

IWC Resolution 1999-1
Resolution arising from the Workshop on Whale Killing Methods

NOTING that the terms of reference for the 1999 IWC Workshop on Whale Killing Methods included the consideration of all methods of killing currently in use in whaling or known to be in development, and specified that a comparative analysis of the methods be undertaken with a view to improving whale killing techniques and minimising times to irreversible insensibility and death;

RECALLING IWC Resolution 1997-1 which urged aboriginal subsistence whalers to do everything possible to reduce still further any avoidable suffering caused to whales in such hunts;

RECOGNISING the efforts made by some countries to provide information on research and improvements in hunting methods;

WHEREAS the Workshop submitted its report, IWC/51/12, to the Commission for consideration;

Now THEREFORE the Commission

1. COMMENDS the Report of the Workshop and accepts the 11 point Action Plan (which appears as Appendix 1 of the Chairman's Report of the 51st Annual Meeting) as the basis for advice to members of the IWC.
2. ENCOURAGES where possible the submission to the annual meetings of the Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Associated Welfare Issues, and future Workshops of relevant information such as:
 - number of whales killed by each method;
 - number and proportion of total whales killed instantaneously;
 - time to death for each animal not killed instantly;
 - number of whales targeted and missed;
 - number of whales struck and lost;
 - calibre of rifle where used and how many bullets used;
 - methods used to determine unconsciousness/time of death.
3. ENCOURAGES the development of more accurate indicators for determining time to death other than cessation of movement.
4. RECOGNISES the difficulty in some aboriginal subsistence hunts of obtaining time to death information; and notes that, where it can be assessed, the lack of information regarding time to death on aboriginal subsistence hunts prohibits an assessment of any improvement in these hunts.
5. ENCOURAGES all Contracting Governments to provide appropriate technical assistance to reduce time to unconsciousness and death in all aboriginal subsistence whaling.

IWC Resolution 1999-2

Resolution on Special Permits for Scientific Research

WHEREAS Paragraph 1 of Article VIII of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (Convention) provides that, notwithstanding anything contained in the Convention, any Contracting Government may grant to any of its nationals a Special Permit (Special Permit) authorising that national to kill, take and treat whales for the purposes of scientific research, subject to such other conditions as the Contracting Government thinks fit; and

WHEREAS Paragraph 30 of the Schedule (Schedule) to the Convention provides that all proposed Special Permits be reviewed by the Scientific Committee; and

WHEREAS Paragraph 3 of Article VIII also requires that each Contracting Government shall transmit to such body as shall be designated by the Commission, insofar as is practicable and at intervals of not more than one year, scientific information available to that Government with respect to whales and whaling, including the results of research conducted pursuant to Paragraph 1 of Article VIII; and

WHEREAS the Scientific Committee receives and reviews information provided by Contracting Governments under Paragraph 3 of Article VIII and reports on this to the Commission.

NOW THEREFORE, the Commission:

REQUESTS the Scientific Committee, with respect to all Special Permit Research Programmes, to provide advice to the Commission, on the research to be undertaken pursuant to any proposed Special Permit or that has been undertaken in respect of any Special Permit, as to whether the information sought in the research programme under each Special Permit is:

- required for the purposes of management of the species or stock being researched; and
- whether the information sought could be obtained by non-lethal means.

IWC Resolution 1999-3
Resolution on whaling under Special Permit

NOTING that since IWC 50 in May 1998, the Government of Japan has issued new Special Permits under the provisions of Article VIII of the Convention for scientific research in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary and the North Pacific Ocean;

NOTING also that information provided to the Whale Killing Workshop in May 1999 indicates that only 30% of whales are killed instantaneously in the JARPA and JARPN programmes;

FURTHER NOTING that the review of ethical considerations with respect to scientific research, prepared by the Secretary of the IWC in 1999, concludes that “the broad sense of the legislation, guidelines and codes of conduct which exist emphasise causing the minimum of stress and distress, suffering and pain, and at the same time considering if the research results can be achieved using fewer animals or by other (non-lethal) means.”

RECALLING that grave concerns have been expressed by eminent members of the international scientific community and many others over the continuation of lethal whale research programmes, especially in areas designated as Sanctuaries in paragraph 7 of the Schedule;

NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION:

REQUESTS that the Government of Japan refrain from issuing any permits in the 1999/2000 seasons for the take of minke whales in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary and the North Pacific Ocean.

