

Slaughtering the Goose that Lays the Golden Egg: Are Whaling and Whale-Watching Mutually Exclusive? author : James E.S. Higham and David Lusseau time : 2008-3-12 18:32:31

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Abstract: Tourism interests usually coexist in a delicate balance with other human interests (e.g. residential development and recreational interests) and activities (e.g. fishing, forestry and mining). Such interests and activities may be compatible or incompatible with tourism to varying degrees. Where incompatibility arises it must be carefully managed through compromise, spatial segregation or exclusivity. Conflicting interests between whale-watching and whaling is one topical such case. Events in recent years, such as the Icelandic government's decision to resume scientific whaling in 2003 have drawn considerable attention to this issue. This is a matter that received some attention at the meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in July 2006. In response to recent debate, this paper highlights the need for a better understanding of tourist views on issues of relevance to whale-watching, noting a number of increasingly topical questions that remain unanswered at present. In doing so it calls for empirical research into the values and views of tourists, actual and latent, on whaling and wider issues of animal welfare. Insights into precisely where tourists stand on issues relating to the whaling/whale-watching debate, and how that may bear upon demand for whale-watching in different national and regional contexts, has become a heightened priority in light of recent events.

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