

IWC/63/OS Rev Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic,
Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay

International Whaling Commission
63 Annual Meeting
ST. HELIER, JERSEY, UNITED KINGDOM, 11-14 JULY 2011

**Opening Statement of the Members of the Buenos Aires Group
attending the 63 IWC Meeting (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica,
Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Uruguay)**

We would like to express our appreciation to the authorities and the people of Jersey for hosting the 63 Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission.

The Buenos Aires Group ratifies its firm commitment with:

- 1) The conservation of whales,
- 2) The permanent maintenance of the moratorium to commercial whaling, established in 1982,
- 3) The end of the scientific whaling and the “under objection” whaling, , as well as any other form of commercial whaling,
- 4) The encouragement and support of the non-lethal use of cetaceans,
- 5) The respect to the integrity of the whales Sanctuaries recognized by the IWC and the creation and implementation of the South Atlantic Whales Sanctuary.
- 6) The firm opposition to international trade of whale meat and its by-products.
- 7) The strengthening of the consideration of conservation issues under the regular work of the Commission, including environmental issues as climate change, disentanglement, habitat degradation, ship strike, marine debris, emergent diseases, chemical and acoustic pollution and other threats.
- 8) The strengthening in the working of the IWC of the responsible whale watching. The Buenos Aires Group acknowledges and support the work carried out by the Scientific and Conservation Committees and request the inclusion of invited participants at the IWC Whale Watching Subcommittee,
- 9) The work carried out by the IWC on whale welfare and ethic, supporting in this way the recommendations from the workshop held in March 2011 in the United Kingdom,
- 10) The creation of effective mechanisms to promote and facilitate the participation of developing countries in the work of the IWC,
- 11) The implementation of mechanisms of technical cooperation among IWC Members such as it currently happens with topics as disentanglement, emergent diseases, etc.
- 12) The review of the Scientific Committee’s composition to provide a better and more balanced geographical representation.
- 13) To promote the active and constructive participation of the Civil Society in the IWC taking as an example the experience of other international fora. We consider such experiences as important contributions to the debate in the IWC. Therefore we support the adoption of amendments of the Rules of Procedures with this purpose,

- 14) To promote a better governance in the IWC in accordance with other modern international fora,
- 15) To have a biannual IWC Plenary Meeting and continue with the current scheme of annual meeting for the Scientific and Conservation Committees,
- 16) To continue working with all IWC Parties in favor of the conservation of whales to arrive at an adequate formula to face the challenges before the IWC today.

In the framework of the Latin American Cooperation Strategy for the Conservation of Cetaceans, adopted by the Buenos Aires Group in 2007, the Group reiterates its commitment with the regional cooperation for research and non-lethal uses of cetaceans.

The GBA is looking for a constructive and positive agenda for the IWC. In this way, as the road map to the creation of a climate of trust and confidence within the organization, we propose to look for common issues to all Member Countries and work step by step to gain positive results in the short to medium terms with a view to maintaining healthy populations of whales and as a functional elements of the ecosystem. This is a common goal to all members.

We also would like to express our support for the active and constructive participation of all observers (IGO, NGOs) in the Commission debates orally and by writing and also our support to improve the effectiveness and transparency within our organization. The GBA considers that IWC should adopt amendments to the rules of procedure with these purposes.

Regarding the state of contributions, the GBA welcomed the amendment adopted by the 62 IWC to the Financial Regulations. However this amendment does not provide a solution to many Latin American countries with budgetary cycles in coincidence with the calendar year. In this regard, the Buenos Aires Group proposes another amendment to allow the right to vote to those Parties that have paid their contributions corresponding to the previous calendar year.

The Buenos Aires Group congratulates and welcomes Colombia for its adherence to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling,

Finally, the Buenos Aires Group would like to support strongly the proposal of Panama to host the 64 IWC meeting in 2012.