

GRAY WHALES NOT SAVED AT IWC.

Many of you may believe that with the defeat of the dreaded draft proposal at the recent meeting of the IWC in Morocco, that the Gray Whales were safe.

Unfortunately, nothing could be further from the truth. A quota of 145 whales a year has been set for the next five years, a quota which will almost certainly drive the population on the path to extinction.

The quota will be taken up by the people of Chukotka, a remote area in the Russian Federation. The report by the Russian government on what happens to Gray Whales killed by Chukotkans makes very sad reading.

Whales are killed using penthrate grenades, darting guns and rifles according to the Russian report presented to the IWC. In total, 115 whales were killed last year. The maximum number of bullets used on whales was 260, the average number of shots 82.

Maximum time to death is estimated by Russian scientists at 77 minutes with the average time to death taking 27 minutes. These figures are completely unacceptable, inhumane and indefensible. For years Gray whale activists have complained at the IWC over the



appalling killing methods used by Chukotkan people. It's hard to imagine how anyone could butcher and eat a dead whale with 82 bullets embedded in its flesh, let alone 260.

71 whales were killed with a darting gun. All whales save 5 were shot, all whales were harpooned. Whales were chased incredible distances with one whale was pursued for 38 km.

All the whales killed were yearlings or juveniles save one adult. Combined with a bias towards killing two females to every one male, the slaughter has for many years focused on yearlings and juveniles. Some



experts believe that the continued killing of the younger generations ensures a lack of adequate numbers of breeding females.

32% of Gray whales demonstrated aggressive behaviour. Given the wonderful experiences enjoyed by thousands of people who visit the Mexican lagoons to play with these majestic whales who bring their calves to the boats and allow themselves to be touched, kissed and stroked, this aggressive behaviour demonstrates the whales know the difference between friends and their killers.

As always, the decision of the

IWC Scientific Committee is based on research submitted by the US National Marine & Fisheries Service (NMFS). The Service scientists continue to mislead the IWC and the general public on the true status of the whales, claiming the collapsing calf numbers will "recover" when the sea ice in the Arctic "returns to normal". Apparently climate change has not registered with NMFS who are alone in their belief that somehow, Arctic sea ice will "get better".

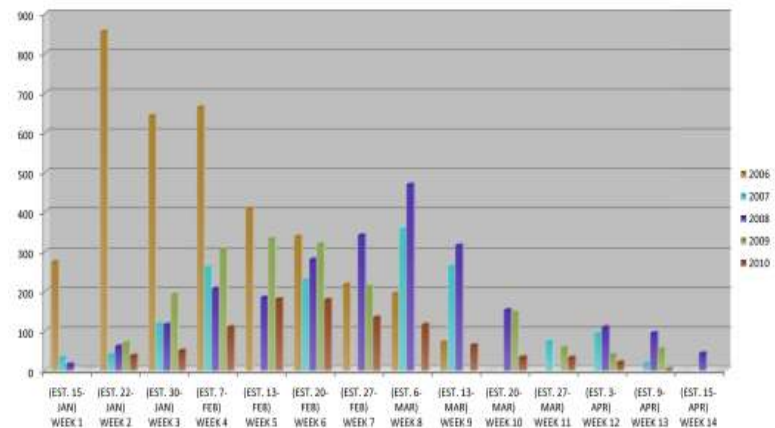
Gray whales are uniquely dependent on the food which gathers under the ice and falls to the sea floor feeding the prey on which Gray whales depend.

MEXICAN NUMBERS COLLAPSE

A paper submitted by the Mexican government to the IWC demonstrates that this season witnessed the lowest numbers of cows and calves in the Baja lagoons in the last 15 years. The graph shows vividly the very serious downturn in numbers.

The economic importance of Gray whales to Mexican

communities relying on whale watching as a primary source of income is largely ignored by the IWC. Yet the poverty in many of these communities is major. With few other sources of income, the importance of protecting the Gray whales is vital to the Mexican economy. Gray whale tourism is worth up to \$100 million USD per year.



COW/CALF COUNTS (Counting single number equals a pair) FOR LAGUNA OJO DE LIEBRE, MEXICO

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GRAY WHALE

ACTION ALERT!

DICK RUSSELL SUPPORTS THE COALITION

Photo by George Peper



The Coalition is delighted to have the support of well known journalist and author, Dick Russell.

Dick wrote a magnificent book entitled "The Eye of the Whale" which is one of the most authoritative books available on the Gray Whales he said:-

"Gray whales need our immediate attention! Due to climate change, their Arctic food supply is diminishing and the numbers of mother-calf pairs on the long migration are the lowest in years."

In his speech at one of the whale rallies recently held on the West Coast of the US, Dick had this to

say about Gray Whales.

"Recently a gray whale – the same gray whales that migrate along this shoreline - was spotted on the wrong side of the world. Off the coast of Israel! There haven't been gray whales anywhere but the Pacific Ocean since the 18th century, when they were hunted to extinction in the Atlantic. So it's likely this lone whale came down through the ice-free Northwest Passage looking for food and became hopelessly lost. Already gray

whales have to search for their food further north because the little amphipods they eat can't live in the warmer Arctic waters. So a 5,000-mile migration turns into a 6,000 or 7,000 mile migration. And this year, like last year, the number of newborn calves is distressingly low.

A generation ago, gray whales started coming up to humans at their birthing grounds in Baja, in the same lagoon where these same humans almost hunted them to extinction a century earlier. The mothers started introducing their newborns to boatloads of tourists, allowing us to actually pet them, in an incredible act of forgiveness. And I'd like to close by reading a brief passage from the conclusion of my book about them, Eye of the Whale:

"As the oceans go, so go we. Can we survive global warming? Noise pollution? The wanton carelessness about our habitats? Can we pretend to endure anything that the whales cannot? Can we come to grips with the suicidal tendency to destroy what sustains us? Is this what the gray whales are reaching out to communicate?"

STOP PRESS

The US IWC delegation recommended a 7 YEAR QUOTA for gray whales at the IWC.

HELP US CREATE THE GRAY WHALE WEB.

The Coalition must now build up a huge data base of public support for the Gray Whales, it is the only way we can make Congress and Senate representatives listen to and act on the plight of these whales.

We're asking everyone to take the time to enlist seven people to sign up on the Coalition website and in turn, to request those seven to enlist another seven. It's easy to do, just requiring the petition sign on which is on every page of the Coalition website to be filled in. The website is:

www.californiagraywhalecoalition.org

President Obama used the net with great success in his presidential campaign. The Coalition needs to make the Gray Whales plight a matter of national and international urgency. We know that at a recent United Nations Environment Program meeting in Paris on the oceans, Jean-Michel Cousteau presented his excellent documentary "The Gray Whale Obstacle Course", and according to a colleague who was at the meeting, many people were deeply moved.

ACTION DONATIONS PLEASE

The Coalition is working tirelessly to raise awareness of the plight of the magnificent Gray Whales. Their survival is on the line and there's never been a more urgent time to get involved. With the IWC meeting now over, many people think the Gray Whale is safe. Gray Whales are in great peril and only a massive public outcry will make a difference.

Donations can be sent to..... P.O. Box 50939 Palo Alto, CA 94303 or online from our website: www.californiagraywhalecoalition.org

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SEARCH FACEBOOK FOR:
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