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Universalism vs. Communitarism: The diffused line between wrong and right

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SARSON

ADEME

1. Examples of conflicts

Shark finning

- Tradition: food and believes
- 100 million sharks
- 60-90% population the last 15 years



Whale hunting

Coca plant crops



d and fur

- 1 million seals were hunted in 2013
- Mainly in Canada and Greenland
- 1987: Ban on commercial hunting of new born seals

2. Basic concepts

Universalism

“People place a high importance on laws, rules, values, and obligations. They try to **deal fairly** with people based on these rules, but **rules come before relationships.**” (The Seven Dimensions of Culture, 2018)

Communitarism

“No-one can really judge „right“ across the borders of her/his culturally formed judgement-frame: You can only **try to learn to understand** the inner structure of foreign cultures and by this come to agreements, based on **mutual understanding and acceptance.**” (Tettenborn, 2018)

3.The whale hunting case

- Since 4,000 years or before
- Norway, Japan, Inuits, Basque, UK
- 1611 UK started hunting in North American Colonies.
- Main species hunted: Bowhead Whales and Sperm Whales



Main Reasons

Ritual and tradition

- Part of Japan's history and culture
- Faroe Islands annual fishing

Economic

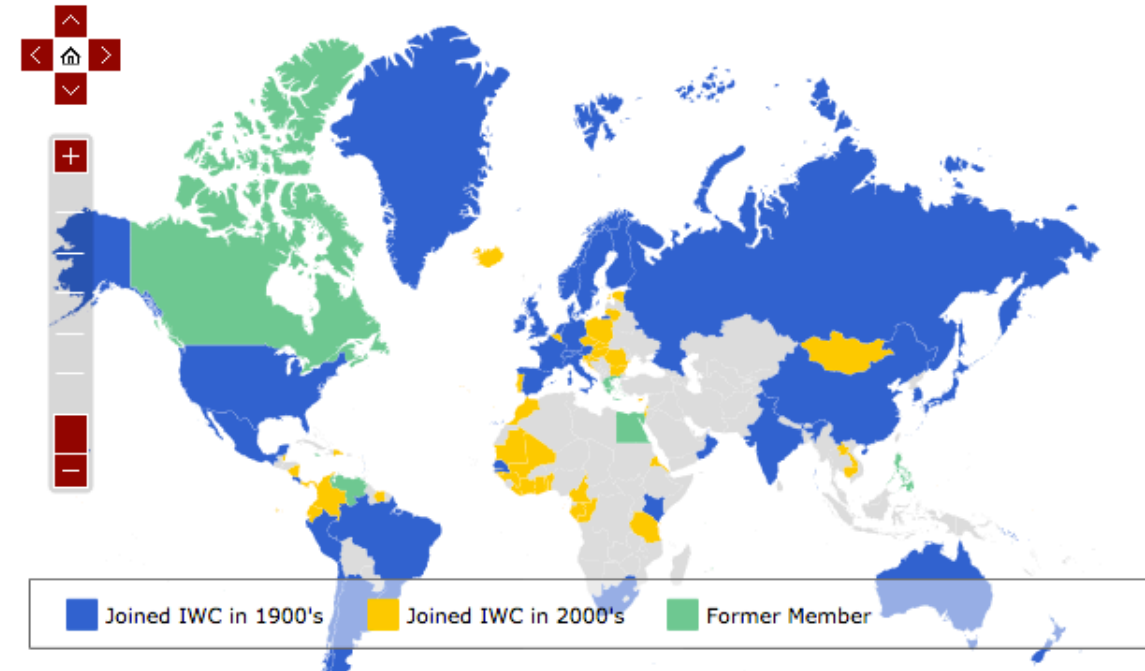
- Meat: main food, rich in niacin, iron and protein
- Fat: energy, vitamins A, C and D

3.The whale hunting case

International Whaling Commission (IWC)

today has 89 members

- 1973: Greenpeace started to work on whaling
- 1979 IWC: Whale Sanctuary in the Indian Ocean
- 1982 IWC: ban on commercial whaling
- 1986: whaling ban came into force



<https://iwc.int/members>

3.The whale hunting case

Japan



- “Scientific research”
- International Convention for Regulation of whaling allow annual hunting
- Beginning 2018: 122 pregnant minke whales were killed for “field survey”

Norway



- Respected the ban until 1993
- Found a gap in the rule
- Set its own annual quotas for minke whales killing

