

Press Summary Statements on Japanese Dolphin Drive Hunts

Dr. William Evans

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1. At the yearly International Whaling Commission Meeting (IWC), Japan has been waffling and dodging the issue of the take and conservation of small cetaceans for over 20 years. This is in spite of resolutions and the disapproval of a majority of the members.
2. At the 2006 meeting of the IWC in Saint Kitts and Nevis, Japan has managed to acquire enough additional votes for a simple majority.
3. Japan also got a resolution to abolish the moratorium on whaling by a simple majority. Although not enough to change the status of the moratorium, this signals they may have enough to do this within the next couple of years.
4. Besides the humane as well as biological concerns, this change in status would not only expand dolphin drive fisheries but open the door to mass exploitation of most of the major whale and dolphin populations of the world.
5. In my opinion this indicates that a stronger message has to be sent to Japan and other whaling nations at the highest level of governments that this issue is a priority.
6. Unless this issue is put on the agenda of discussion between heads of states we will witness a major environmental catastrophe.

Paul Boyle, Ph.D.

Director of the New York Aquarium and its Osborn Laboratories of Marine Science

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Today, we are bringing together a single voice of scientists, zoo, aquarium, and animal care professionals, and people all over the world calling for an end to the brutal and inhumane Japanese dolphin drives. When people see the unqualified brutality and inhumane treatment of dolphins in these Drive Hunts, they will want to do something to stop it. We have created a site called www.actfordolphins.org, where people can go to make their voice heard. We will make their call known to the Prime Minister of Japan. Many people feel they cannot accomplish much alone; www.actfordolphins.org offers the opportunity *to think, instead, about what a million voices speaking together will say.*

Louis M. Herman, Ph.D.

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My talk will illuminate the advanced intellectual capabilities of the dolphin as revealed through research studies at the Kewalo Basin Marine Mammal Laboratory in Honolulu that I directed. Three brief video clips will be shown illustrating (a) the dolphin's ability to learn to understand instructions we give them through a gestural language, including an understanding of how "word order" affects the meaning of instructions; (b) the dolphin's ability to faithfully imitate the behaviors of a human that it views on a television screen, despite vast differences in the body plans of the two species that requires the dolphin to create analogies, such as representing our legs by its tail; and (c) the ability of a pair of dolphins to create a behavior of their own choosing together—it must be the same behavior and it must be executed in close synchrony. These and other advanced intellectual capabilities of the dolphin contribute significantly to its effective functioning within its intricate and complex society—a society that can be destroyed by drive fisheries.

Lori Marino, Ph.D.

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I have been studying dolphin brains for the past fifteen years and I want to share with you what I've learned about dolphins from this research and what this means for the impact of the drive hunts on these animals. The take home message is a warning that the dolphin brain is that of a highly intelligent sophisticated animal that can perceive, feel, and comprehend the full impact of the devastation of the drives. I will give you two examples, based on scientific findings, of why I contend this.

Human beings are highly intelligent and complex and, quite appropriately, we credit our large highly convoluted brains for our prodigious intelligence. Specifically, our brains, while not the largest in absolute size, are the largest relative to our body size of all animals. Also our brain is more convoluted (has more folding on the surface), than all other primates. Therefore, if we attribute our intelligence to these features of our brain then we should be able to tell something about dolphin intelligence from examining these two parameters in *their* brains. So how do dolphins stack up?

Relative Brain Size

Human brains are seven times larger than expected for our body size. Our closest relatives, the great apes (chimpanzees, gorillas, and

orangutans), also have larger brains than expected. Their brains are, on average, a little more than twice the size expected for their body size. Most other animals fall below primates on this measure. But there is one mammal group that has a relative brain size *even closer* to that of humans than the great apes. These are the dolphins. Many dolphin species have brains four to five times the size expected for their body size. This means their brains are significantly larger in relative size *than all other animals* and *second only to modern humans*. Therefore, dolphin brains, like human brains, are *outstanding* because, like human brains, they are many times larger than one would expect for their body size.

Degree of Convolution

Convolutions are folds in the surface area of the brain that are nature's way of increasing the amount of brain tissue in the skull. Therefore, given the same brain volume in two different brains the more convoluted brain will have more tissue. Furthermore, the part of the brain that is folded is called the neocortex and it is the part of the mammalian brain involved in high-level thinking and self-awareness. The human brain is more highly convoluted than other primate brains but, according to scaling laws, about as convoluted as expected for its size. But there is one brain that *exceeds the human brain* in level of convolution and that is the dolphin brain.

Dolphin brains are the most highly convoluted brains on earth.

Furthermore, dolphin brains are actually *more convoluted* than one would expect for their size. Therefore, once again, the dolphin brain stands out among other animal brains and, in this measure of brain elaboration, actually *exceeds the human brain*.

The Inescapable Conclusion

If we consider a highly convoluted neocortex and large relative brain size characteristics that afford us our advanced intelligence, then we must extend the same objective logic to dolphin brains. When we consider that the dolphin brain is second to the human brain in relative brain size and exceeds the human brain in surface area, we are forced to conclude that dolphins are exceedingly intelligent sentient animals with capacities that may be on a par with humans in many respects. If this is indeed the case then the implications for what dolphins might psychologically and emotionally experience in the Japanese drive hunts are nothing short of staggering.

