To its credit, the Administration has responded forcefully to Iceland on this matter and has continued working to dissuade Iceland from continuing its whaling activities. Icelandic media and political leaders including the foreign minister have also criticized the effort to re-open the whale meat trade. These are hopeful signs.

It seems appropriate to close with a Japanese metaphor. In the early 1970s, the well-known Japanese novelist Kobo Abe wrote a terrific short novel called “The Box Man.” In the course of the novel, the protagonist rejects society, withdraws from his family, friends and co-workers and retreats to the streets of Tokyo to live his life in a cardboard box. He peers at the outside world only through small holes cut in the cardboard.

In 2008, when it comes to the whaling issue, we should encourage the Government of Japan, as respectfully and positively as we can, and as firmly as needed, to reject the invitation of Abe’s Box Man, to make the transition our country and so many others have made – a transition the Japanese people themselves are prepared to make – and to join the emerging global consensus for whale conservation. We shouldn’t be focusing our efforts on trying to build them a better box.

Thank you, Madam Chair, this concludes my testimony.