

## Memorandum of Cooperation concerning Conservation Measures for the Western Gray Whale Population

**The authorities of Participant Range States, responsible for the whale conservation and management, hereinafter referred to as “Participants”,**

*Acknowledging* that the Western Gray Whale population (*Eschrichtius robustus*) has the critically endangered status on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species;

*Recognizing* that: (1) western North Pacific gray whales feed during summer and fall in the Okhotsk Sea off northeast Sakhalin Island, Russia, and some whales also feed off southeastern Kamchatka in the Bering Sea; (2) some gray whales observed feeding off Sakhalin and Kamchatka migrate during the winter to the west coast of North America in the eastern North Pacific, while others migrate to areas off Asia; and (3) despite the observed movements between the western and eastern North Pacific, genetic comparisons show significant mitochondrial and nuclear genetic differences between whales sampled in the eastern North Pacific and those sampled on the feeding ground off Sakhalin Island in the western North Pacific. Thus, the survival and recovery of the Western Gray Whale population is highly dependent on protection and conservation measures throughout its range;

*Expressing Concern* that Western Gray Whales face a number of both direct and indirect threats throughout their range;

*Underscoring* that concerted, co-ordinated action should be taken immediately to prevent the disappearance of the existing population;

*Acknowledging* their shared concern for the conservation of Western Gray Whales and managing human activities that affect their status and the desirability of involving all Participants in common initiatives;

*Desiring* to work together to improve the conservation status of the Western Gray Whale throughout its wintering, migration, and summering distribution.

To that end, in a spirit of mutual understanding and co-operation, the Participants intend to individually or collectively:

1. Provide for the conservation of the Western Gray Whale population and identify and conserve the habitats essential for its survival;
2. Subject to availability of resources, implement in their respective countries the terms of the Conservation Plan annexed to this Memorandum of Cooperation (“Memorandum”) as a basis for conserving the Western Gray Whale. The Conservation Plan aims to reduce incidental mortality, increase numbers and enhance international co-operation, and includes inter alia: terms for the identification of key sites and measures to protect the traditional wintering, migration and feeding areas of the Western Gray Whale; the preparation of national action plans; proposals for monitoring, research and practical measures for the recovery of the Western Gray Whale; and proposals for the establishment of a funding mechanism for these conservation measures. Implementation of the Memorandum, including the Conservation Plan, is to be evaluated at regular meetings attended by representatives of each of the Participants concerned and other interested persons or co-operating organizations qualified in the conservation, study or monitoring of whales. Such meetings are expected to be held in the margins of meetings of the International Whaling Commission (IWC).

3. Facilitate the exchange of scientific, technical and legal information needed to co-ordinate conservation measures; and co-operate with recognized experts of international organizations in order to facilitate their work conducted in relation to the Conservation Plan;
4. Cooperate with the Western Gray Whale Advisory Panel (WGWAP) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);
5. Name a national point of contact for other Participants and communicate without delay the name and contact details of this coordinator (and any changes thereto) to the Chair of IUCN WGWAP and Head of Science of the IWC;
6. Provide to the Chair of IUCN WGWAP and Head of Science of the IWC the information on implementation of this Memorandum by each of the Participants. The IUCN WGWAP has committed to transmit all of the reports received, together with an overview report which it is to compile on the basis of information at its disposal, to each Participant;
7. The working language for all matters related to this Memorandum is English.
8. Each Participant intends to finance its participation in implementation of the present Memorandum taking into account financial opportunities.
9. Cooperation among the Participants under the present Memorandum may commence from the first day of the first month following the date of the signing.
10. The Memorandum may be modified by mutual consent of the Participants.
11. The Memorandum is not legally-binding and does not create any rights and obligations under national or international law.
12. A participant may cease participating in the Memorandum at any time, but should endeavor to provide 30 days' advance written notice of its intent to the other Participants.

Signed at \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, 201\_\_.

For Canada

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

For Mexico

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

For Japan

Date: 17 Sep. 2014

Signature 

For People's Republic of China

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

For Republic of Korea

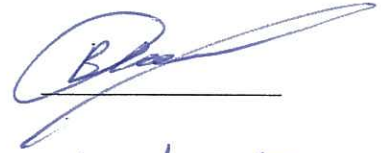
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

For The Russian Federation

Date: 9 September 2014

Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be a stylized name, written over a horizontal line.

For United States of America

Date: 9-17-2014

Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of several vertical strokes and a star-like shape, written over a horizontal line.