

Proposal to link IWC's website to those of Contracting Governments

During the F&A Committee meeting on 24 May 2007, Japan drew attention to a recommendation arising from the Conference on Normalizing the IWC, held under its auspices in Tokyo in February 2007, that the Secretariat might consider establishing links from the Commission's website (www.iwcoffice.org) to websites of Contracting Governments where governments express their views and positions on IWC matters. The aim would be to make the views and positions of Contracting Governments equally available to the public. Japan noted that it would like to go ahead with this recommendation.

The Secretariat noted that creating the links from IWC's web page to the web pages of Contracting Governments would not be difficult or time consuming. It noted however that it could not be responsible for the content or updating of other web sites.

The F&A Committee found Japan's proposal to be interesting and asked the Secretariat to develop a short paper for plenary that addressed the practical arrangements and implications, including cost, of establishing these links.

Secretariat response:

The Secretariat notes that amending the website and creating the links will not present any difficulties and will not be time-consuming. There will be no cost implications given that a member of staff already has responsibility for management and updating of the website.

We suggest establishing the links via the existing Member Government page on IWC's website. Links to the websites of Contracting Governments would be made via the Country name on that page.

With regard to the content of Government's websites, the current IWC disclaimer regarding links to external websites should be appropriate. This reads:

“External Links

This website includes links to external websites. These links are included to give you the opportunity to explore an issue in more depth and is in no way an endorsement of those sites. The International Whaling Commission is not responsible for the content of these Internet sites.”

Should the Commission agree to proceed with the proposal to establish links from its website to websites of Contracting Governments, it suggests that it requests appropriate URLs from Governments by Circular Communication.