

# IWC66 COMMISSIONERS' BRIEFING

## MEAT FROM JAPAN'S 'SCIENTIFIC' HUNTS AVAILABLE ONLINE TO GLOBAL CUSTOMERS

2016



WHALE AND  
DOLPHIN  
CONSERVATION

WDC

## Introduction

On Saturday 15th October, 2016, WDC discovered that Tokyo-based online sales company, Japan Trend Shop, was offering several canned whale products to global customers<sup>1</sup>. The company advertised payment in sterling, dollars and Euros and offered worldwide express shipping. The discovery was made through US blog site A.V. Club<sup>2</sup>.

The site offered canned Sunoko whale meat from Kinoya Ishinomaki Suisan Inc., a Japanese canned goods producer with a long history of selling whale meat sourced from Japan's 'scientific' whaling programmes<sup>3</sup>.

The Japan Trend Shop website describes the product thus:

*“Now this is something that will set you apart as a whale meat connoisseur! Sunoko, meat from what could be thought of as a whale's cheeks, is very rare, even in Japan: from each whale, sunoko only comprises 3-5% of the total, and its taste and texture is very different from regular whale meat. Cooked with ginger and soy sauce, this Kinoya Canned Rare Sunoko Whale Meat is a treat that most Japanese have only ever heard of, but now you can try it.”*

The A.V.Club blog also includes this and video.

**A.V. CLUB** Stock up your winter pantry with Japanese sea lion and bear curry

the burn of the curry.”

とろとろ食感が美味しい「須の子缶詰」 鯨の希少部位肉  
須の子とは、  
くじら肉の一部で  
人間で言うと“ほっぺた”  
にあたります。

0:09 / 1:14

You might be budget-conscious and want to buy in bulk: Here's a 12-can set of [Baleen whales](#) (known at one point as “marine beef”) marinated in soy sauce and ginger for a mere \$151. Even more prized from the whale family is [sunoko](#), meat that comes from the base of the flipper and known for its collagen-rich fatty texture. For those concerned about its environmental implications, rest assured! “The meat contained in this product,” the ad copy says, “comes from animals that have been killed as part of scientific research.” *Kawaii!*

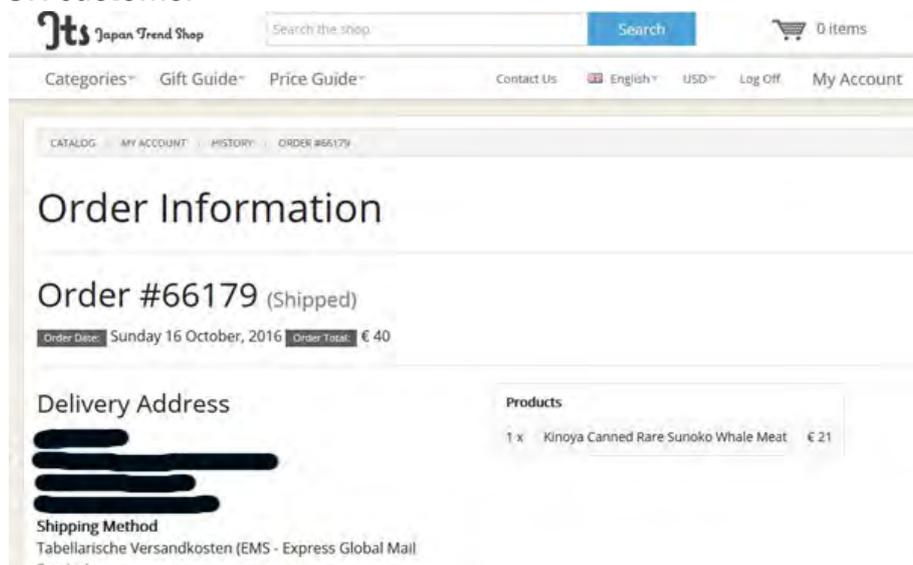
The product is listed as coming from 'baleen whales' but does not name the specific whale species. However, in its promotional blurb, it comments “If you still have some environmental concerns, rest assured that the meat contained in this product comes from animals that have been killed as part of scientific research.”

## WDC's investigations

WDC entered the Japan Trend Shop website and was able to select various language/currency options at the point of adding whale products to our online trolley (English/dollars; German/Euros; French/Euros – see screenshots in Appendix 1). It was also possible to purchase in pounds sterling.