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We are here today as an international consortium of marine mammal scientists and zoo and aquarium professionals speaking out in a united voice and calling for the Japanese government to end the infamous and inhumane dolphin drive hunts in Japan. We will present scientific and ethical justification for ending the dolphin drives.

In the drive hunts, Japanese fishermen conduct yearly slaughters of dolphins and small whales. During these hunts dolphins and other cetaceans are herded and driven, sometimes by the hundreds, into shallow coves and then brutally slaughtered with knives and eviscerated alive. There are no restrictions on capture or killing methods and they fail to meet even the most minimal requirements used in laboratories and slaughterhouses. We will be showing you very graphic and disturbing footage of the brutal and inhumane drives that occur today in the villages of Taiji and Futo, Japan by small groups of fishermen. This is not a subsistence kill but a small industry regulated by the Japanese government. Yearly quotas for both villages reaches in the thousands based on Japan fisheries records. The hunts run from October through April. Small cetaceans of several species including bottlenose dolphins, striped dolphins, spotted dolphins, and short-finned pilot whales, are taken.

In 2001 in a paper published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, my colleague Dr. Lori Marino and I that demonstrated that dolphins have the capacity to recognize themselves in a mirror - a hallmark of a level of self-awareness previously thought to be restricted to only humans and great apes. This is one of many studies in a prodigious scientific literature that has revealed that dolphins share many our higher cognitive abilities.

We contend that that the Japanese drive hunt of dolphins and small cetaceans is a brutal and inhumane practice that violates all standards for animal welfare. Previously a number of international NGO's have been working tirelessly to end the drives without much response from the Japanese Government. We now join with them as scientists making the argument on the basis of the scientific evidence that the drive hunts are unjustifiable and indefensible in that they inflict pain and suffering on animals that are intelligent, sentient, socially complex and have capacity to experience pain and suffering. We are asking for the public and government officials to join with us in a global response in this call to end the drives.

Sam Ridgway, DVM, Ph.D.

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The slaughter of dolphins in drives by Japanese fishermen continues. Because I have worked for many years as a veterinarian and scientist with dolphins and because I developed techniques for anesthetizing dolphins, in the past I have worked with Japanese scientists on the issue of humane hunting of whales at meetings of the International Whaling Commission. If hunting must continue, I feel that progress must be made in humane hunting methods.

Dolphins such as Risso's dolphins, bottlenose dolphins, killer whales and others in the dolphin family are very highly developed animals with large brains. My extensive experience with animals of the dolphin family has proved to me that they are sensitive to pain and must be under anesthesia even for minor surgery. The methods used in the dolphin drives are inhumane and I hope that the government of Japan will bring an end to the drives for dolphin slaughter.

Karen Sausman

President, World Association of Zoos & Aquariums
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In my current position as President of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), it has been brought to my attention that the inhumane practice of collecting dolphins through drive fisheries operations in Japan is continuing. WAZA is the premier zoo and aquarium association in the world and comprises about 12,000 institutions all over the world. The Code of Ethics and Animal Welfare of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums is quite clear in requiring the members of WAZA to ensure that all animals in their care are treated with the utmost care and their welfare should be paramount at all times. In addition to the animals in our care, our Code of Practice also addresses the acquisition of animals for institutions and specifically condemns cruel and non-selective methods in taking animals from the wild. In the WAZA administrative session, held in Taipei, Taiwan, in 2004, a unanimous resolution was passed condemning the capture of dolphins through drive fisheries.

As President of WAZA, I represent zoo and aquarium directors of institutions comprised of scientists, veterinarians, animal care professionals and educators and our 600 million visitors to zoos and

aquariums globally. We are committed deeply to animal conservation and welfare. Whether animals are in our collections, in the wild or being housed in substandard conditions in other types of facilities, the members of WAZA and the world's professionally managed zoos are working to improve the standards of care for captive wildlife as well as conserving species in the wild. I have contacted our colleagues to enlist their support in ending the Taiji Dolphin Drive and any such activities of this nature. We have also sent a strong letter to the Government of Japan expressing our strong condemnation of the dolphin drives and urging them to stop this unjustifiable and inhumane practice.

Hal Whitehead, PhD.

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"Dolphin Drives Destroy Cultures of the Ocean"

It is becoming increasingly clear that whales and dolphins are cultural animals. Different groups exhibit dialects, social traditions, and unique ways of making a living. Like humans, they learn much of their behavior from each other and pass this learned behavior down through the generations. The Japanese dolphin hunts remove individual animals from their habitat; they also remove their learned knowledge. When they remove a whole group, a unique and adaptive body of knowledge is gone. Thus, whole learned cultural traditions can be decimated by the drive hunts and the adaptive impact on populations may be devastating. Just as many fight to preserve human cultures in the face of genocide or globalization, we should also find it morally repugnant and tragic to lose the cultures of the ocean.