

## Japan begins commercial whaling after 30 years

6th July, 2019



Japan has resumed commercial whaling after a hiatus of over three decades. Commercial whaling was banned in 1986 by an International Whaling Commission (IWC) moratorium. However, Japan withdrew from the IWC in December.

Japan's government has promised all whalers will stay within 320 kilometers from its coast. The Japanese fisheries agency set a quota for killing 227 whales every six months. In the first days of resumed whaling, whalers caught two minke whales, which were taken to the northern port of Kushiro. The whale meat was auctioned in Tokyo and sold for record prices. Eager restaurant owners snapped up the meat at prices of up to \$140 per kilo.

Japan has engaged in the practice of whaling for centuries. Whale restaurant chef Mitsuo Tani summed up why he thought the return of commercial whaling was important. He said: "A country that does not preserve its food culture has no future." He also promoted the health benefits of whale meat. He said: "It is five times lower in calories than beef, 10 times lower in cholesterol, two times less fat than chicken and it's packed with iron. But abroad, people do not know this." However, Japan's return to whaling has brought international outcry. The Humane Society accused Japan of starting a "new and shocking era of pirate whaling". It added: "This is a sad day for whale protection globally."

Sources: [cnn.com](http://cnn.com) / [japantoday.com](http://japantoday.com) / [nzherald.co.nz](http://nzherald.co.nz)

### Writing

Whaling should be banned globally forever. Discuss.

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

commercial / whaling / three decades / whalers / coast / fisheries / port / restaurant / practice / important / food culture / health benefits / calories / cholesterol / protection

### True / False

- a) Japan had stopped commercial whaling for more than 30 years. T / F
- b) Japan is a member of the International Whaling Commission. T / F
- c) Whalers promised to stay within 320 kilometers of the Japanese coast. T / F
- d) A kilo of whale meat cost \$140 at an auction in Tokyo. T / F
- e) The article said Japan has been whaling for millennia. T / F
- f) A chef said eating whale is important to preserve Japanese culture. T / F
- g) Chicken contains less fat than whale. T / F
- h) The Humane Society suggested private whaling would increase. T / F

### Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                      |                  |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. <b>resumed</b>    | a. advocated     |
| 2. <b>banned</b>     | b. pulled out of |
| 3. <b>withdrew</b>   | c. participated  |
| 4. <b>quota</b>      | d. age           |
| 5. <b>snapped up</b> | e. prohibited    |
| 6. <b>engaged</b>    | f. protests      |
| 7. <b>preserve</b>   | g. recommenced   |
| 8. <b>promoted</b>   | h. bought        |
| 9. <b>outcry</b>     | i. conserve      |
| 10. <b>era</b>       | j. limit         |

### Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you know about whales?
- b) Why did Japan stop whaling for three decades?
- c) What do you think of the quota?
- d) What do you think of whaling?
- e) What is the difference between eating whale meat and beef?
- f) What do you think of the price of the auctioned whale meat?
- g) What arguments do whaling nations give in support of whaling?
- h) What advice do you have for the International Whaling Commission?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. resumed commercial whaling after a     | a. was auctioned in Tokyo       |
| 2. Commercial whaling was                 | b. with iron                    |
| 3. The Japanese fisheries agency set      | c. up the meat                  |
| 4. The whale meat                         | d. food culture                 |
| 5. restaurant owners snapped              | e. banned in 1986               |
| 6. Japan has engaged in the practice      | f. benefits of whale meat       |
| 7. preserve its                           | g. hiatus of over three decades |
| 8. He also promoted the health            | h. international outcry         |
| 9. it's packed                            | i. of whaling for centuries     |
| 10. Japan's return to whaling has brought | j. a quota                      |

## Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- What do you know about Japanese whaling?
- Would you eat whale meat?
- How would you describe your country's food culture?
- Is there a problem with a country whaling if it is part of its tradition?
- Do you understand the international outcry at Japan's actions?
- Should all whales be protected?
- What questions would you like to ask the whalers?

## Spelling

- Japan has deruems commercial whaling
- after a sihuta of over three decades
- The Japanese fisheries agency set a utqao
- taken to the notrhnr port of Kushiro
- The whale meat was aucidonte in Tokyo
- Japan has eeagdng in the practice of whaling
- A country that does not eveerrsp its food culture
- five times lower in liaoecr
- 10 times lower in tloerhcsloe
- whaling has brought international utroyc
- The Humane Society caucesd Japan
- a sad day for whale nooircptet

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. g	2. e	3. b	4. j	5. h
6. c	7. i	8. a	9. f	10. d

## Role Play

### Role A – Whaler

You are a whaler living in a very remote coastal village. Your community has whaled for centuries. Without whaling the whole community would die an economic death. You hate Greenpeace. They don't respect tradition.

### Role B – Activist

You are a Greenpeace activist. You believe it is ethically and morally wrong to kill whales. They are endangered and very intelligent. There is no reason to kill whales and that whales are too intelligent to eat. You think whaling is terrible.

### Role C – President

You are president of a whale meat processing company. You believe whales are a sustainable source of food. You believe that when deforestation makes it uneconomical to raise cows on land, whales will become an important source of food.

### Role D – Whale

You are a whale with a family.

## Speaking – Controversial food

Rank these with your partner. Put the most controversial food at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |            |               |
|------------|---------------|
| horse meat | beluga caviar |
| foie gras  | dog           |
| shark fin  | monkey meat   |
| whale      | rat           |

### Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	T	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.