## WDC is able to purchase whale meat without restriction

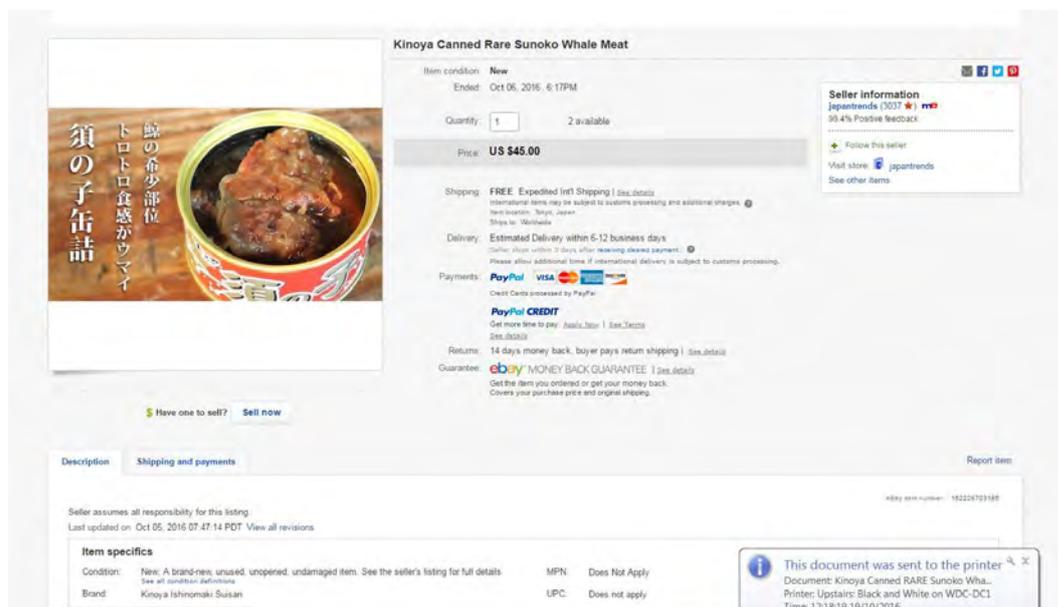
After taking advice, WDC made the minimum possible purchase (one can) of Kinoya Canned Rare Sunoko Whale Meat at a cost of EUR 21 (plus shipping EUR 19, giving a total of EUR 40). The purchased meat was sent from Japan to the United Kingdom without any problems and currently sits in UK customs.



The screenshot shows the 'Order Information' page for Order #66179, which has been shipped. The order was placed on Sunday 16 October, 2016, with a total cost of € 40. The delivery address is redacted with black bars. The shipping method is 'Tabellarische Versandkosten (EMS - Express Global Mail)'. The product list shows 1 x 'Kinoya Canned Rare Sunoko Whale Meat' for € 21.

## Kinoya whale meat also discovered for sale on eBay US

On Wednesday 19th October 2016, we made a further discovery. At least two cans of 'Kinoya Canned Rare Sunoko Whale Meat' was advertised on the site for \$45 (free shipping). The listing was ended by the seller on 06th October 2016 as "the item is no longer available." It is currently unclear what quantity of whale meat was originally offered on eBay US and for what period of time.



The screenshot shows an eBay US listing for 'Kinoya Canned Rare Sunoko Whale Meat'. The item condition is 'New', and it was ended on Oct 06, 2016, at 6:17PM. The quantity is 2 available, and the price is US \$45.00. The shipping is 'FREE Expedited Int'l Shipping'. The estimated delivery is within 5-12 business days. The seller is 'japantrends' with a 98.4% positive feedback rating. The listing was updated on Oct 05, 2016, at 07:47:14 PDT. The item is described as 'New: A brand-new, unused, undamaged item. See the seller's listing for full details. See all conditions for this item.' The brand is 'Kinoya Ishinomaki Suisan'.

## Comment

Although Japan holds a reservation (CITES) to the listing of some whales, the countries it can potentially trade whale products with is limited to Norway and Iceland. Having a website in several European languages, including English, can therefore only be explained by the intention to illegally sell to customers in the US, the EU and elsewhere.

## Conclusions

1. Japan clearly has whale meat surplus to its own requirements and some retailers are keen to offload it to overseas buyers.
2. Japan argues that the IWC can maintain the moratorium whilst still giving it a whaling quota. This is fundamentally wrong and all attempts to accommodate Japan's arguments should be rejected. Japan's blatant failure to regulate and control this trade whilst whaling is banned, shows just how bad the situation will be if the moratorium was ever lifted.

