

**Netherlands view on the future of the IWC**

**Submitted by the Netherlands**

Currently, the IWC finds itself at a crucial phase. From a scientific and technical perspective, the IWC has been a highly successful organisation. However, the discussion currently at the heart of the IWC is in essence a political one. Following upon the discussions during the RMS meeting in Cambridge, The Netherlands is convinced that there are three agenda items that dominate the debate in IWC: scientific whaling; the RMS; and compliance.

Until now, discussions on these subjects have been disappointing. Both camps within the IWC have not been willing to meet each other on any of these agenda items.

The Netherlands aims for a clear result to be the outcome of IWC58, taking into account the aims of the ICRW, including conservation and sustainable use (such as whale watching).

However, should IWC-58 again fails to produce such results, the Netherlands is of the opinion that a different approach is needed.

As a consequence, we feel very strongly about an intervention to be made by a higher level segment. A ministerial conference is probably the only way to break through the current deadlock situation. Such a conference should encompass the three core agenda items as mentioned above. Moreover, such a process could even contribute to the discussions on the 'normalisation' and 'modernisation' of the IWC. We would like to take this discussion as an opportunity to re-invent the RMS-process.

We would see the high level segment as an inclusive process, in which all contracting governments and stakeholders can participate.

The IWC deserves the prospect of achieving a result on all these subjects. It would contribute significantly to the credibility of the IWC as a well-functioning organisation.