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In This Issue

Members of Eagle Eye Intelligence, along with members of the Honors Program at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Prescott Campus, recently began conducting research into whaling for the Undergraduate Research Institute and Elephants, Rhinos & People. We have therefore decided to publish a special edition on whaling and its current geopolitical implications.

WHALING: Status Quo Likely to Sustain in Japan, Norway, and Iceland

Origins of Whaling: The Europeans started the whaling industry around the 11th Century. Whaling traditions varied as the Inuit, Basque, and Japanese hunted in different oceans while relying on whales to provide material goods, as well as part of their cultural identity. By the late 1930s, more than 50,000 whales were hunted annually. The turn of the 20th century saw whaling thrive in the western Japanese town of Taiji. Japan emphasizes that eating whales is an important part of their cuisine. However, widespread consumption only began during the United States' military occupation after World War Two to feed the impoverished population. In modern times, Norway and Iceland allow whaling. Japan officially hunts whales for scientific research.

A Recent History: In 1951, Japan joined the International Whaling Commission (IWC). Created 2 December 1946, the IWC “provides for the proper conservation of whale stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry” and currently comprises 88 members. Whale migration across international waters created a need for international cooperation. The commission states that countries must hunt within their exclusive economic zones and must provide scientific and data information to the IWC. The IWC aims to maintain a balance between respecting the culture and health needs of indigenous people and maintaining healthy whale populations. In 1982 the IWC agreed to a whaling moratorium, both Norway and Japan registered an objection. Norway does not consider itself bound by the moratorium. Feeling the pressure from the United States, Japan withdrew its objection in 1985 and resumed “special permit whaling” for scientific research in 1987. Since the moratorium took effect, Japan killed more than 12,000 whales due to scientific research. Japan announced in December 2018 their withdrawal from the IWC and then they resumed whaling 1 July 2019. Before their announcement, Japan had been whaling but solely for scientific purposes. However, Japan has been accused of effectively carrying out stealth whaling that had no scientific value.

Whaling Today: In 2013, Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe, appointed Yoshimasa Hayashi as minister of agriculture, forestry, and fisheries, which oversees whaling policies. Both Abe and Hayashi are members of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and come from Yamaguchi Prefecture, which is known for a history of whaling and whale related local traditional culture. Due to this, the Abe administration continued a strong pro-whaling position. Abe pursues a nationalistic pro-whaling stance.

In Iceland, the Leftist-Green Party leads the current government. Their platform expresses opposition to whale hunting. They stated in 2015 that such hunts are inhuman. Funding for whaling primarily comes from the country's government, commonly through subsidies. In the last three years, the Japanese government paid whalers over \$46 million in subsidies while the industry remained officially unsanctioned. With a relatively small workforce in the whaling industry in Japan, the government will likely return to overt commercial whaling to reduce expenses. In Norway, the government offers fuel tax exemptions and free storage for whale meat, along with government subsidies. In addition to subsidizing whalers, the Norwegian government looks for new markets to promote the sale of whale meat, potentially reducing the number of subsidies required. However, in Iceland, the government neither supports the whaling industry nor take action against it. Hvalfur Hf, the largest whaling company in Iceland, remains primarily privately funded.

The economies in Japan, Norway, and Iceland do not rely on whaling for substantial revenue. The desire for whale meat has dwindled in these countries. For example, Japan annually consumes only 3,000 tons of meat, 1,000 tons of which are imported from countries such as Norway and Iceland. According to government data, this consumption rate leaves up to 3,500 tons of whale meat in storage in Japan. This trend can also be found in Iceland, where consumption of whale meat comes primarily from tourists, and the rate of consumption continues to fall. Much of what is hunted in Iceland is eventually shipped to Japan. However, Hvalfur hf does not generate the majority of its profits from actual whaling. An independent analysis of the finances of Hvalfur hf showed that in 2015, operation costs were not covered by revenue generated from the sale of whale meat. The report found that Hvalfur hf lost as much as 597,006.32 USD and that most actual profits came from shares in other companies. Norwegian whaling companies are also likely experiencing losses due to a failure to reach annual quotas, the reason for which is almost certainly due to a decreased public interest and demand. This leads whale meat in Norway to be used for other products besides food offered to the public such as food for livestock and commercial health products.

