

Response of the Grupo Buenos Aires to the questionnaire regarding Japan's proposal on Small-Type Coastal Whaling

With regard to the letter dated 21st January 2015, submitted by the Government of Japan together with an attached list of questions, circulated to all IWC Commissioners and Contracting Governments, on Small-Type Coastal Whaling, the Governments of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, México, Panamá, Perú, the Dominican Republic and Uruguay, member States of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and members of the so - called Grupo Buenos Aires (GBA), would like to reaffirm its traditional commitment to the conservation of cetaceans and its engagement with a constructive and positive agenda for the IWC.

The GBA seizes this opportunity to reiterate the arguments that were put forth during the IWC65. In this regard, the GBA firmly supports the continued enforcement of the moratorium on commercial whaling, established by the IWC in 1982, and categorically opposes to the resuming of international trade in whale products.

In this context, the GBA cannot support Japan's Small-Type Coastal Whaling proposal since it considers – as stated during the IWC65 – that it would pose a threat to the IWC's commercial whaling moratorium currently in force. Accordingly, the GBA would like to recall that the IWC Scientific Committee has expressed its concern about the potential impacts on the depleted 'J stock', which is classified as a Protection Stock by the Commission.

The GBA hereby reiterates its previous statements on this subject and reaffirms its unchanged commitment to conservation, the non-lethal and non extractive use and research of cetaceans, the maintenance of the global commercial whaling moratorium in force since 1986, and the respect for the integrity of whale sanctuaries recognized by the IWC.

Finally, the GBA expresses its members' disposition to work with the Government of Japan – as well as with other IWC members – towards a mutual understanding on the next steps to be taken by the IWC, particularly in regards to a positive conservation agenda for cetaceans.