

Draft Resolution for the Implementation of a Conservation and Management Program for Whale Stocks aimed towards the lifting of the moratorium and the orderly Development of the Whaling Industry

Submitted by Antigua and Barbuda

RECOGNIZING that the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (hereinafter referred to as “the Convention”) was concluded “to provide for the proper conservation of whale stocks and thus make possible the orderly development of the whaling industry”;

ACKNOWLEDGING that most whale stocks were over exploited for many years and that through the implementation of careful conservation and management measures by the IWC whale stock populations have significantly increased.

FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING that the 1982 moratorium on whaling was established as a temporary measure that should have been reviewed within 10 years of its implementation.

RECOGNIZING that significant scientific progress has been made by the commission, leading to a better understanding of the nature and the abundance of whale stocks, and that most whale stocks are for being significantly increased since the moratorium.

NOTING that in 1994 the commission adopted a robust and risk-averse procedure for calculating quotas for abundant stocks of baleen whales (known as Revised Management Procedure (RMP)) and the findings by the Scientific Committee that stocks of some whale species are abundant;

RECALLING, that the IWC agreed that before the RMP is implemented and the moratorium is lifted an inspection and observation scheme must be in place to ensure that agreed catch limits are not exceeded;

FURTHER RECALLING the commission began negotiations towards the development of an inspection and observation scheme (Revised Management Scheme (RMS)).

REALIZING that the Commission made significant progress towards the development of an inspection and observation scheme (RMS), but reached an impasse in 2007 due to the failure to reach agreement on a combination of scientific and non-scientific facts that comprises the Revised Management Scheme (RMS).

BEARING IN MIND that any conservation and management measures for the harvesting of whale resources including catch limits for sustainable whaling, must be supported by inspection and observation strategies that are based on the best scientific evidence available;

NOTING that sustainable whaling contributes to livelihoods, food security and poverty reduction in coastal communities; and also cognizant of the commitment of IWC countries to the United Nations sustainable development goals, requiring the commitment of all countries to ensure that no communities are left behind.

ACKNOWLEDGE that it is in the best effort and common interest of all Contracting Governments that the Commission move towards a more balanced approach in consideration of its mandate of ensuring the proper and effective conservation of whale stocks and also the orderly development of whaling;
NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION,

1. WELCOMES the exchange of views among Contracting Governments, realizing that objective discussions can lead to meaningful solutions aimed at providing a proper conservation and management strategy for whale resources.
2. DECIDES to strengthen a process of collaboration among contracting governments to ensure that the commission improves its work in realizing the objectives of its Convention (ICRW).
3. DECIDES to establish a Special Working Group, to be chaired by the Chairman of the Commission, members of this working group will comprise representatives of the contracting governments.
4. DECIDES to entrust the Special Working Group with:
 - Reviewing the work of the Commission in an effort to make an assessment for the Commission to resume work on the implementation of the RMP and the development of a negotiating framework for reconvening negotiations for a monitoring control surveillance program that would give support to the RMP;
 - Make recommendations to the Commission on the basis of the results of above;
5. INSTRUCTS the Special Working Group to report the result of the review and recommendations in paragraph 4 above at the next Commission meeting in 2024.
6. REQUESTS the Scientific Committee to provide the Special Working Group with advice on the best scientific evidence available, in the performance of functions entrusted in this Resolution, on any scientific issues contributing to sustainable whaling irrespective of types of whaling.