

SCIENTIST STATEMENT Against the Japanese Drive Hunts

“It is a practice
that shames
Japan and the
rest of us [as]
human beings.”

—Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara, Ph.D.

To the Government of Japan,

We, the undersigned members of the community of marine mammal scientists, veterinarians, and conservation biologists, implore you to put an end to the brutal treatment and slaughter of dolphins (including small toothed whales) in the Japanese drive hunts. Scientific research shows that dolphins are highly intelligent, self-aware and emotional animals with strong family ties and complex social lives. In addition, repeated recommendations from the international scientific and management communities (for example, the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission) to end this hunt have been ignored, and there are no current population assessments of most targeted dolphin species in Japanese waters. We urge you to lead the way and take action in stopping the inhumane treatment and killing of these highly sentient mammals.

We strongly believe that the sourcing of animals from these hunts for any purposes, including human consumption, fertilizer and pet food manufacturing, and live public display, is unethical. We believe it is a violation of the code of professional ethics concerning collection from the wild for any zoo, aquarium or public display facility to be associated with these hunts in any way. This includes the direct sourcing of dolphins from these hunts for education or breeding programs or the indirect exchange of animals with facilities that may be closely associated with a drive hunt.