Culture and tradition are commonly used as an explanation for why some countries whale. The Japanese government promotes whaling as an important part of Japanese culture, although whale meat was not widely consumed in Japan until the 1940s post-war US occupation. During this time, many schools served whale meat as a part of school lunches, although this practice started to decline in the late 1980s. However, Abe's government announced plans to reintroduce whale meat into schools as a way of passing along the culture. Iceland has a long history of commercial whaling, which started in the early 20th century. Whale meat is not a traditional dish in Icelandic culture, although it remains popular among tourists. The popularity of whale meat in Norway follows this continued downward trend. Surveys found that the meat remains mostly unpopular among younger generations, while its overall popularity has slowly declined. Pro-whaling officials continue to push for a return to the consumption of whale meat to uphold tradition by introducing whale meat to schools and festivals, specifically targeting the younger generations. In addition to each of these countries receiving pushback surrounding the validity of the claims regarding cultural importance, indigenous groups that whale receive criticism as well.

Conservation vs. Culture: Countries use culture as a defense for continued whaling practices, causing friction with conservation groups. Iceland uses whale meat as a tourist attraction, with only 1.5% of Iceland's actual population consuming it. This will likely create friction between conservation groups and whalers. The IWC, along with other treaties, attempts to balance culture and conservation, but skepticism over enforcement ignited tensions between conservation groups and native populations. Although the IWC classifies aboriginal whaling separately from commercial whaling, many feel the rights promised to them were not upheld. The Makah tribe in the US gained explicit permission to resume whaling operations, but conservation groups sued the tribe in 1999, effectively ending the Makah whaling operation. The Makah faced bomb threats and aggressive backlash. Incidents like these deepen the distrust between conservation groups and native tribes, making it difficult to establish and maintain a middle ground. Commercial whaling countries will likely take advantage of this and attempt to discredit anti-whaling efforts as anti-cultural. Several conservation groups spoke out about whaling practices, including Greenpeace activists, who revealed Japanese whalers illegally traded and smuggled whale meat. Measures like these will likely further a rift between conservation groups and governments, which may damage the groups' operations within Japan. Furthermore, the Sea

Shepherd Conservation Society, an environmental extremist group likened to pirates, chased and damaged Japanese whaling ships until 2017. Extremist groups like Sea Shepherd threaten the credibility of conservation groups like the WWF and Greenpeace. Should attacks resume, Tokyo will likely spin the violence and paint itself as a victim, damaging conservation efforts. The hacker group Anonymous denied service to official Icelandic websites to protest whaling. Activists may turn to cyberattacks like Anonymous did to further their message.

Territorial Concerns: Territorial disputes amongst state and non-state actors will likely arise as commercial whalers hunt further and further away from land. In 2014, Russia held a Japanese whaling research vessel after it crossed into Russian waters without permission. The incident damaged attempts to strengthen Russian-Japanese relations. Commercial whalers will likely continue to stray into territorial waters as the industry grows. Japanese whaling caused conflict with Australia, who views whaling as a threat to its Antarctic territorial claim. The growing industry will likely lead to further tensions between the two countries, and as whalers expand outward it's highly likely new disputes will occur.

Outlook and Implications: Norway, Iceland, and Japan will likely continue whaling at their current in the near-term future because of the present economic and cultural incentives, combined with the current lack of consensus political opposition to their actions.

The SWOT analysis below considers a scenario in which NGOs and governments successfully achieve a policy that significantly reduces whaling activities in Norway, Iceland, and Japan. The analysis addresses nonviolent NGOs, governments that allow whaling currently, and citizens of those countries can potentially impact whaling policy. The indicators following the SWOT analysis illustrate what a scenario that achieves whaling reform will look like.