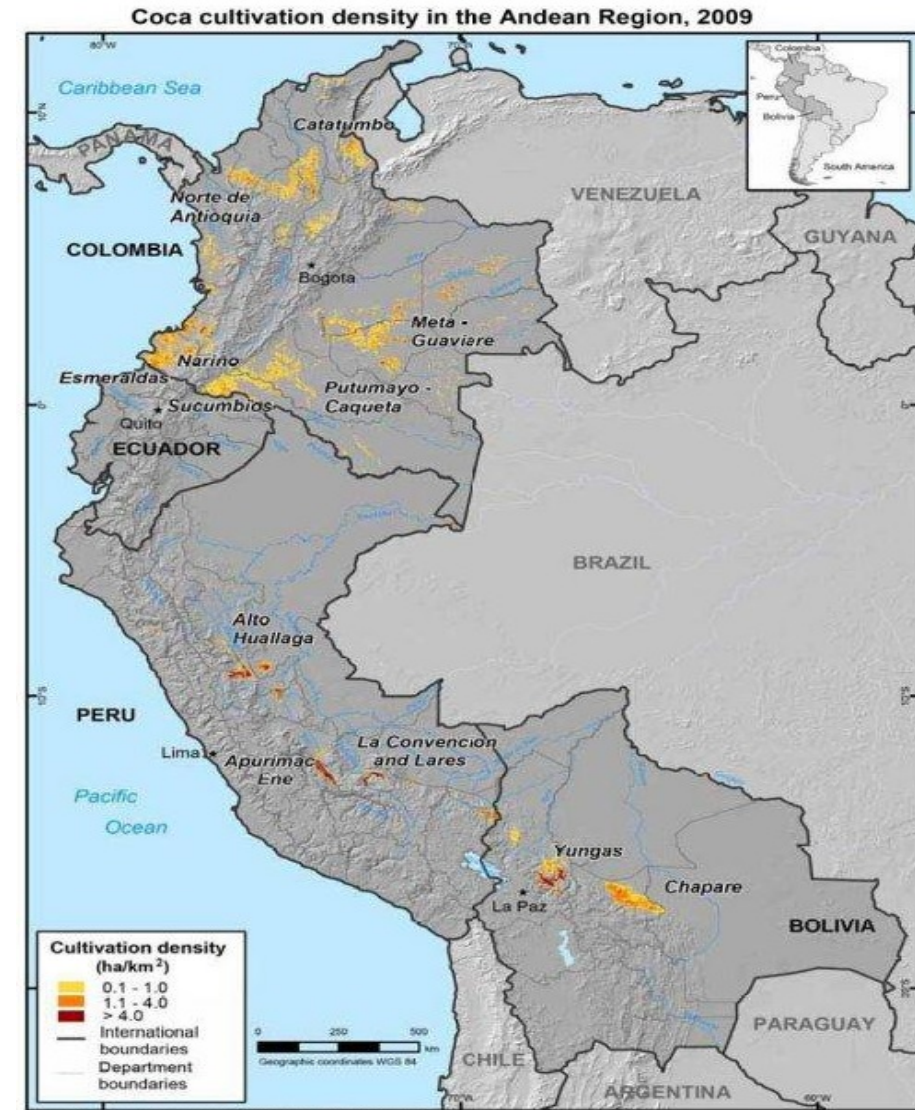
Iceland



- “Scientific reasons”
- 1992 resigned from IWC
- Back again in 2004, but still protested against the ban

4. Coca leaves use and consumption

- South American endemic plant
- Essential oils, mineral nutrients
- Compounds with pharmacological effects



Sources: National monitoring systems supported by UNODC - Governments of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations

4. Coca leaves use and consumption



- Traditionally used by indigenous people
- Medical purposes
- Source of energy



- Benefits in human health
- Commercial products (legal and illegal)



4. Coca leaves use and consumption

1961: 1961 UN convention classified coca leaves as controlled substance

1964: Complete eradication of chewing of coca leaf should be done by the year 1989

1988: An article declaring respect for native traditions was incorporated into the 1988 Convention within the historical context of strict provisions to fight the illicit use of drugs

1991: The 1991 Colombian Constitution, however, grants indigenous peoples the right to self-determination

2017: The government does not feel pressure on this issue from the international system, the situation remains in a kind of limbo

4. Coca leaves use and consumption



The Colombian state faces two mutually exclusive obligations: One to its international commitments and another to respect the rights of indigenous communities

17 countries out of 184 are still objecting against the bolivian amendment on UN agenda



5. Conclusions (reflection)

Whale hunting

Coca leaf crops

- Distinction between problematic, recreational, commercial and traditional uses must be considered
- Particular cases, particular solutions
- **Maybe: a link between communitarism and universalism concepts is the answer**



DON'T EAT US



Thank you...