

Antarctic is in crisis due to Krill bait consumption.

In the beginning of last month, international strategic meeting for krill protection in Antarctic Southern ocean was held in Washington DC. About 25 environmentalists and experts from 10 countries discussed how to protect krill which is in danger due to overfishing and global warming.

Krill is a core species in Antarctic food chain which means most of Antarctic species depend on Krill for their diet directly or indirectly. Scientists warn that 80% of krill has been disappeared so far. Global warming and overfishing are main threats to krill habitat.

Korea's krill fishing has been increased rapidly since 1990 first fishing and reached at 42,000 ton of krill the most in the world in 2006 fishing season. Last year Korea caught over 30,000 ton. It is surprising that in Korea 90% of krill is consumed for sports fishing bait. It is unacceptable situation to throw out the krill snatched away from Antarctic animals like seal and penguins. As lugworm used for bait disappeared for reclamation, krill caught in Antarctic the other side of globe is thrown away in seaside for sports fishing. This is the reality of Korean environmental and marine policies which is one of the leading deepsea fishing countries. Participants of the krill protection meeting agreed to develop various programs for each krill fishing countries as well as krill consuming countries awareness on this issue. Particularly international lobbying and pressure should be focused to adopt independent observers and other ecological management system like small scale management unit at this year CCAMLR meeting which is annual intergovernmental meetings for Antarctic southern ocean marine living resources.

Korea is categorized as a global fishing player traditionally. Korea has caught huge amount of fishes from all over the world but Korea has showed very narrow mind in terms of global environmental issues. Korea has cultivated some global leaders such as the current UN secretary general and the former WHO secretary general, so Korea has the position to show international leadership for the global civil society. Ocean protection issue like overfishing is one of the global common issues beyond any nation's interests like with climate change and Antarctic preservation. I do hope Korean government and Korean fishing industries will rebirth as the global nation leading the ocean defending. To do this, most Korean sports fishermen should not use the krill for their bait. There is no doubt sustainable fishing is worldwide mainstream for fishing

industries as well as individual consumers.

Recently a piece of news that a large part of Wilkinson ice shelf located West Antarctica nearby Antarctic peninsula collapsed was covered by all medias in the world. Ice shelf is glacier grown from the continent on the seawater. Scientists suspect global warming for the reason. They are embarrassed that the breakdown of the ice shelf happens far earlier than they expected. It must be a kind of signal of global scale crisis but it is worrisome if people become dumb at this kind of news repeated.

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