IWC Resolution 1999-4
Resolution on Health Effects from the Consumption of Cetaceans

NOTING that while the consumption of cetacean products may have positive health effects, scientific evidence demonstrates that some communities may be faced with health problems arising from the high levels of organic contaminants and heavy metals present in those products in their diet;

RECALLING that IWC Resolution 1998-11 expressed the Commission's concern about human health effects from the consumption of cetaceans, invited Contracting Governments to submit information to the IWC and asked the Secretariat to correspond with the WHO and other appropriate authorities;

NOTING that regulatory limits for contaminants in food are set by competent national and international authorities;

NOTING that the Scientific Committee is the appropriate body to review and provide to the competent authorities information relevant to the health of cetaceans relating to chemical contaminant burdens;

NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION

CALLS ON relevant countries to take measures to reduce pollution that may cause negative health effects from the consumption of cetacean products;

AGREES to keep under review, under the permanent Agenda Item on Environmental Concerns, all effects on Human Health from the consumption of cetacean products;

REQUESTS the Scientific Committee to receive, review and collate data on contaminant burdens in cetaceans and forward these as appropriate to the WHO and competent national authorities, and to report on this matter to the Commission;

ENCOURAGES Contracting Governments, other countries and relevant organisations to continue to forward relevant data concerning contaminants in cetaceans to the Scientific Committee;

INSTRUCTS the IWC Secretariat to send this Resolution to the WHO Secretariat.

IWC Resolution 1999-5

Resolution for the funding of High Priority Scientific Research

RECALLING the directives by the Commission to the Scientific Committee and its Standing Working Group on Environmental Concerns (SWGEC) to consider and act on all priority areas for assessing the impact of environmental change on cetaceans;

NOTING that, while it has identified a number of priority areas that need to be addressed in future years, the SWGEC has agreed to focus on one or two priority topics for consideration at each meeting in order to ensure maximum effectiveness of the working group;

NOTING that, at the 51st Annual Meeting, the SWGEC identified, and the Scientific Committee strongly endorsed, its research priorities as:

- (1) SOWER 2000, a collaborative, interdisciplinary, international survey programme in the Southern Ocean with CCAMLR and Southern Ocean GLOBEC; and
- (2) POLLUTION 2000+, an interdisciplinary programme of work to investigate pollutant cause-effect relationships in cetaceans;

RECOGNISING that, in order to research and provide recommendations to the Commission on these topics, as well as additional priorities, the Scientific Committee will need additional funds to allow it to initiate research programmes and to invite participants with relevant expertise in these priority areas; and

RECALLING that the Commission has agreed that the Scientific Committee should develop a co-operative research programme that will enable it to provide advice to the Commission on stock structure and abundance of fin and minke whales off West Greenland

NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION:

ENDORSES the SOWER 2000 and POLLUTION 2000+ research programmes recommended to it by the Scientific Committee;

DECIDES to provide £126,000 from its budget for 1999/2000 as core funding for research on environmental threats to cetaceans, of which £100,000 shall be withdrawn from the Commission reserves;

URGES Contracting Governments, other governments, international organisations and other bodies to contribute financially and in kind to these programmes;

DIRECTS the Chairman of the Scientific Committee to ensure that scientists with relevant expertise in the priority areas of the SWGEC are adequately represented in the list of Invited Participants to the Scientific Committee; and

AGREES to the feasibility study recommended by the Scientific Committee concerning research into fin and minke whales off West Greenland and, in the light of the results, to give due priority to research on these issues in 2000/2001 and subsequent years.

IWC Resolution 1999-6

Resolution on Cooperation between the IWC and Cites

WHEREAS it is the purpose of the International Whaling Commission to provide for the effective conservation and management of whale stocks;

WHEREAS the IWC is the universally recognised competent international organisation for the management of whale stocks;

ACKNOWLEDGING with satisfaction that all species of whales in the Schedule to the IWC have been listed in Appendix I of CITES (with the exception of the West Greenland stock of minke whales, which is listed in Appendix II by CITES) pursuant to and in recognition of the establishment of zero catch limits for commercial whaling agreed by the Contracting Governments to the IWC, and other decisions of the IWC relating to the status of great whale species;

WHEREAS by virtue of the inclusion of these species in CITES Appendix I and Resolution Conf. 2.9, CITES requires that Parties not issue any import or export permits for commercial trade in any whale stocks for which the IWC has set zero catch limits;

WELCOMING the recent decision by the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES to uphold CITES Resolution Conf. 2.9;

WELCOMING as well the recent decisions of the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (Decisions 10.40 - 10.43) that recognised the need for international co-operation in monitoring and controlling the illegal trade in whale meat;

RECOGNISING that the IWC has made progress toward completing the Revised Management Scheme, specifically by the endorsement of the Revised Management Procedure, by the revision of the requirements and guidelines for conducting surveys and analysing data within the Revised Management Scheme, and by the clarification of arrangements to ensure that total catches over time are within the limits that would be set under the Revised Management Scheme;

NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION:

RECOGNISES that the IWC management regime prior to the establishment of zero catch limits for commercial whaling led to the global demise of the whale stocks;

FURTHER RECOGNISES that the IWC has not completed the necessary measures to ensure that commercial whaling catch limits are not exceeded, that whale stocks can be adequately protected, and that all whaling by IWC member countries is brought under effective IWC monitoring and control;

RECOGNISES the important role of CITES in supporting the conservation of whale stocks and the IWC's management decisions, and reaffirming the importance of continued co-operation between CITES and IWC;

RECOGNISES as well the important role of CITES in detecting illegal trade in whale meat through inclusion of whale species in CITES Appendix I;

EXPRESSES its appreciation to the Conference of the Parties to CITES for its continuing reaffirmation of the relationship between CITES and the IWC;

DIRECTS the Secretariat, when the IWC is requested to provide comments on any proposal submitted by a CITES Party to transfer any whale species or stock from Appendix I to II, to advise the CITES Conference of the Parties that the IWC has not yet completed a revised management regime which ensures that future commercial whaling catch limits are not exceeded and whale stocks can be adequately protected;

FURTHER DIRECTS the Secretariat to advise the CITES Conference of the Parties that zero catch limits are still in force for species of whales which are managed by the International Whaling Commission.

