

## 19.63 Commercial Whaling

RECALLING the commitment of IUCN - The World Conservation Union, to the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, as stated in Recommendation 18.34 of the 18th Session of the General Assembly;

RECALLING the concerns expressed by previous sessions of the General Assembly regarding the lack of respect by some governments for international regulatory measures intended to ensure the proper conservation of whale stocks, including—in the International Whaling Commission (IWC)—by the use of objections and special permits and—in CITES—by reservations to listing of whale species in Appendix I;

RECOGNIZING IUCN's long-standing support for a worldwide moratorium on commercial whaling, as expressed in the World Conservation Strategy (1980) and General Assembly Recommendations in particular 17.46 (1988) and 18.34 (1990);

EMPHASIZING that nothing in Agenda 21 restricts the right of a State, or competent international organization, to prohibit, limit or regulate the use of marine mammals more strictly than is required for sustainable use, within areas under its jurisdiction or control;

AWARE that since the 18th Session of the General Assembly the Scientific Committee of the IWC has recommended a proposed Revised Management Procedure as the main scientific element of the Revised Management Scheme, which is also to include a system of observation, inspection and other safeguards;

FURTHER AWARE that the IWC at its 45th Annual Meeting in Kyoto, Japan, in May 1993, did not adopt the Procedure or any other elements of the Revised Management Scheme, and in consequence has not yet adopted a scientifically rigorous procedure for regulating commercial whaling;

FURTHER AWARE that the elements of the Revised Management Scheme, including a fully effective inspection and observation scheme for commercial whaling, have not been agreed and that other elements, such as continued protection of depleted stocks already protected under the IWC's previous management rules, as agreed in the Resolution on the Revised Management Procedure of the 43rd Annual Meeting of the IWC (1991), should additionally be considered;

CONSIDERING also that, until the Revised Management Procedure and the other essential elements of the Revised Management Scheme have been adopted and incorporated into the IWC Schedule, the existing moratorium on the commercial killing of whales should be maintained and observed by all States;

COMMENDING the IWC for its decision taken at its 44th Annual Meeting to renew the Indian Ocean whale sanctuary for an unlimited period;

BEING COGNIZANT that there are ethical doubts

about the commercial killing of cetaceans, which are shared by many members of IUCN, and that current methods for killing cetaceans cannot be considered humane;

ALSO CONCERNED by the potential risks to cetaceans resulting from oceanic environmental degradation, for example the effects of chronic pollution, and global climate change;

OBSERVING that these risks have not yet been adequately addressed by the IWC, but that at its 45th Annual Meeting, the IWC agreed to convene a special workshop prior to its 47th Annual Meeting in 1995, regarding research on the effects of environmental changes on cetaceans, in order to provide the best scientific advice for the Commission to determine appropriate response strategies;

The General Assembly of IUCN - The World Conservation Union, at its 19th Session in Buenos Aires, Argentina, 17-26 January 1994:

1. REAFFIRMS its view that the IWC remains the appropriate global authority for the management of whales, and notes that Agenda 21 (Paragraphs 17.61(a), 17.89(a) and 17.75) recognizes the IWC as the responsible organization for the conservation and management of whale stocks and the regulation of whaling pursuant to the 1946 International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, and calls on all States, including both members and non-members of the IWC, to abide by its regulations;
2. CALLS UPON all States and the IWC to maintain the current moratorium on the commercial killing of whales at least until the Revised Management Scheme, including the Revised Management Procedure has been adopted and incorporated into the IWC Schedule;
3. URGES IUCN and all IWC member States to participate actively in the IWC's planned workshop in 1994/95 on research regarding the effects of the environmental change on cetaceans;
4. CALLS UPON the relevant IWC member governments to remove their objections to IWC decisions;
5. URGES relevant IWC member governments to refrain from any further commercial whaling activities under objections to IWC decisions;
6. FURTHER CALLS UPON the relevant IWC member governments to terminate those aspects of their present programmes of research that involve the killing of whales;
7. EXPRESSES its appreciation to the Government of Brazil for the withdrawal of its reservations to the CITES Appendix 1 listing of whale species and urges other relevant CITES member governments to withdraw their reservations to the listing of these species;
8. REQUESTS the Director General to convey this Recommendation and associated explanatory documents to the Secretary General of the United Nations, to the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and to the Secretary of the IWC and all member governments of the IWC.

*Note. This Recommendation was adopted by consensus after each paragraph in the draft text was adopted by a show of hands. Proposals for three other preambular paragraphs and an alternative paragraph to Operative Paragraph 2 were rejected by shows of hands. The delegation of the State member Norway stated that though they accepted some parts of the Recommendation, they strongly opposed it as a whole. They considered that it contained incorrect information and was not scientifically based. The delegation of the State member Denmark indicated that had there been a vote, the delegation would have abstained, although they could support some parts of the Recommendation. A written statement on this issue was supplied by the European Bureau for Conservation and Development. The State member United Kingdom provided a written statement on the UK's policy on commercial whaling, which is published in the Proceedings of the General Assembly.*

