

1977 Special Meeting
(Rep. Int. Whal. Comm 29)

Resolution on Bering Sea Bowhead Whales

WHEREAS it is the purpose of the International Whaling Commission to provide for the effective conservation and management of whale stocks,

WHEREAS at its 29th Annual Meeting, held in Canberra, Australia in June 1977, the Commission, acting upon the advice of its Scientific Committee, agreed on the establishment of a total moratorium on the hunting of bowhead whales,

WHEREAS the Commission has recognized that these stocks are seriously depleted, and that information is at present inadequate to provide any satisfactory guide to management of this population with a non-zero quota,

WHEREAS the Commission has reviewed its June 1977 decision as regards the Bering Sea bowhead stock, taking into account representations made concerning aboriginal subsistence and cultural needs, the degree of risk inherent in related proposals, and the management and research program prepared by the USA,

WHEREAS the Commission has concluded that a harvest, limited to the striking of 18 whales or the landing of 12, should be permitted from this stock for 1978, and has noted that, pursuant to undertakings by the Governments of Canada and the USSR, this harvest will be taken exclusively by persons under the jurisdiction of the Government of the United States,

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED by the International Whaling Commission

(a) that the commission calls upon the Government of the United States to take all necessary measures to minimize adverse effects upon the Bering Sea stock resulting from the aboriginal hunt, through controls on hunting techniques and equipment, size limits, seasons, and the kill or striking calves, and females accompanied by calves,

(b) that the Commission welcomes the undertaking of the Government of the United States to implement management and research programs of the comprehensiveness of those tabled at the meeting of the Scientific Committee held in Australia in November of 1977, and to establish surveillance and enforcement measures for the 1978 hunt adequate to ensure that the number of whales struck does not exceed the limit established by the Commission,

(c) that the status of the Bering Sea bowhead whale stock be reviewed at the Commission's 30th Annual Meeting in June, 1978 in the light of information resulting from the proposed research program, with a view to establishing regulations, based on the advice of the Scientific Committee, which should include comment on risks associated with different levels of removals from the stock,

(d) that all necessary measures be taken to ensure that the reduction in the take of bowhead whales does not affect the take of beluga whales to any significant degree,

(e) that all necessary measures be taken to preserve the habitat of bowhead and beluga whales.