Basic information

2016/2600(RSP) RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects	Procedure completed
Resolution on Japan’s decision to resume whaling in the 2015-2016 season **Subject** 3.70.01 Protection of natural resources: fauna, flora, nature, wildlife, countryside; biodiversity **Geographical area** Japan	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
ENVI Environment, Climate and Food Safety	SOMMER Renate (PPE)	01/03/2016
	BRIANO Renata (S&D)	01/03/2016
	GIRLING Julie (ECR)	01/03/2016
	RIES Frédérique (ALDE)	01/03/2016
	ECK Stefan (GUE/NGL)	01/03/2016
	ENGSTRÖM Linnéa (Verts /ALE)	01/03/2016
	AFFRONTE Marco (EFDD)	01/03/2016

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Maritime Affairs and Fisheries	VELLA Karmenu

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
08/06/2016	Debate in Parliament		
06/07/2016	Decision by Parliament	T8-0313/2016	Summary
06/07/2016	Results of vote in Parliament		
06/07/2016	End of procedure in Parliament		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2016/2600(RSP)
Procedure type	RSP - Resolutions on topical subjects
Procedure subtype	Debate or resolution on oral question/interpellation
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed
Committee dossier	ENVI/8/05849

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Motion for a resolution		B8-0853/2016	29/06/2016	
Motion for a resolution		B8-0855/2016	29/06/2016	
Motion for a resolution		B8-0862/2016	29/06/2016	
Motion for a resolution		B8-0863/2016	05/07/2016	
Text adopted by Parliament, single reading		T8-0313/2016	06/07/2016	Summary

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2016)694	23/01/2017	

Resolution on Japan’s decision to resume whaling in the 2015-2016 season

2016/2600(RSP) - 06/07/2016 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 610 votes to 11, with 77 abstentions, a resolution on Japan’s decision to resume whaling in the 2015-2016 season.

The text adopted in plenary was adopted by the EPP, S&D, ECR, ALDE, GUE/NGL, Greens/EFA and EFDD groups.

Parliament recalled that in 1982 the International Whaling Commission (IWC) put in place a **moratorium on all commercial whaling**, which is still in force, in order to protect stocks from extinction and allow them to recover. It recalled that despite this moratorium, commercial whaling continues to be practised by several countries. Since the introduction of the moratorium, the number of whales killed using special permit authorisation for alleged scientific research has actually increased. In this regard, Parliament called on Japan to stop its whaling activities and to abide by the conclusions of the IWC.

Parliament noted that Japan has been conducting such whaling under special permit for decades (killing over 20 000 whales up to 2014). It recalled that in its judgment of 31 March 2014, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordered the **halting of Japan’s annual hunt of whales**, based on its JARPA II programme, because there was a ‘lack of scientific merit’ and the permits it issued were not conducted for scientific research as Japan claimed.

In October 2015, Japan deposited a declaration with the UN recognising the jurisdiction of the ICJ but with an exception for any dispute arising out of, concerning or relating to research on, or conservation, management, or exploitation of, living resources of the sea, effectively ruling out future challenges in the ICJ to their special permit whaling programme. In November 2015, the Japanese Fisheries Agency notified the IWC that it would resume whaling under the New Scientific Research Whale Programme (NEWREP-A).

The resolution noted that the EU and its Member States have criticised Japan for resuming activities and for not paying sufficient regard to the guidance found in the 2014 ICJ opinion and that in this regard **Parliament called on Japan to stop its whaling activities** and to abide by the conclusions of the IWC.

It noted its deep concern that the decision to resume whaling under the new NEWREP-A programme allowed the killing of 333 minke whales, including 200 pregnant females, in the Antarctic Ocean during the 2015-2016 season, and that Japan intends to hunt a total of nearly **4 000 whales over the 12-year period as a whole**.

According to Parliament, Japan is clearly ignoring the ruling of the ICJ. It urged the EU and its Member States to do their utmost to resolve the issue through political dialogue and through the IWC.

The Commission, the EEAS and the Member States are called upon to continuously engage with Japan on the issue of alleged scientific whaling with a view to **abolishing the practice**, using bilateral and multilateral channels.

Lastly, Parliament urged the Council and the Commission, when drafting an updated EU common position on whaling after the 66th IWC meeting in October 2016, to **take an approach that is at least as precautionary as the present common position**.