

Appendix 11

RESOLUTION ON THE DIRECTED TAKES OF WHITE WHALES AND NARWHALS

WHEREAS on several occasions since the 34th Annual Meeting, the Scientific Committee has expressed its concern about the status of some white whale stocks;

WHEREAS at the 43rd Annual Meeting, the Scientific Committee requested in its report (IWC/43/4) more accurate and complete information about total removals for all areas where white whales and narwhals are hunted and expressed its continuing concern about some white whale stocks in eastern Canada that are harvested at rates above their estimated yield levels;

WHEREAS also in that report, the Scientific Committee pointed out that assessments of the impact of directed catches on stocks of narwhals and white whales are limited by sparse information on stock sizes in general and by little or no information on catches in some areas;

WHEREAS this year the Scientific Committee reviewed new information on white whales and narwhals and expressed continuing concern about the estimated kill levels in the eastern Canadian and western Greenlandic hunts of both white whales and narwhals and recommended that both countries improve the quality and completeness of their catch and reporting schemes (IWC/44/4);

WHEREAS the Scientific Committee shared the concern expressed by the Canada-Greenland Joint Commission on the Conservation and Management of Narwhal and Beluga that the available data suggest that the present harvest of the Baffin Bay stocks of white whales and narwhals (stocks exploited by both countries) is not sustainable;

WHEREAS in 1991 the Scientific Committee recommended that the USA obtain more accurate estimates of stock size of white whales in Alaskan waters;

WHEREAS the Commission is aware of the differences in views among member states on the regulatory competence of the IWC with regard to small cetaceans, and noting that this resolution does not seek in any way to prejudice different members' positions;

Now, THEREFORE the Commission

INVITES all states having white whale or narwhal populations in their waters, in cooperation with Inuit organisations, to continue to work individually and through such organisations as the Canada-Greenland Joint Commission, and with other white whale and narwhal range states to conduct research on white whales and narwhals concerning stock identity, life history data, hunting methods and ecology, and that such information be supplied to the Scientific Committee as available;

RECOMMENDS that all states having white whale or narwhal populations in their waters, in consultation with Inuit organisations, continue efforts to document information on total removals and to determine stock size and other information that is necessary for the proper management of these species;

INVITES the USA to submit results of planned surveys in Norton Sound, Bristol Bay and Cook Inlet to the Scientific Committee as they become available; and

REQUESTS that the Secretariat transmit the text of this resolution to the Government of Canada, requesting their cooperation with the IWC regarding conservation of white whales and narwhals and development of scientific information related to these stocks.