

UDENRIGSMINISTERIET

Folketingets Miljø- og Planlægningsudvalg

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Hermed fremsendes svar på spørgsmål 188 til Folketingets Miljø- og Planlægningsudvalg.

UDENRIGSMINISTERIET

Udenrigsministerens besvarelse af spørgsmål nr. 188 (alm. del) stillet af Folketingets Miljø- og Planlægningsudvalg

Spørgsmål nr. 188:

Vil ministeren kommentere vedlagte AFP-artikel ”Japan’s compromise whaling plan dismissed at talks” fra den 29. maj 2007 om det igangværende møde i hvalfangstkommissionen (IWC), herunder Japans inddragelse af oprindelige fangst som et led i bestræbelserne på at opnå indrømmelser til Japan og gengivelsen af den grønlandske delegations rolle?

Svar:

IWC’s årsmøde sluttede den 31. maj 2007. Den til spørgsmål 188 knyttede artikel fra AFP kommenterer – en del af – drøftelserne på årsmødets anden dag. Det afgørende i artiklen er den korrekte beskrivelse af et japansk forsøg på at komme i forhandlingskontakt og dialog med en række nationer, som er imod hvalfangst. Det japanske forsøg på dialog blev afvist af en række lande. Fra japansk side har man efterfølgende udtrykt sin dybe skuffelse over IWC’s manglende evne til at opfylde sit formål. Hvilken konsekvens Japan på længere sigt vil drage af IWC’s manglende funktionsduelighed vides ikke, men den danske regering har gentagne gange advaret mod den risiko for IWC’s fremtid en manglende dialog medfører. En umiddelbar japansk reaktion på årsmødet var, at man trak tilbudet om at være værtsland for IWC’s årsmøde i 2009 tilbage.

For så vidt angår Grønland kan oplyses, at Danmark på vegne af Grønland fremsatte en række ønsker til kvoter for perioden 2008-2012. De ønskede kvoter relaterer til det af IWC i 1992 godkendte grønlandske behov for 670 tons hvalkød ved Vestgrønland – et behov som i dag er steget til 730 tons. Det endelige resultat, af en række forhandlinger under årsmødet, er i fuld overensstemmelse med både den videnskabelige rådgivning og IWC’s regler for oprindelige folks fangst.

Hvalart	Resultat for Grønland	Hvad kunne den videnskabelige komite acceptere - supplerende bemærkninger
Vågehvaler, Øst	12 hvaler	12 hvaler (skader ikke bestanden)
Vågehvaler, Vest	200 hvaler	230 hvaler (skal genovervejes 2008)
Finhvaler, Vest	19 hvaler	26 hvaler (skader ikke bestanden)
Grønlandshvaler, Vest	2 hvaler	5 hvaler (skader ikke bestanden. Skal genovervejes i 2008)

Resultatet for Grønland svarer til det Grønland havde fremsat ønske om på de pågældende arter. Man havde oprindeligt også ønsket pukkelhvaler, men den videnskabelige komite mente, at man først næste år kunne give en udtalelse om hvor stor en fangst, der kan gennemføres på disse hvaler. Danmark og Grønland trak herefter dette ønske tilbage, idet bemærkes, at ønsket vil blive genfremsat i 2008, såfremt rådgivningen fra den videnskabelige komite tillader dette. Det nu for Grønland opnåede resultat forventes at give Grønland ca. 610 tons hvalkød ved Vest Grønland, dvs. mindre end hvad der faktisk er brug for. Udtalelsen fra Kitty Block, director of Human Society International om grønlandsk ”grådighed” er derfor uforståelig.

Folketinget - Miljø- og Planlægningsudvalget

Christiansborg, den 4. juni 2007

Arriv 1 NFG med svarvalket

map: N-CMP

Udvalget udbeder sig ministerens besvarelse af følgende spørgsmål:

Ad

MPU alm. del

- 188 Vil ministeren kommentere vedlagte AFP-artikel "Japan's compromise whaling plan dismissed at talks" fra den 29. maj 2007 om det igangværende møde i hvalfangstkommissionen (IWC), herunder Japans inddragelse af oprindelige fangst som et led i bestræbelserne på at opnå indrømmelser til Japan og gengivelsen af den grønlandske delegations rolle?

