

Whaling ships set sail as Japan resumes commercial hunts

Notes & Cues:	<p>Article:</p> <p>Japan began its first commercial whale hunts in more than three decades on Monday, brushing aside outrage over its resumption of a practice that conservationists say is cruel and outdated.</p> <p>The hunts come after Japan decided to withdraw from the International Whaling Commission, a move slammed by activists and anti-whaling countries but welcomed by Japanese whaling communities.</p> <p>Whaling has long proved a rare diplomatic flashpoint for Tokyo, which says the practice is a Japanese tradition that should not be subject to international interference.</p> <p>With its withdrawal from the IWC, Tokyo will carry out whale hunting off Japan, but will end the most controversial hunts in the Antarctic.</p> <p>Some believe that Japan’s return to commercial whale hunting will effectively sound the death knell for the industry.</p> <p>”Japan is quitting high-seas whaling... that is a huge step towards the end of killing whales for their meat and other products, ” said Patrick Ramage, director of marine conservation at the International Fund for Animal Welfare. He said commercial whaling in Japanese waters was unlikely to have much of a future given dwindling subsidies and the shrinking market for whale meat.</p> <p>”What we are seeing is the beginning of the end of Japanese whaling.”</p>
Summary:	