

Statement of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, the European Union and its Member States, Mexico, New Zealand, Panama, Peru and Uruguay calling for Japan to end lethal research in the Southern Ocean

The aforementioned signatories jointly express their opposition to Japan's continued so-called 'scientific' whaling in the Southern Ocean. We remain resolutely opposed to commercial whaling, in particular in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary established by the International Whaling Commission.

Japan has not sufficiently demonstrated that it has given due regard to the guidance found in the International Court of Justice judgment delivered on 31 March 2014 on ensuring that lethal research is consistent with the obligations under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling.

Resolution 2014-5, adopted at the 65th meeting of the International Whaling Commission, and as recalled in Resolution 2016-2, requested that proponents not issue further permits for existing or new special permit research until the Commission had the opportunity to consider the Scientific Committee's review of special permit programs and make recommendations as it sees fit.

At the International Whaling Commission meeting in 2016, we joined the majority of member governments present in noting that Japan had issued special permits for its Southern Ocean whaling program, 'NEWREP-A', before the Commission's review processes were complete. Based on the material before the Commission, we assessed that NEWREP-A was not 'for purposes of scientific research' as required by Article VIII, paragraph 1 of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling. We requested that Japan cease the lethal component of NEWREP-A.

Japan's decision to return to the Southern Ocean this year is contrary to the Commission's requests.

We remain firmly committed to the global moratorium on commercial whaling which has been in place for over thirty years.

The aforementioned signatories are committed to improving the conservation status of whales worldwide, maintaining the Commission's global moratorium on commercial whaling, and implementing meaningful reform of the Commission.