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CIRCULAR COMMUNICATION TO COMMISSIONERS
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**Statement by the Chair of the Commission on
progress made at the meeting of the Support Group in Santiago, Chile**

You will recall that at IWC/61 in Madeira, as part of the 'Consensus resolution on the extension of the Small Working Group (SWG) on the Future of IWC until the 62nd Annual Meeting of the Commission', it was agreed to appoint a Support Group to assist the Chair in providing direction in the process and to assist in the preparation of material for submission to the SWG.

The Support Group meeting in Santiago, Chile has just drawn to a close. Please find attached a statement by the Chair of the Commission, prepared for the media, regarding progress made at the meeting. Translations into French and Spanish will follow shortly. The Statement is available on IWC's website at

<http://www.iwcoffice.org/documents/commission/future/PressReleaseOct09.pdf>

You will note that the Support Group did not complete its discussions and plans to meet again before the end of the year. For this reason, the meeting of the SWG, initially scheduled to take place in Florida from 8-10 December, has been postponed to March next year. Further information on this will follow but I wanted to provide the statement to you straight away. I will also be in touch regarding the intersessional meeting of the Commission.

Dr. Nicky Grandy
Secretary to the Commission

Statement by the Chair of the International Whaling Commission, Cristian Maquieira, on the future of the IWC

16 October 2009

Progress made at Santiago meeting

The Support Group to the Chair of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), which is charged with recommending reforms for the future of the IWC, held a positive and constructive meeting in Santiago, Chile. The eleven-day meeting ended today. The group comprises 12 of the 88 IWC member countries, which represents a broad cross section of the membership.

“We have not completed the discussions on possible reforms that would assist the Small Working Group of the Commission,” said Cristian Maquieira, the Chair of IWC, “but we hope to do so after one further meeting of the Support Group.”

The group in Santiago discussed in depth a number of topics including a shared vision for the future of the IWC that focuses the work of the Commission on improved whale conservation and management.

Maquieira said the Support Group will convene again before the end of the year and the product of that meeting will be discussed in the Small Working Group now set for March of next year. This schedule, Maquieira believes, will give ample time for governments and the public to review and discuss the matter prior to the next annual meeting of the IWC to be held in Agadir, Morocco in June 2010.

“I am confident that a solid platform is being built that may produce a viable proposal for consideration by the Small Working Group,” said Maquieira.

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