

RESOLUTION 2024-2

RESOLUTION ON SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE IWC, THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND THE KUNMING-MONTREAL GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK ADOPTED THEREUNDER, AND THE AGREEMENT UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION

RECOGNISING that Decision 15/13 of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on Cooperation with other conventions and international organisations encourages the strengthening of cooperation and synergies among relevant conventions and multilateral agreements by, as appropriate and in line with their respective mandates, legal authority and responsibilities, establishing or renewing cooperation frameworks, as needed;

ACKNOWLEDGING the prominent role of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) as the international authority on conservation and management of whales contributing to a significant improvement in the conservation status of whales and other cetaceans; also

ACKNOWLEDGING the critical role that the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) provides to support the conservation and management of migratory cetaceans and their habitats, alongside the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) which protects cetaceans from over-exploitation through international trade;

UNDERLINING the importance of collaboration between the IWC and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements and international organisations and processes, in line with their respective mandates, including at the global, regional, subregional and national levels, in order to realise synergies in their work and, among others, strengthen the global regime for cetacean conservation;

RECOGNISING that the IWC Conservation Committee will be undertaking an effort to align its next Strategic Plan for the 2027-2036 period with the identified international agreements in this resolution;

NOTING the important role of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions, which facilitates coordination, cooperation, and collaboration among the eight global biodiversity-related conventions, joined by the IWC in 2016.

NOW THEREFORE, THE COMMISSION:

WELCOMES the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), adopted by the Parties to the CBD at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-15);

ACCEPTS the invitation of the CBD COP-15 in Decision 15/13 which invites the governing bodies of biodiversity-related conventions to contribute to the implementation and monitoring of the KMGBF;

NOTES the outcomes of the 2024 Bern III Conference on Cooperation among the Biodiversity related Conventions for the efficient and effective implementation of the KMGBF;

WELCOMES the adoption of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction in 2023 (commonly referred to as BBNJ); encourages rapid ratification by states to ensure its entry into force; and expresses readiness to contribute to its implementation, as appropriate, particularly in the establishment of area-based management tools, including marine protected areas, the conduct of environmental impact assessments, and relevant capacity building;

NOTES with concern the release of the State of the World's Migratory Species report in February 2024 by CMS, and the conclusion that the extinction risk is growing for migratory species globally, including those not listed under CMS, and that the two greatest threats to all migratory species are over-exploitation and habitat loss due to human activity;

CALLS for further strengthening of the synergies, as appropriate and in line with their respective mandates, between the IWC and other multilateral environmental agreements and international organisations at the global level, particularly in the areas of capacity building, scientific research, monitoring, reporting, communication and mobilising financing, aspects of which may be described in the next Strategic Plan (for the 2026-2037 period) of the IWC's Conservation Committee;

REQUESTS the IWC Secretariat to collaborate with the CBD Secretariat and the interim and future BBNJ Secretariats to strengthen cooperation, as appropriate and in line with their respective mandates;

ENCOURAGES Contracting Governments that are also Parties to the CBD to integrate IWC cetacean conservation and management objectives and priorities into their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs);

REQUESTS the IWC Secretariat to closely collaborate with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat and GEF-accredited entities to explore opportunities to gain access to GEF funding for GEF-eligible projects relevant to the IWC's operations concerning the Goals and Targets of the KMGBF, such as species-based and region-based Conservation Management Plans;

ENCOURAGES Contracting Governments to assist the IWC Secretariat in these tasks by sharing expertise and experiences.