



# Media Release

**Senator the Hon Penny Wong**

**Minister for Climate Change & Water**

**Acting Minister for the Environment, Heritage & the Arts**

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11 January 2009

## **NO INTERNATIONAL LEGAL ACTION ON WHALING: ABBOTT**

Tony Abbott has today rebuffed his Shadow Environment Minister and back flipped on the Liberal Party's policy for international legal action on whaling.

This morning Mr Abbott told Radio 2GB that the Liberal Party did not support taking Japan to court over the issue of whaling.

ABBOTT: Look, as for taking Japan top the international court, this is Kevin Rudd's policy, not the Coalition's policy.

Mr Abbott has contradicted his environment spokesman, Mr Hunt, who in September last year told *The Age* newspaper that if Japan had not stopped whaling within a year of a Coalition government being elected, it would act internationally.

In fact Mr Hunt has repeatedly said the Liberal Party supported international legal action.

"There is now no question that Japan is in breach of its international legal obligations and there is, therefore, a duty for Australia to take action, send a ship, a non-military vessel to observe, collect, monitor, capture the incidents and take it forward through the international legal process."

AAP, December 29, 2009

"We think Australia should put together a coalition of nations to proceed legally against Japan under the International Law of the Sea."

Greg Hunt, *The Age*, August 4, 2009

"Stand up, stand up for Australian interests, stand up for the marine environment and protect the Antarctic and say to the rest of the world, we will lead a case against Japan in the international tribunal."

Greg Hunt, doorstep interview, August 26, 2009

This is the latest random policy thought bubble from the Opposition Leader who prefers to make it up as he goes along.

Either Mr Abbott or Mr Hunt is making up policy. The Liberal Party should be clear on whether Mr Abbott or Mr Hunt got it wrong.

The Government's position is clear: we are continuing to engage in diplomatic efforts on this issue, but we want to see real progress and unlike the Liberal Party, if we cannot resolve this matter diplomatically, we will take international legal action.

**Media Contact:** Laura Anderson (Senator Wong's Office): 0411 143 111

Ben Pratt (Minister Garrett's office ): 0419 968 734