

THE WHALER

A FILM BY
PHILIPPE BLANC

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In 2022 Iceland killed 160 Fin whales. The second largest animal in the world. Yet the IWC, the international whaling commission, considers it an endangered species and has therefore banned its hunting worldwide. A crew from Swiss television intercepted Icelandic whaling ships and documented the cruel methods of this hunting. An investigation that find out violations of international regulations, ghost ships and omertà behind a business exclusively aimed at Japan. The problematic nature of the controls is confirmed in an exclusive interview with the president of the IWC, who is also an official of the Federal Veterinary Office in Bern.





Illegal whaling in Iceland

In 2022, Iceland killed 160 Fin whales, the second largest animal in the world; an endangered species. In fact, the International Commission whaling commission has banned its capture worldwide. How is it then that the slaughter continues? A crew from Swiss television RSI went to Iceland, intercepted the whalers and documented their cruel hunting methods. The result is an investigation that highlights a system of omertà spread throughout the country, a silent complicity behind which there is a multi-million dollar business aimed exclusively at the Japanese market. Whaling is not a tradition for Iceland, as it is for Norway, for example. The meat of this cetacean is in fact practically all exported to Japan, purely for business. The small amount that remains on the island is distributed to three small restaurants that prepare dishes for tourists. A very strong contrast for a nation that focuses on ecological and nature tourism, where one of the sectors that generates the most income is whale watching.

Another controversial aspect also emerges from the investigation. The problematic nature of the controls is confirmed in an exclusive interview with the president of the IWC (International Whaling Commission), who is also an official of the Federal Veterinary Office in Bern. He himself confirms that from 2022 it will no longer be possible to market whale meat; not even for the three countries (Japan, Norway and Iceland) that have escaped the international moratorium through loopholes. And so the meat of the 160 Fin whales, weighing 70 tonnes each, will have to remain in a cold storage facility.



Credits

The whaler
a film by Philippe Blanc

dur: 55'

camera
Mauro Boscarato

sound
Guido Lombardo

editing
Andrea Levorato

original music
Michele Vassalli

color grading
Denise Liardet

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