

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF DENMARK

To IWC Commissioners and
Contracting Governments

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Department
NEA

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Greenland aboriginal subsistence whaling

Dear Commissioners,

At the 64th meeting in Panama on 2 - 6 July 2012 the International Whaling Commission was not able to take a decision for the aboriginal subsistence whaling in Greenland.

Since the close of the meeting the government of the Kingdom of Denmark has carefully reviewed and considered possible solutions and ways forward in consultation with the Government of Greenland.

In the absence of an IWC decision Greenland is left with no catch limits set by the IWC for the year 2013 and beyond. The Government of Greenland has under those circumstances decided to unilaterally implement on a temporary basis the proposal on catch limits put forward by the Kingdom of Denmark at the 64th meeting. This decision was taken in order to ensure uninterrupted whaling in Greenland to meet the needs of the population and to avoid unregulated whaling. The proposal was consistent with the advice of the Scientific Committee at the time of submission as not harming the stocks. The Government of Greenland has informed that it will continue to follow the advice of the Scientific Committee in this regard.

The government of the Kingdom of Denmark is fully committed to the Convention on the Regulation of Whaling signed in Washington on 2nd December 1946 as adhered to on 23 May 1950. The government of the Kingdom of Denmark fully acknowledges the competences of the International Whaling Commission under the mandate of the said convention.

The government of the Kingdom of Denmark finds the present situation inconsistent with the obligations of the Kingdom of Denmark under the Convention. We hope for dialogue and consultation with IWC partners on a proposal for a solution. Should a solution not be found consistent with the convention, the Kingdom of Denmark intends to submit notification on withdrawal from the Convention on the Regulation of Whaling before 1 January 2014 to be effective by 30 June 2014.

The government of the Kingdom of Denmark strongly supports international cooperation on the conservation and management of whales and has a profound understanding and support for the significant historic and present importance of whaling in Greenland.

Yours sincerely,



Gitte Hundahl

IWC Commissioner of the Kingdom of Denmark