

## PRESS RELEASE - DAY 4 – 14 JULY 2011

The meeting opened with continued discussion of the **safety at sea** issue that began on Day 3. [The Commission agreed by consensus a Resolution](#). The Resolution inter alia reiterated that the Commission condemns any actions that are a risk to human life and property and that this is not the way to pursue the resolution of different view regarding whales and whaling. It also recognises the importance of the International Maritime Organisation with respect to safety at sea; and encourages all governments to fulfil their obligations under IMO and UNCLOS.

The Commission then moved to a discussion of Sanctuaries. The primary issue was a proposal sponsored by Brazil and Argentina for the [creation of a South Atlantic Sanctuary](#). This has been a particularly contentious item within the Commission for several years. To establish a Sanctuary requires an amendment to the Schedule to the Convention and requires a three-quarters majority of those voting 'yes' or 'no'. It became clear during discussions that consensus on the sanctuary was not possible. After a proposal to take this to vote and the subsequent withdrawal of a number pro-sustainable use member governments from the room, the Chair called a Private Commissioners' meeting, inter alia to try to resolve a serious procedural issue with respect to a quorum.

The [outcome of those discussions can be found here](#). The agenda item has been left open until the 2012 Annual Meeting. While recognising the diversity of views on this issue, the Commission recognises the importance of a South Atlantic Sanctuary to many member governments. The Commission has resolved to continue to discuss the item as the first substantive agenda item at IWC64. If consensus cannot be reached then a decision will be taken in accord with the Commission's Rules of procedure.

Given the time taken to conclude the above item, the Commission was left with very limited time to review its remaining sub-group reports including those of the [Conservation Committee](#), [Infractions Sub-Committee](#) and those items of the [Scientific Committee not yet discussed](#). It endorsed those reports but agreed deferred full discussion of them until next year. The election of a Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission will be undertaken by postal ballot.

The Commission was pleased to accept an invitation by the Government of Panama to host the 64th meeting of the Commission in Panama City from 11 June to 6 July 2012.