

**48th Annual Meeting, 1996**  
**(Rep. int. Whal. Commn 47)**

**IWC Resolution 1996-8**  
**Resolution on Environmental Change and Cetaceans**

NOTING that in 1993 the Commission stated that the Scientific Committee "should give priority to research on the effects of climate change on cetaceans in order to provide the best scientific advice for the Commission to determine appropriate response strategies to these new challenges";

NOTING that the Scientific Committee in 1994 identified priority areas that needed to be addressed in this context;

NOTING that the IWC has sponsored two special workshops, one on the effects of chemical pollution on cetaceans and the second on the effects of climate change on cetaceans;

AWARE that the Workshop on Chemical Pollution and Cetaceans concluded that there are sufficient data on the adverse effects of pollutants on the health of other marine mammals and terrestrial species to warrant concern for cetaceans;

AWARE also that the Workshop on Climate Change and Cetaceans concluded that the available evidence on the effects of such change is sufficient to warrant some general concerns for cetaceans;

NOTING also that the Scientific Committee endorsed the recommendations of the two special workshops and that both workshops strongly recommended that the Commission and the Scientific Committee consider ways to facilitate the development and execution of research within the context of a multidisciplinary, multilateral focused programme;

NOTING the precautionary principle enunciated in the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio;

NOTING that assessment of the effects of climate change on cetaceans cannot be achieved by the IWC alone, and that it will require the development and fostering of a range of co-operative and collaborative approaches;

NOTING that the Scientific Committee has recommended a series of actions to facilitate the development of collaborative research, including the formation of joint CCAMLR-IWC and GLOBEC-IWC working groups and establishment of improved collaboration with SCAR, IPCC, the AEPS and a range of other programmes and organisations and the inclusion of cetacean research components as appropriate in other research programmes;

NOTING the general objectives set out by the Scientific Committee and the approaches identified in the context of evaluation of climate change on cetaceans and the two broad approaches that it has identified;

NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION:

WELCOMES AND ENDORSES the establishment by the Scientific Committee of its Standing Working Group to facilitate examination of the effects of environmental change on cetaceans;

ENDORSES the objectives and research avenues identified by the Scientific Committee in this context;

REQUESTS the Scientific Committee to increase collaboration and co-operation with governmental, regional and other international organisations working on related issues, including CCAMLR, SCAR, GLOBEC, IPCC, IOC, and appropriate Arctic programmes.

ENDORSES the recommendation of the Scientific Committee that the Standing Working Group consult intersessionally, including if appropriate, through an intersessional meeting of the Standing Working Group;

DIRECTS the Scientific Committee, through its Standing Working Group, to consider and, as appropriate act on the specific recommendations of the two IWC Workshops and the other items identified as requiring additional examination, including: the impact of noise; anthropogenic environmental degradation; and the direct and indirect effect of fisheries; in order to develop non-lethal research programmes that will allow assessment of the impact of environmental change on cetaceans.