

MEDIA RELEASE

15 February 2013

Sea Shepherd Bob Barker attempts to sabotage Japanese research vessel Nisshin Maru and Yushin Maru No.2

On February 15 around 1600JST until about 1830JST the Antarctic whale research (JARPAII) mother ship Nisshin Maru (NM) and the research vessel Yushin Maru No. 2 (YS2) were subjected to attack by the Sea Shepherd (SS) ship Bob Barker (BB).

When the YS2 was preparing to transfer a sampled whale to the NM, the BB repeatedly came to close quarter distance from both research vessels with the aim of interrupting the transference. At one point the BB came as close as about 55 meters from the NM, which means BB was about to collide with NM. Also, SS activists aboard a rigid inflatable boat sent from the BB deployed a rope in front of the YS2 bow, aiming to disable the Japanese vessel rudder and propeller.

During the attack, the NM and the YS2, besides using their water pump as a preventive measure to make SS desist from further approaching, repeatedly broadcasted a warning message to stop them. Further, in order to secure safety, the NM and the YS2 towed from their stern a safe-distance warning rope and buoy to contain the BB closing in, but the ropes were cut off by activists.

There were no injuries or damage to the Japanese crews and vessels.

After several attempts the sampled whale was successfully transferred to the NM.

On 17 December 2012 the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals issued an Injunction Order enjoining Sea Shepherd, Paul Watson and anyone acting in concert with them from physically attacking the Japanese research vessels or any person on them and from navigating in a manner that is likely to endanger the safe navigation at sea of any such vessel. The Injunction Order also prohibits Sea Shepherd and Paul Watson from approaching any vessel engaged by the Institute of Cetacean Research (ICR) or Kyodo Senpaku (KS) any closer than 500 yards when the research vessels are navigating on the open sea.

The ICR and KS filed, on February 11, a Motion for Contempt against Sea Shepherd for approaching the research vessels late last month in violation of the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Injunction Order. The ICR and KS will file in short another Motion for Contempt against SS for this new breaching of the Injunction Order.

Japan's research whaling in the Antarctic (JARPAII) is a perfectly legal activity carried out under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW). The Institute of Cetacean research strongly condemns the SS and its imprudent and violent actions perpetrated against the integrity and safety of Japan's whale research vessels and crews. Over and over again, we call on all related countries including the Netherlands, Australia and New Zealand which is the BB's flag state or port State of SS vessels, and United States in which headquarter of SS is based to take every measure available to restrain them and deal with their criminal actions in a strict and objective manner.

NOTE: Images to be attributed to THE INSTITUTE OF CETACEAN RESEARCH, TOKYO, JAPAN (<http://www.icrwhale.org/gpandsea.html>)

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