Spørgsmålet er stillet efter ønske fra Steen Gade (SF)

P.u.v.

Christian Wedell-Neergaard
formand.

Japan's compromise whaling plan dismissed at talks



Published: Tuesday May 29, 2007

Japan offered a compromise on Monday to break an impasse over its controversial plan to lift a 20-year moratorium of commercial whale hunting but it was flatly rejected by the other key powers.

The failure to break the deadlock threw the polarized 75-nation International Whaling Commission (IWC) into disarray as it opened annual talks in the Alaskan capital of Anchorage on the fate of the majestic creatures.

Japan said it would consider shelving plans to hunt humpback whales in the next Antarctic season under a highly criticized research program if its request for whale hunting by coastal communities in four Japanese towns was allowed.

"We might come up with a package that will satisfy all member countries but we like to see acceptance of our coastal whaling proposal, said Joji Morishita, Japanese alternative commissioner to the IWC.

Japan wants to kill 50 humpbacks from stocks that migrate along the Australian and New Zealand coasts into the tropical Pacific, drawing flak from the two countries as well as environmental groups concerned over the fate of the iconic mammals.

Tokyo's compromise plan was immediately dismissed by a so-called "like-minded" coalition of anti-whaling nations Australia, New Zealand, Britain, Argentina, Germany and the United States.

They said the fate of the whales was not up for bargaining.

Japan's humpback hunt request is a "very, very provocative act," Australian Environment Minister Malcolm Turnbull said, warning that diplomatic ties between the two allies could be affected if Tokyo proceeded with the move.

An Australian petition with 30,000 signatures protesting the Japanese plan was presented to the IWC meeting.

The fate of the endangered mammals is not "a matter of horse trading and negotiations," Britain's Biodiversity Minister Barry Gardiner said, pointing out that Japan's humpback hunting plan ran counter to principles of science upheld by the ICW.

Japan last year won a non-binding resolution in favor of commercial whaling, but fell short of the numbers needed to overturn the moratorium.

Anti-whaling nations are said to have a slim majority this year.

The commission will decide this week whether to allow Japan's plan for traditional coastal communities to catch whales under the same rules allowing the aboriginal peoples to hunt the giant creatures.

Environmental groups deem the Japanese proposal as a form of commercial whaling but Tokyo says it is based on the "same language of subsistence whaling" undertaken by indigenous peoples.

Tokyo is already under fire for allegedly using research as a thinly disguised and subsidized exercise in commercial whaling.

Japanese official Morishita warned of serious repercussions if Tokyo's request was rejected amid speculations that political pressure at home could force the Asian nation out of the IWC.

"Unless we see clear, tangible progress at this meeting, my government will have a difficult time to continue at IWC ... we will be asked to reconsider our approach," he said.

Some groups felt that failure by key powers to engage Japan in the IWC could boomerang.

"It is foolish to make demands but offer nothing in return," said Eugene Lapointe, president of the International Wildlife Management Consortium World Conservation Trust, a pro-sustainable use group.

"If they are seriously concerned about the scope of Japan's research, they need to engage in a discussion, not avoid one," he said. "The message they are sending is that Japan should leave the IWC."

The meeting would also consider a US request to renew bowhead whale hunting quotas for its native Alaskan communities as well as aboriginal subsistence hunts by Russia, Greenland and St Vincent and the Grenadines.

Although the IWC imposed a ban on commercial whaling in 1986 it has a policy of allowing certain indigenous peoples to hunt otherwise protected whales to satisfy longstanding cultural and subsistence needs.

The United States and the other four countries seeking to renew aboriginal quotas had wanted to forge a joint package in a bid to gain swift IWC approval, some groups said.

But Greenland spoiled the party as the Danish territory reportedly wanted to add a new species, humpback whales, to its quota and also expand the number of bowheads for its aboriginal hunters, they said.

"Greenland's greed for whales is undermining the moratorium and whales conservation efforts and potentially sabotaging the other aboriginal request for quotas," said Kitty Block, director of Humane Society International.

But "things could shift with intensive overnight lobbying."