



## 3<sup>rd</sup> SCH Topic Update

### Whaling in Japan

In the last year, Japan has been hit with more financially straining variables than most countries deal with in a decade. The Japanese people have had to cope with an earthquake, a tsunami, and even nuclear meltdowns. Despite having to make some very big bottom lines to Japan's deficit and its public debt, the Japanese government still propose that the whaling expeditions will continue later this year. Other small coastal towns though feel that their whaling culture could be destroyed due to the effects of the recent natural disasters. Can Japan still have legitimate claims to continue such a heated industry amidst such financially taxing times? Is the whaling industry more viable than the welfare of the Japanese people?

Also, the IWC annual meeting in Jersey this year ended in hostile relations as Japan and their supporting bloc walked out during a vote. This action prevented the necessary quorum to be reached and also blocked a proposed vote initiated by the Buenos Aires bloc to create a whale sanctuary in the Atlantic Southern basin. Japan's inability to remain present stalled the meeting – ultimately preventing the body from addressing key issues effecting whaling. How can these issues be resolved if Japan is unable to discuss compromises? Is it possible that anti-whaling nations are approaching the issue with too hostile of emotions?

Some final questions to consider are the effect of protests and anti-whaling movements gaining support in the media. With more and more people learning about the topic and Japan being shown in a negative light, how can a comprehensive agreement be reached? Are Western ideals being imbued too heavily in discussions and alienating the cultural identities of the Japanese people?

#### **Whaling Meeting 'Ignores Needs of Whales':**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-14153779>

#### **Japan to 'Continue' Antarctic Whaling:**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-14132320>

#### **Japanese Town Mulls Future Without Whaling:**

[http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/25/world/asia/25whale.html?\\_r=1&scp=2&sq=whaling%20in%20japan&st=cse](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/25/world/asia/25whale.html?_r=1&scp=2&sq=whaling%20in%20japan&st=cse)

#### **Walkout Sours Global Whaling Conference:**

<http://green.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/07/14/walkout-sours-global-whaling-conference/?scp=5&sq=whaling%20in%20japan&st=cse>



## **Whaling: Reflections from**

**Japan:**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/science-environment-14153781>

## **Whaling in Japan and “The Cove”:**

<http://www.reuters.com/article/2011/05/06/uk-japan-dolphins-idUSLNE74503W20110506>

## **Effects of Climate Change on Indigenous People in South America**

The Amazon Rainforest is one of the most crucial natural resources in South America. Two major draughts have undermined its ability to serve as the planet’s most important carbon sink and natural brake on climate change. Climate change coupled with increases in deforestation will more than likely lead to drier and warmer conditions that will ultimately will weaken the rainforest’s resistance to human and environmental stressors. How does this affect the indigenous people of South America? The Amazon Rainforest symbolizes the foundation of a culture for so many indigenous tribes. If the forest is destroyed due to continued climate change and extensive deforestation, thousands of indigenous people will lose their homes, culture, language, and way of life.

This burden falls on the shoulders of the international community. Not only is the welfare of indigenous people at stake, but also an invaluable natural resource that serves to slow down climate change. What can the international community do to prevent such a catastrophe? Can stricter sanctions be placed on deforestation in the region? What can be done to ensure that indigenous people continue to live their lives the way they have for thousands of years? Are mass relocation operations a viable option?

## **Climate Change and Deforestation Pose Risk to Amazon Rainforest:**

[http://news.mongabay.com/2011/0520-amazon\\_climate\\_moukaddem.html](http://news.mongabay.com/2011/0520-amazon_climate_moukaddem.html)

## **Amazon Draughts Increase Climate Change Fears:**

[http://articles.cnn.com/2011-02-04/world/brazil.amazon.drought\\_1\\_droughts-carbon-dioxide-co2?\\_s=PM:WORLD](http://articles.cnn.com/2011-02-04/world/brazil.amazon.drought_1_droughts-carbon-dioxide-co2?_s=PM:WORLD)

## **Amazon Rainforest Deforestation Rises Sharply:**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-13449792>

## **Indigenous People of the Amazon Are in Danger:**

[http://news.mongabay.com/2011/0922-almir\\_surui\\_un.html](http://news.mongabay.com/2011/0922-almir_surui_un.html)