

PRESS RELEASE - DAY 2 - 12 JULY 2011

The Commission agreed to a new experimental procedure relating to the participation of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in its Plenary sessions. At this meeting, the NGO total speaking time of up to 30 minutes will be split over three mutually agreed items; two NGOs, one from the sustainable use side and one from the conservation side will be allowed to speak on each item. The Commission will review its procedures with respect to NGO participation next year in the light of experience this year.

The first order of business concerned the question of safety at sea. The Commission has on several occasions (examples: [Resolution 2006-2](#) and [Resolution 2007-2](#)) strongly condemned dangerous activity in the Southern Ocean. This year, the Commission was disturbed to receive reports of an escalation of such behaviour. Progress on attempts to deal with this problem, which potentially can endanger human life, property and the ecosystem were discussed and the Agenda Item was left open to allow the possibility of developing a further resolution.

The next order of business related to the [report of the Finance and Administration Committee](#) which had a particularly busy agenda this year.

For a number of years, the Commission has been considering the merits of separating the meetings of the Scientific Committee and the Commission, to allow Commissioners more time to reflect upon that lengthy report and determine how best to act upon it. This year, the Commission endorsed this separation in principle, noting that some details remain to be worked upon. Upon a related matter, the Commission has also been discussing the move to biennial meetings of the Commission. It endorsed the [report of a working group on meeting frequency](#) whose task was to propose actions that would enable the Commission to move to biennial meetings after the 2012 Annual Meeting.

The Commission welcomed news that its website is being rebuilt to improve design and functionality both for the Commission and for the public. The new site will be completed before the next Annual Meeting.

There was considerable discussion of new and revised Rules of Procedure on a number of matters in the report of the Finance and Administration Committee. After some lengthy procedural discussions, it was agreed that further discussion of these will occur on the morning of Day 3, in the context of a draft Resolution on improving the effectiveness of operations within the IWC. Tomorrow, the Commission will also discuss issues arising from the difficulties some delegations experienced in obtaining visas in the context of the [Secretary's report](#).