

Beat: Miscellaneous

Iceland To Put An End To Whaling

Canceling All New Permits

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USPA NEWS - Whales off the coast of Iceland will be left alone by the end of next year, after the nation's Fisheries Minister announced a cancellation of all new permits for commercial whaling.

The country had already banned international whaling crews in their waters, but once the current permits expire in 2023, the practice will end for good. Only one whale was hunted last year, as there is little demand for it. In fact, a 2018 Gallup poll found that 84% of Icelanders had never eaten whale meat. For 10 years, the International Fund for Animal Welfare has been campaigning to persuade Icelanders that whales are worth more alive than dead.

New economic feasibility studies find that whales would generate more tourism revenue from being seen on whale-watching tours than from being eaten, and the campaign generated 175,000 signatures, the largest signature campaign in the nation's history. Transcend Media Service reports that hundreds of thousands of whale-watchers visited the northern European nation in 2019 to observe both the Minke whales, the world's smallest Baleen whale, and Fin whales, the world's second largest species. Whale sightings are bound to become more lively in coming years, now that average annual catches will drop to zero, from around 83 caught yearly from 2003-2019.

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