



VERDICT

of the 22nd February 2010 in the case of
the slaughter of whales and dolphins
practiced by Japan, Norway, Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands

versus

the ministers of the ministries of fisheries of the incriminated countries :

M. Hirotaka Akamatsu, Japon
Mme. Lisbeth Berg-Hansen, Norvège
M. Jón Bjarnason, Islande
Mme. Ane Hansen, Groenland
M. Jacob Vestergaard, Iles Féroés

THE COURT FINDS

Wide areas of the oceans, whose riches were not so long ago considered to be inexhaustible, are dead spaces today, while the last of the oceans' large mammals – whales and dolphins – continue to be systematically hunted and bestially killed despite the moratorium put into place by the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and in force since 1986. Over 2'000 large whales and tens of thousands of smaller whales and dolphins are killed every year.

The cruelty involved in the whale and dolphin hunt is beyond imagination. As whales have no natural enemies, their nervous system is not structured to respond to an assault or to severe pain by fainting or going into shock. They will endure their own slaughtering fully conscious up to their last breath. Thousands of dolphins are brutally captured and ill treated with the purpose of stocking and restocking dolphin fun parks which are becoming more popular and numerous every day.

While most countries have never hunted whales, or have respected the IWC moratorium, Japan, Norway, Iceland and Greenland continue to hunt whales despite the moratorium. In addition, Japan and the Faroe Islands hunt dolphins intensively.

But dolphins and whales are threatened and decimated by a great many other perils such as contamination by heavy metals and other pollutants, over-fishing and over use of the oceans by man. Their food is becoming scarce through over-fishing while thousands of kilometres of nets drifting in the seas cause an enormous amount of additional victims. Every year innumerable dolphins and whales lose their sense of orientation and get stranded on beaches or cliffs. Scientists believe this phenomenon to be a result of the increasing sound pollution in the oceans and of physiological damage caused by chemical pollutants.

Notwithstanding the high toxicity of whale meat, responsible authorities of the indicted countries continue to permit and even promote its consumption, thus putting the health and physical integrity of their citizens at risk.

Having become rare, the great whales have more and more difficulty in finding partners for procreation. The same destiny awaits the dolphins. The climate change added to all the other perils will have devastating effects on all whale and dolphin populations.



The complete verdict will be notified to the International Court of Justice of The Hague and to the guilty parties. It will also be sent to the President of the European Parliament, the President of the Council of Europe, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, the President of the European Commission, the UN, UNESCO, the World Health Organisation and the International Whaling Commission.

Geneva, 22nd February 2010

THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS

- International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling of 2/12/1946 completed by the protocol 19/11/1956
- Convention on Biological Diversity in Rio of 5/6/1992
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora in Washington D.C. of 3/3/1973
- Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals in Bonn of 23/6/1979
- Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats in Berne of 19/9/1979
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Fauna and Flora in Washington D.C. of 3/3/1973