

**Question for written answer E-012352/2011
to the Commission**

Rule 117

Keith Taylor (Verts/ALE), Daniel Caspary (PPE), David Martin (S&D) and Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL)

Subject: Euro-Japanese trade relations: opportunities to address marine mammal conservation

In a 2009 resolution entitled 'Community action in relation to whaling', the Parliament overwhelmingly voted for the EU to promote, in key international fora, the highest level of protection for whales at a global level whilst also calling for an end to so-called scientific whaling (INI/2008/2101). The European Commission has also condemned lethal whaling for scientific purposes, especially given that many species of whales, such as the fin whale, are endangered.

Although commercial whaling is prohibited under the International Whaling Commission (IWC), Japan has continued to hunt whales under an exception for scientific research. Japan also has a reservation under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which allows it to trade in whale products, an otherwise prohibited activity.

The International Whaling Commission's (IWC) scientific committee has dismissed Japan's research as 'unnecessary', and it has also been condemned in a resolution passed at the IWC 2007 meeting, when a majority of countries voted for Japan to suspend indefinitely the lethal aspects of its research programme within the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary.

Given that the EU and Japan have started a scoping exercise ahead of potential negotiations on a free trade agreement, we would be grateful if you could answer the following questions.

1. Given that Japan's whaling practices are unsustainable and also undermine the Commission's own efforts to reverse the loss of biodiversity, how will the Commission address this issue in negotiations with Japan, both throughout the scoping exercise and, if it goes ahead, during discussions on the FTA itself?
2. Does the Commission plan, as it has done in recent FTAs, to include a provision in the EU-Japan FTA committing parties to effective implementation of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) such as CITES? Would the Commission also consider including a provision on enforcement of MEAs?