

Abidjan le 22 mai 2018

Re : Invitation to Discussions on WayForward of the IWC

Dear IWC Members,

Côte d'Ivoire received the IWC Circular Communication IWC.CCG.1295: here is its point of view.

(Côte d'Ivoire'sView)

#### **A- THE ICW AND ITS NOBLE PROJECTS WHEN IT WAS CREATED**

The International Whaling Commission is an intergovernmental organization whose purpose is the conservation of whales and the management of whaling. The legal framework of the IWC is the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling. This convention was established in 1946, making it one of the first international environmental legislation.

In otherwords, the IWC is created to manage the hunt for large cetacean species in accordance with the provisions of the Convention (ICRW). Having seen this noble goal, the Ivory Coast joined in 2004

#### **B- WHAT THE IWC BECOMES TODAY**

During the first period of its existence, the IWC represented a kind of forum, where hunter countries negotiated among themselves to set a catch quota for large whales for the production of oil. But the following years saw the emergence of anti-whaling movements. These movements have spread very rapidly throughout the Western Hemisphere and since the 1980s, many organizations opposing whaling have been created to strengthen these movements and put pressure on the governments of the major hunters. And as consequence, the IWC has evolved into a body aimed only at banning whaling.

This development occurred following the adoption of a moratorium on commercial whaling, ostensibly based on the pretext that here is, likely, some scientific uncertainty about the status of cetacean stocks

#### **C – A WAY FORWARD FOR COTE D'IVOIRE**

The IWC against whaling was initially a forum for hunters to set catch limits. Its creation therefore intended to conserve cetaceans, but first of all, to stabilize of whale oil's prices on the market. As the excessive capture of these mammals in a period of time would lower the prices of whales oil, these hunter countries have formed a cartel

And yet the ICRW has in these few lines of its preamble:

- Recognizing the interests of the nations of the world in safeguarding for future generations the great natural resource represented by whale stocks,
- considering that the history of whaling has seen overfishing from one area to another, from one cetacean species to another, to such a degree that it is essential to protect all whale species against further exploitation,
- recognizing that whale stocks are likely to increase naturally **if whaling is properly regulated**, that the growth in whale stocks will allow the numerical increase of whales that could be caught without endangering these resources

This preamble clearly states "**if whaling is properly regulated**"; In other words, if whale stocks are well managed, then good management involves good scientific studies with non-lethal methods, which can be lethal if the results we aim at are considered inevitable (see Article 8 of the Convention)

Ivory Coast, a contracting country of the CBI, would like to propose, among others, these three ways to follow:

- Make efforts to make the sessions of the Commission transparent as it was at its 53rd meeting in London in 2001 where TV cameras were allowed in the conference room and daily debates were been broadcast to the world via the Internet. This allowed viewers around the world to see first-hand how the discussions were going. This act made clear that some countries, wrongly accused, were in full compliance with the terms of the Convention (ICRW) and scientific evidences.
- Make the vote by secret ballot: Cote d'Ivoire suggests that the introduction of this new voting system will make less aggressive these many environmental NGOs who do not hesitate to harass some countries
- The annual fee, which will facilitate IWC membership for developing countries, needs to be reduced; this system of assessment, proposed a twenty years ago by a country in the Caribbean Sea, was modeled on that of the United Nations; according to this system, the amount of the contribution depends on the GNP of each country. If this system is adopted within the IWC, developing countries, countries reluctant to join because of the relatively heavy care, can easily access it .

Best regards

Zoumana MEITE Anlyou

Côte d'Ivoire's Commissioner for IWC

