

**45th Annual Meeting, 1993**  
**(Rep. int. Whal. Commn 44)**

**IWC Resolution 1993-12**  
**Resolution on Research on the Environment and Whale Stocks**

RECALLING that at its 31st Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted a Resolution on the Preservation of the Habitat of Whales and the Marine Environment which resolved that member governments of the IWC should take every possible measure to ensure that the degradation of the marine environment resulting in damage to whale populations and subsequent harm to affected peoples does not occur;

RECALLING that at its 32nd Annual Meeting, the Commission noted the serious threat to whale stocks caused by increasing levels of heavy metals, PCBs and other organochlorides in cetaceans and called upon members of the Commission to provide relevant data to the Scientific Committee;

RECALLING that at its 32nd Annual Meeting, the Commission set zero catch limits for the killing for commercial purposes of whales from all stocks for the 1986 coastal and 1985/86 pelagic seasons and thereafter subject to review based on the best scientific advice;

CONCERNED that since 1982, scientific evidence has emerged regarding detrimental changes in the marine environment which may threaten whale stocks;

RECALLING that at its 37th Annual Meeting the Scientific Committee noted that there was a need for studies to assess the effects of pollutants on cetaceans;

RECALLING that at its 44th Annual Meeting the Commission adopted a resolution on the need for research on the environment and whale stocks which established a regular agenda item in the Scientific Committee to address the impact of environmental changes upon whale stocks;

RECALLING that at its 44th Annual Meeting, the Commission adopted a resolution which recognised the importance of the precautionary principle, endorsed by UNCED (Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21, Chapter 17) and numerous other international agreements, in the face of inadequate scientific data and of the need to improve our understanding of the effects of global environmental change on marine ecosystems;

NOTING that at its 45th Annual Meeting the Scientific Committee agreed that the impact of environmental changes on whale stocks is relevant to the long term management and conservation of whales in all areas;

NOTING further that the Scientific Committee draws to the attention of the Commission that addressing the impact of such change on whale stocks will require expertise not presently found within the Scientific Committee and that governments may wish to take this into account when deciding on their nominations to the Committee;

NOTING that the Scientific Committee's Report of the 45th Annual Meeting of the Commission identified the relevant areas for study, including climate change and pollution, and recognised the need for a mechanism for data collection and analyses;

**THE COMMISSION DECIDES**

1. that the Scientific Committee should give priority to research on the effects of environmental changes on cetaceans in order to provide the best scientific advice for the Commission to determine appropriate response strategies to these new challenges;
2. that to this end a special workshop be convened under the auspices of the Commission before the 47th Annual Meeting;

3. to accept the recommendation in the Scientific Committee's report to its 45th Annual Meeting that the Secretariat contact other relevant international organisations to obtain information for presentation to the Scientific Committee and the special workshop;
4. that Contracting Governments provide available relevant information to the Scientific Committee and contribute to the workshop;
5. that the Scientific Committee and Contracting Governments consider inviting participants to the 46th Meeting of the IWC with expertise in addressing the impact of such environmental changes and the impact of such changes on cetaceans.