



OceanCare
Oberdorfstrasse 16, CH-8820
Wädenswil
Phone: +41 (0) 44 780 66 88
info@oceancare.org
www.oceancare.org



IWC/63/OS-OC&PW
Pro Wildlife
Kidlerstrasse 2, D-81371
Munich
Phone: +49 / 89 / 81299 507
mail@prowildlife.de
www.prowildlife.de

Opening Statement to the 63rd Annual Meeting of the IWC

OceanCare and Pro Wildlife would like to thank the Government of the United Kingdom for hosting the 63rd IWC conference at such a pleasant and beautiful location. We also congratulate the United Kingdom for its initiative to discuss a comprehensive **reform of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling**. Such a reform, especially with a view on transparency, participation of the civil society i.e. in providing speaking rights to NGO's, and the early availability of relevant documents (e.g. Annual report, Report of the Scientific Committee, prompt communication of decisions) is overdue and a good practice yet in most other international fora.

We hope that after last year's commotion regarding the **credibility and integrity of delegates** the IWC now find ways to ensure that each member state pays its own bills as it is explicitly demanded in Art. III 5 of the Convention ("The expenses of each member of the Commission and of his experts and advisers shall be determined and paid by his own Government.").

OceanCare and Pro Wildlife welcome the proposal by Argentina and Brazil to establish a **sanctuary in the South Atlantic**. However, we urge the delegations not to offer any weakening of the moratorium, e.g. an agreement of quota for coastal whaling in exchange for the sanctuary.

We are very much concerned about the absence of data on **killing methods** from Iceland and Norway. Before 2003, the IWC community was told by Norway that international observers would lack space on the whaling vessels, but that national inspectors would sufficiently control and document the whaling process. In 2003, those national inspectors were replaced by the Blue Box – a computer based system, which is able to collect technical data (e.g. time between harpooning and landing, weight of whale body), but not e.g. on the location of the strike, the sex and eventual pregnancy of individuals. From 2011 on neither an external supervision nor a technical control is intended to be used – but just reports on paper and by phone, making independent controls almost impossible. In 2003, Iceland resumed whaling, starting with minke whales and since 2006 the much larger fin whales. However, Iceland in violation of IWC Resolution 1999-1 so far denied to present any data on killing methods and time-to-death. We are also concerned about the long time-to-death in some Aboriginal Whaling operations (reaching up to two hours) and urge the accordant Governments to optimize the hunting techniques to prevent high ratios of struck-and-lost as well as long suffering of wounded whales.



OceanCare
Oberdorfstrasse 16, CH-8820
Wädenswil
Phone: +41 (0) 44 780 66 88
info@oceancare.org
www.oceancare.org



IWC/63/OS-OC&PW
Pro Wildlife
Kidlerstrasse 2, D-81371
Munich
Phone: +49 / 89 / 81299 507
mail@prowildlife.de
www.prowildlife.de

OceanCare and Pro Wildlife are pleased to notice Doc IWC/63/9, which reports the beginning of a dialogue between the IWC and the World Health Organization (WHO), as has been requested by many IWC delegates. We encourage the IWC Secretariat, the Scientific Committee and Member States to provide scientific data on the **contamination of whale and dolphin products with toxic substances and related health risks for consumers**. We recommend that such data are submitted to the WHO on a regular basis and both bodies should together develop measures to protect consumers of cetacean products, e.g. by public awareness campaigns or by placing a health warning on the product.

According to media reports **Iceland's** exports of fin whale meat in 2010 reached a total volume of 764 tons. These exports are in violation to international agreements. Media reported that traders and consumers in Japan found fault with the quality of Icelandic fin whale meat. This may be the reason, why this year's hunting season of fin whales in Iceland was postponed sine die. OceanCare and Pro Wildlife call on Iceland to halt its whaling, especially with Iceland's accession negotiations with the EU, where any commercial whaling is prohibited.

Finally, OceanCare and Pro Wildlife encourage the IWC Parties to intensify the discussions on hunting of **small cetaceans**. For example, despite a warning of the Health Authorities of the Faroe Islands to consume any products from pilot whales, in 2010 the hunting season was one of the worst since many years. The Government of Denmark has a special responsibility with being bound to the highest possible protection status of small cetaceans within the EU and representing the Faroe Islands in international conventions. We also wish to recall the enormous cruelty of the dolphin hunts in Japan, documented in the Oscar-awarded film "The Cove". The IWC Parties should admit to their responsibility for ALL whales, including small cetaceans. Size doesn't matter!