

**DRAFT RESOLUTION  
THE FLORIANÓPOLIS DECLARATION ON THE  
ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION IN THE  
CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF WHALES IN THE 21st CENTURY**

Submitted by Brazil

**WHEREAS** the International Whaling Commission has been widely recognized as the main international body directly charged with the conservation and management of whales;

**RECOGNIZING** that the evolution of whale research methods, management alternatives and the sustainable use of whale resources, as well as that of international law since the adoption of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW) in 1946 has led to the mandate of the Commission to evolve through the adoption of more than a hundred conservation-oriented resolutions, as well as through various Schedule amendments to include, *inter alia*, the management of non-lethal appropriation of whale resources, as well as the maintenance of healthy cetacean populations to fulfill the vital ecological and carbon cycling roles these animals play in the global marine ecosystem functioning;

**ACKNOWLEDGING** that there are diverging views among member States of the Commission regarding how this mandate should be adequately implemented, in a manner that would satisfy the broadest interest of all humankind in the conservation of whales and their habitats, while allowing for limited, sustainable and legally admissible catches of whales for communities which are proven to depend on whaling for subsistence;

**RECALLING Resolution 2007-3 on the non-lethal use of cetaceans** and **FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGING** that the sustainable, non-lethal and non-extractive use of whales provides significant socio-economic benefits for coastal communities around the world, particularly in developing countries, and generate a rapidly growing activity deserving of recognition and full protection from this Commission and other relevant international treaties, including from any initiatives that might impair its fruition or otherwise threaten the livelihoods of coastal communities which depend on it for their socio-economic and cultural well-being;

**REAFFIRMING** that the moratorium on commercial whaling which has been in effect since 1986 has contributed to the recovery of some cetacean populations essential to the promotion of non-lethal uses in many countries;

**AWARE** of the cumulative effects of multiple emerging threats to cetaceans' population such as entanglement in fishing gears, noise pollution, ship strikes, marine debris and climate change;

**NOTING** that, while Whale Sanctuaries have been repeatedly proposed by member States under Article V of the ICRW to cover areas where no whaling activities have been in place for decades and where non-lethal activities have provided relevant scientific results, jobs and income for coastal communities, no action has been taken by the Commission due to the opposition of a minority of member States;

**FURTHER NOTING Resolution 2014-4 on the Scientific Committee and conclusions of the IWC Governance Review Report** which recognized that the IWC Scientific Committee, while recently addressing a wider range of issues in line with the best available whale science, continues to devote an inordinate amount of time and resources to the issue of whaling, while leaving other pressing issues to receive marginal attention and funding by said Committee;

**CONSCIOUS** of the views and rights of member States of the Commission which advocate for the continuation of whaling, but nevertheless **CONVINCED** that minority views must not prevent the Commission from taking decisions to fulfil its role as expected by the international community, towards safeguarding the common heritage represented by whales species and populations and protect coastal communities which depend on healthy whale populations for their well-being;

**NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION:**

**AGREES** that the mandate of the International Whaling Commission in the 21st Century includes *inter alia* its responsibility to ensure the recovery and the maintenance of whale species and populations at or closest to their pre-industrial exploitation levels, in order to fulfill their ecological and nutrient cycling roles on the world's oceans and to provide maximum benefit from non-lethal uses to coastal communities, particularly in developing countries;

**AFFIRMS** that commercial whaling, while admitted under the 1946 Convention, is no longer a necessary economic activity, has systematically reduced whale populations to dangerously low levels and should not be resumed as a management alternative endorsed by the Commission; that "scientific whaling", although a sovereign right of member States under Article VIII of the ICRW, is no longer a valid alternative to answer scientific questions given the existence of abundant contemporary non-lethal research methods; and that aboriginal whaling for the benefit of traditional communities should be adequately managed and closely monitored to ensure the conservation of whales and the fulfilment of traditional subsistence needs without affecting non-lethal uses by other communities;

**ACKNOWLEDGES** the need to seek balance in the expenditure of the Commission, and especially the Conservation Committee and Scientific Committee's budgets and their resources in order to reflect the interests of the widest possible number of its member States, including the need to adequately fund conservation and non-lethal management issues, and accordingly **DIRECTS** the Secretariat, the Conservation Committee Chair, the Scientific Committee Chair and the Scientific Committee sub-group convenors to propose more balanced budgets and work schedules for consideration by the Finance and Administration Sub-committee and the Commission at its next Plenary meeting;

**RECOGNIZES** the South Atlantic Ocean as an area of special interest for the non-lethal use of whales, in particular scientific research and whale watching; **TAKES NOTE** of the Resolution on the Conservation and Management of Whales and their Habitats in the South Atlantic Region (UNEP/CMS/Resolution 12.17) adopted by the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals at its 12th Conference of the Parties in 2017; and **ENCOURAGES** Range States of the South Atlantic to cooperate in its implementation as appropriate;

**DIRECTS** the Secretariat to seek further cooperation with other relevant international agreements, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals and the World Tourism Organization to coordinate actions for the proper management and conservation of whales and the promotion of their sustainable non-lethal use; and

**REQUESTS** the Secretariat to forward this Declaration to the United Nations' Secretary-General, the UN Environment Programme, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant international agreements with which the Commission maintains regular communication and cooperation.