INSTRUCTS the Secretariat to send a copy of this resolution to the CITES Secretariat.

IWC Resolution 1999-7
Resolution on Small Populations of Highly Endangered Whales

RECALLING THAT the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling recognises the interests of the nations of the world in safeguarding the great natural resources represented by the whale stocks;

NOTING THAT the following small populations, (numbering 500 or less), of great whales remain highly endangered from previous over-exploitation and some are threatened with extinction:

The Okhotsk Sea and Spitsbergen stocks of bowhead whales;

The Eastern Canadian Arctic (the Baffin Bay/Davis Strait and the Hudson Bay) stocks of bowhead whales;

The Western North Pacific stock of gray whales;

All four Northern stocks of right whales; and

Various blue whale stocks in both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres;

FURTHER NOTING that some of these small populations have been subjected in recent years to direct takes and anthropogenic sources of mortality, including by-catches and ship strikes;

NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION:

WELCOMES the initial agenda for the 2000 meeting of the Scientific Committee at which the status and trends of small populations of highly endangered great whales will be discussed and the summary findings reported to the Commission;

ENCOURAGES member and non-member governments to send appropriate representatives and documents to the next meeting of the Scientific Committee to facilitate this work;

CALLS UPON all governments whose nationals have in recent years taken whales from any of these populations of highly endangered whales to refrain from authorising any further takes until the Scientific Committee concludes that adequate scientific advice is available to demonstrate that such takes will not cause a continued threat to the survival or recovery of these populations;

REQUESTS that the Secretariat transmit the text of this Resolution to the Government of Canada.

IWC Resolution 1999-8 Resolution on DNA Testing

RECALLING that the Commission is developing a Revised Management Scheme that will require regular updates on relevant new methods and technologies for the inspection and monitoring of commercial whaling operations;

NOTING that one of the most promising of these technologies is DNA-based identification of market products and genetic typing of known catches;

THE COMMISSION NOW THEREFORE:

REQUESTS the Scientific Committee to establish an agenda item to provide annual reports on progress in the following areas:

- a) Genetic methods for species, stock and individual identification;
- b) Collection and archiving of tissue samples from catches and by-catch;
- c) Status of and conditions for access to reference databases of DNA sequences or microsatellite profiles derived from directed catches, by-catch, frozen stockpiles and products impounded or seized because of suspected infractions.

AND FURTHER REQUESTS the Scientific Committee to provide advice to the Commission on the development and implementation of a transparent and verifiable system of identification and tracking of products derived from whales taken under the RMP, and to provide a means to differentiate such products from those taken outside the RMP.

IWC Resolution 1999-9

Resolution on Dall's Porpoise

RECALLING that in 1990 the Commission requested the Japanese Government to urgently consider the advice from the Scientific Committee concerning the Dall's porpoise stocks exploited in the Japanese hand harpoon fishery, to reduce catches to pre-1986 levels, and to consider further reductions in take when new stock assessments became available;

NOTING that 8 years have elapsed since the Scientific Committee's last review in 1991, during which time:

- (i) over 115,000 Dall's porpoises have been taken in the fishery, with catches tending to increase in recent years;
- (ii) concerns have been raised in the Scientific Committee about the unpublished 1990 abundance estimate, on which the Government of Japan has based its domestic quota;
- (iii) the potential for significant bycatch has been identified;
- (iv) a more systematic approach to precaution, within the Scientific Committee and within other national and international bodies charged with the conservation of small cetaceans, has led to significant reductions in the rates of removals considered safely sustainable;

CONSIDERING that the Scientific Committee has in 1999 reiterated its concerns over the status of the exploited stocks;

NOTING that the Scientific Committee has offered advice to the Government of Japan on Dall's porpoise in the past, and that such advice has led to very positive responses from the Government;

NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION:

WELCOMES the plans of the Japanese Government to conduct abundance surveys, encourages further genetic studies, and looks forward to continued cooperation with, and exchange of information between, the Scientific Committee and the Government of Japan;

DIRECTS the Scientific Committee to review the status of the impacted stocks in the 53rd Annual Meeting;

ENCOURAGES the Government of Japan to make available the data identified by the Scientific Committee as relevant for such a review, in sufficient time to allow analysis before the 53rd Annual Meeting;

INVITES the Government of Japan meanwhile to reconsider the level of its domestic quota, in the light of the concerns identified above.