More detail on WDC thinking on this issue may be found here<sup>4</sup>

## References

1. [http://www.japantrendshop.com/advanced\\_search\\_result.php?keywords=whale+meat](http://www.japantrendshop.com/advanced_search_result.php?keywords=whale+meat)
2. <http://www.avclub.com/article/stock-your-winter-pantry-japanese-sea-lion-and-bea-244221>
3. <http://kinoya.co.jp/> and <http://cupidojapan.com/ishinomaki-the-city-of-whale/>
4. <http://uk.whales.org/wdc-in-action/why-japan-is-wrong-about-moratorium>

# Appendix 1

## Screenshots with various language/currency options Offer 1 (German selected)

**Jts Japan Trend Shop** Search the shop Suche 0 Produkte

Kategorien Geschenkkideen Preisklasse Kontakt Deutsch EUR Abmelden Ihr Konto

KATALOG FOOD TRENDS

### Kinoya Canned Rare Sunoko Whale Meat

Japanese food delicacy

Price: € 21

Menge: 1

[In den Warenkorb](#)

Einzelversandkosten, weltweiter Express € 19  
Ermäßigung bei Bestellung mehrerer Artikel wird im Warenkorb angezeigt.

Like Share 15 Fancy 1

Pinit 1

Now this is something that will set you apart as a whale meat connoisseur! Sunoko, meat from what could be thought of as a whale's cheeks, is very rare, even in Japan: from each whale, sunoko only comprises 3-5% of the total, and its taste and texture is very different from regular whale meat. Cooked with ginger and soy sauce, this **Kinoya Canned Rare Sunoko Whale Meat** is a treat that most Japanese have only ever heard of, but now you can try it. If you still have some environmental concerns, rest assured that the meat contained in this product comes from animals that have been killed as part of scientific research.

鯨の希少部位  
トロトロ食感がウマイ  
須の子缶詰

What sets sunoko meat apart from the other whale meat is its fatty texture. That being said, it's still very lean: compared to a chicken breast, the amount of fat is almost half! Full of collagen and protein, and with flavors evoking memories of those postwar days, the Kinoya Canned Rare Sunoko Whale Meat deserves to be the main dish in any washoku (classic Japanese cuisine) dinner.

よりウマ食感が美味しい「須の子缶詰」鯨の希少部位肉

トロトロ食感が旨い  
須の子缶詰

The Kinoya Canned Rare Sunoko Whale Meat features:

- Made by Kinoya Ishinomaki Suisan
- 170g (5.9 oz)
- Baleen whale meat, sugar, starch, soy, ginger, etc.
- Expiration date: 3 years
- After opening, transfer the contents to a different container, store in refrigerator and consume quickly
- Made in Japan

Offer 2 (English selected)

**Kinoya Yamatoni Canned Whale Meat**  
Baleen whale in soy, ginger and sugar sauce  
Price: US\$ 23

Quantity: 1

[Add to Cart](#)

Worldwide express shipping (trackable and insured): US\$ 21  
Single item cost. Multiple order discount displayed at checkout.

In the devastation that followed WWII, the Japanese had to resort to anything they could lay their hands on for sustenance, especially for sources of protein. This is how an old custom of coastal areas, the consumption of whale meat, came to become widespread and **Kinoya Yamatoni Canned Whale Meat** recaptures the taste of those postwar years offering baleen whale meat cooked in a sauce made of soy, ginger and sugar.

Made by Kinoya, one of the best-known Japanese canned-food companies, this product uses meat from whales that have been hunted and killed for scientific purposes. Even though whale meat is also eaten as sashimi (i.e. raw), cooked yamatoni-style is the most classic recipe. If you ever wanted to know why the Japanese insist on eating whale, this can will provide you with an immediate, delicious answer!

**The Kinoya Yamatoni Canned Whale Meat features:**

- Made by Kinoya Ishinomaki Suisan
- 170g (5.9 oz)
- Baleen whale meat, sugar, starch, wheat, etc
- Expiration date: 3 years
- After opening, transfer the contents to a different container, store in refrigerator and consume quickly
- Made in Japan

Offer 3 (French selected)

**Kinoya Yamatoni Canned Whale Meat Set**  
Baleen whale in soy, ginger and sugar sauce  
Price: € 137

Quantité: 1

[Ajouter au panier](#)

Frais de port unique point à travers le monde exprimés: € 51  
Single item cost. Multiple order discount displayed at checkout.

We admit it, this is a bit controversial but haven't you ever been tempted to see what all the fuss is about? In times of hardship (like after WWII) the Japanese saw the whale as one of the few available foods rich in protein but low in fats and calories. They actually called it "marine beef". While everyday consumption has decreased, it is still considered one of Japan's classic tastes, and now it's available in a set of 12 cans.

**The Kinoya Yamatoni Canned Whale Meat Set features:**

- Set of 12
- Made by Kinoya Ishinomaki Suisan
- 170g (5.9 oz)
- Baleen whale meat, sugar, starch, wheat, etc
- Expiration date: 3 years
- After opening, transfer the contents to a different container, store in refrigerator and consume quickly
- Made in Japan

OTHER PRODUCTS YOU MIGHT LIKE