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MEDIA RELEASE

19 November 2004

ANTARCTIC KRILL RESOURCE STABLE AT HIGH LEVEL

A paper published in *Nature* on 4 November 2004 reported that the density of Antarctic Krill has declined since the 1970s and that this decrease could interfere with the recovery of whale stocks. This paper was cited by some news articles with significant misquotations and misinterpretations and some of them emphasized that an 80 % decrease of Krill was occurred in the Antarctic Ocean. Such news articles could mislead the readers. For clarification I would like to point out the following:

1. The paper published in *Nature* states that the 80% decrease of Antarctic Krill resources was observed only in a specific area of the Scotia Sea, not in the whole Antarctic Ocean as suggested in the news article. The original paper also states that decrease of Antarctic Krill in the whole Scotia Sea is 38% from '70s.
2. The estimate of Krill biomass in Scotia Sea and Indian Ocean is available, but there is no accurate information on krill biomass in the whole Antarctic Ocean because no estimate has been conducted for other large areas of the Antarctic Ocean.
3. The trend of density of krill resources appears to indicate decline, but also shows sharp increases in each several years. Further, in a research survey on density of Krill resources conducted using acoustic survey (as part of Japan's Whale Research Program under Special Permit in the Antarctic, JARPA), no apparent increase or decrease trend in Krill density has been observed. Therefore, we considered that the **Antarctic Krill resource has kept stable at high level.**
4. Regarding whale resources, their abundance trend is different by species. For example, the number of blue whales decreased from 200 thousand in the past to 1,700 in the present. On the other hand, the Antarctic minke whale increased from 80 thousand to 760 thousand. Besides, increasing trends of abundance have been revealed for many whale resources including fin and humpback whales by JARPA.

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Long-term decline in the krill stock and increase in salps within the Southern Ocean, *Nature*, Volume 432, PP100-103, November 2004