



PRESS RELEASE

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AMAZON.COM PROFITS FROM SLAUGHTER OF WHALES Internet giant urged to clean house and ban all cetacean products

Internet marketplace giant Amazon.com is today called on to stop supporting commercial whaling by immediately and permanently banning the sale of all products from whales, dolphins and porpoises (collectively known as 'cetaceans').

Amazon.com's Unpalatable Profits, a new report by the **Environmental Investigation Agency**, launched in co-operation with **Humane Society International**, reveals that Amazon Japan, the wholly owned subsidiary of Amazon Inc., sells more than a hundred cetacean food products.

In December 2011, 147 whale products were found for sale on Amazon Japan. The listed products included fin, sei, minke and Bryde's whales, all protected by the International Whaling Commission's moratorium on commercial whaling and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, which forbids international trade. Despite this, several companies were selling endangered fin whale imported from Iceland.

Amazon Japan was also selling pilot whale and other unspecified products from the infamous Taiji drive hunts, highlighted in the Oscar-winning documentary *The Cove*.

EIA has released a hard-hitting 50-second [campaign film](http://vimeo.com/31427376) (<http://vimeo.com/31427376>) urging consumers to tell Amazon boss Jeff Bezos to stop selling whales.

"Amazon.com has a clear policy of banning trade in endangered and threatened species but is turning a blind eye to commercial trade in whale products from endangered and threatened whales on its Japanese website." said **Allan Thornton, president of the Environmental Investigation Agency**. "We are appealing to Jeff Bezos and Amazon to ensure that Amazon's ban includes all

trade in products from whales, dolphins and porpoises across all of Amazon's websites."

EIA investigators purchased eight whale products from Amazon Japan in 2011, including canned whale meat, whale jerky, whale bacon and whale stew. Analysis revealed six of them to have mercury levels exceeding the Japanese national limit for mercury in seafood of 0.4 parts per million and one had a staggering mercury level of 20ppm, which is 50 times the safe limit.

"Amazon says 'we're constantly looking for ways to further reduce our environmental impact' – banning these harmful products is an easy way for Amazon to show genuine commitment to this principle, while protecting its customers," said Thornton.

One-third of the 147 products were not listed with a species name, contrary to the requirements of Japan's labelling laws. Since many of these products originate from Taiji, where 10 times more dolphins are killed than whales, it is likely Amazon Japan is selling dolphin products mislabelled as 'whale'.

"The vast majority of Australians and nations around the globe oppose the commercial slaughter of whales," said **Alexia Wellbelove, Senior Program Manager of Humane Society International**. "Profiting from the killing of whales is a dirty business which no reputable company should be involved."

International condemnation of Japan's cetacean hunts, coupled with concerns about pollution and food safety, have already spurred Japan's leading supermarket chains to ban the sale of whale and dolphin products in thousands of stores. EIA and HSI call on Amazon to do the same.

Interviews are available on request: please contact:

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EDITORS' NOTES

1. The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA) is a US and UK -based Non Governmental Organisation that investigates and campaigns against activities that destroy the natural environment, forests, the global climate and endangered or threatened species. www.eia-global.org

2. Humane Society International and its partner organizations together constitute one of the world's largest animal protection organizations — backed by 11 million people. For nearly 20 years, HSI has been fighting for the protection of all animals through advocacy, education, and hands-on programs. Celebrating animals and confronting cruelty worldwide — www.hsi.org.au

3. Founded by Jeff Bezos in 1995, Amazon.com has its HQ in Seattle, USA, and has established subsidiary retail websites in the UK, Canada, China, Germany, Italy, Japan and Spain.

4. The report *Amazon.com's Unpalatable Profits* can be downloaded from <http://www.eia-international.org/amazon-coms-unpalatable-profits>