

The Government of Brazil's has described Japan's whaling program in Antarctica as 'political whaling' and a 'blatant abuse of rights'.

Following is the text of Brazil's powerful intervention to the 57th International Whaling Commission, June 2005

Mr. Chairman, Brazil and many other Southern hemisphere nations have watched with great concern as the so-called scientific whaling escalates despite past recommendations by this Commission to have it stopped. It is clear from the scientific records that it has produced very little peer-reviewed publications from the enormous amount of whales slaughtered.

The whaling activity currently conducted under the guise of science is a blatant abuse of rights granted under Article VIII. It clearly serves better the purpose of maintaining a market for whale meat than of fostering science.

Moreover, Mr. Chairman, the renewed and much-increased proposal to continue these killings, and in particular the intention of slaughtering humpback whales, serves clearly non other purpose than a political one – that is, to press this Commission to hastily adopt compromises to bring a commercial whaling scheme, however weakly devised, to bear; the proposal deliberately attacks a species which is of great importance both for non-lethal research programs by other nations and of non-lethal appropriation through whale watching.

It attempts to create political upheaval by interjecting this economically valuable species appropriate through non-lethal use, perhaps as a means to potentially take it off its whaling list in the hopes everyone will be relieved by them taking only other whale species less known to the public. May I say very clearly that we are not to be misled by these tactics.

The proponents, in crafting this political whaling proposal, strike a direct blow to any hope of compromise and understanding regarding the rights of Southern hemisphere nations to non-lethal management and use of whales, and reaffirm their desire to continue making the IWC hostage to aggressive unilateral actions that equally threaten whales, the IWC, and the rights of other sovereign States.

We hope that the proponents of the continuation of politically and commercially oriented whaling conducted under Article VIII exemptions will take into account the broader and very serious implications of their actions for the future of the IWC.