

Minke Whale Meat Supply Chain in Contemporary Norway

Jun Akamine (Hitotsubashi University, Japan)

Modern whaling was developed in Norway in the 1860s and further expanded into the Southern Ocean as factory ship whaling in the 1920s. While modern whaling had its roots in seal hunting for its fur and blubber, pelagic whaling in the Southern Ocean was exclusively for the oil. Thus, when the global whale oil market collapsed in the 1960s, Norway stopped pelagic whaling in the Southern Ocean. Aside from the pelagic whaling for oil, Norway practiced small scale coastal whaling for meat. Norway followed the moratorium of the commercial whaling in 1987 but restarted commercial minke whaling in 1993 for meat. The presentation will first summarize the history of modern whaling in Norway and point out that Norwegian whaling was consistent before and after the Second World War, with the pre-war period as its peak. Second, the presentation will describe the current minke whale meat supply chain practices based on observations at the Lofoten Islands. Finally, the presentation will emphasize the importance of distinguishing differences between coastal whaling for meat and pelagic whaling for oil. This will likely provide hints for the future of commercial coastal whaling in Japan.