

Resolution 2007-3

RESOLUTION ON THE NON-LETHAL USE OF CETACEANS

RECALLING the objective of the 1946 International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling to safeguard the natural resources represented by whale stocks for the benefit of future generations;

NOTING that many coastal States, including developing countries, have adopted policies of non-lethal use of cetaceans in the waters under their jurisdiction, in accordance with their sovereign rights reinforced by, *inter alia*, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the Rio Declaration;

AWARE that most whale species are highly migratory and thus shared biodiversity resources;

CONCERNED that negotiations aimed at resolving the impasses at the International Whaling Commission must address the issue of non-lethal use to take into account the interests of a substantial portion of IWC membership;

NOTING that, under domestic management by coastal States, non-lethal utilization of whales is a rapidly growing activity that provides substantial socio-economic opportunities, including promoting employment in coastal communities, especially in developing countries;

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

CONCERNED that whales in the 21st Century face a wider range of threats than those envisaged when the ICRW was concluded in 1946;

NOTING that the Buenos Aires Declaration states that “high quality and well managed implementation of whale watching tourism promotes economic growth and social and cultural development of local communities, bringing educational and scientific benefits, whilst contributing to the protection of cetacean populations”;

NOW THEREFORE THE COMMISSION:

RECOGNISES the valuable benefits that can be derived from the non-lethal uses of cetaceans as a resource, both in terms of socio-economic and scientific development;

RECOGNISES non-lethal use as a legitimate management strategy;

ENCOURAGES member States to work constructively towards the incorporation of the needs of non-lethal users of whale resources in any future decisions and agreements.