NGOs

<p>Strengths</p> <p>Nonviolent NGOs typically operate with a higher level of efficiency and more freedom of action than their government counterparts. Their ability to remain relatively apolitical grants them the ability to affect change in governments globally.</p>	<p>Weakness</p> <p>NGOs don't have the position to directly impact policy changes and must rely on governments to do so. Additionally, non-profit NGOs have finite resources that make targeting the entire whaling industry alone difficult.</p>
<p>Opportunities</p> <p>NGOs' single-issue focus and non-partisan nature give them greater opportunity to access to political connections with the influence required to create policy. NGOs also possess the opportunity to encourage individuals with a passion for the issue to affect change, which likely allows NGOs' influence to spread influence through outreach without the NGO directly applying time and money.</p>	<p>Threats</p> <p>Non-violent NGOs face delegitimization from more violent groups that directly target whaling vessels. The public can confuse legitimate organizations willing to work with whaling organizations with more violent and extreme groups.</p>

Governments

Strengths Governments possess both the resources and ability to ultimately create or alter policy.	Weakness Government partisanship limits political mobility and the ability to reach a consensus on policy. Additionally, the bureaucracy of government further inhibits policy.
Opportunities The enforcement mechanism domestic governments have allows them to punish and deter negative actors.	Threats Geopolitical relations and external pressure often limit governments' ability to develop political inertia, create policy, or altering policy.

Individuals

Strengths Individuals possess the ability to rapidly affect change through grassroots movements that spread quickly and influence society more effectively than institutions.	Weakness Individuals acting alone cannot impact change on a national level. Additionally, individuals, in general, lack political awareness and a full grasp of the issues surrounding whaling
Opportunities Individuals possess opportunities to affect change by participating in the democratic process and by growing their influence with social media.	Threats Marketing campaigns and external interest groups can easily influence people against whaling policy and delegitimize facts.

NGOs can most effectively use information campaigns both to lobby support and mobilize citizens for whaling reform and potentially damaging and de-legitimizing narratives on whaling reform. The strength of NGOs most likely indicates they can effectively assist in mobilizing the people and spreading information through their nonpartisan, single focus and priority (in this case on environmental conservation,), and disconnect from the political process. This focus and apolitical nature allows for information to spread from NGOs to the people more effectively, and the connection but not explicit affiliation with the government allow for NGOs to lobby on behalf of the people successfully. Though in this scenario, organizations would use information flows to generate whaling reform, but opposition organizations can also delegitimize facts and generally create uncertainty.

Less Apathy from Citizens

An NGO in this scenario would likely monitor indications of reduced apathy in individuals to determine when encouraging change would be most successful. Creating new policy, inspiring action, or altering cultural norms becomes increasingly possible should an organization capitalize on a less apathetic population. This should be caveated by stating that invested individuals likely choose sides of an issue, and NGOs must capitalize on this opportunity to gain influence. Greater

buy-in from individuals typically indicates support for change and policy adjustments. Individuals' participation in the democratic process, along with their support of grassroots movements would likely indicate success. Social media platforms would provide a strong indication of public opinion and support.

International Pressure

Governments and their leaders ultimately possess the opportunity to enact and enforce policy. In this scenario, countries could significantly mitigate whaling if they enforce their sovereignty and prevent unwanted whaling vessels from entering their waters. Gaining international support and expanding the issues' focus to national security could create a multinational deterrent against whaling, and provide an NGO with the necessary political capital to create change.

Policy Reforms

Intermediate policy reforms on whaling and broader environmental conservation domestically and internationally would almost certainly indicate more impactful reform on whaling. Smaller policy steps from domestic countries implicated in whaling would clearly signify larger reform on whaling. More broadly, international policy and attention concerning whaling would most likely contribute to other indicators and generally signify an appetite to pass meaningful policy reform.

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