

FIRST SANTIAGO DECLARATION BY THE LATIN AMERICAN NON GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS FOR WHALE CONSERVATION

Santiago de Chile, October 18, 2007

The Non Government Organizations of Latin America, gathered in Santiago de Chile between the 15th and 18th of October, 2007, with a view towards the 60th annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission, to be held in this same city in June of 2008, convinced of the importance of whale conservation and the social, cultural, environmental, educational and economic benefits of the non lethal use of their populations worldwide, and determined to make our region and the Southern Hemisphere free of whaling, declare the following:

1. We firmly support the work and proposals of the bloc of Latin American countries named the Buenos Aires Group, and we urge them to:
 - a. Promote the Latin American agreement for the conservation and non lethal use of cetaceans.
 - b. Adopt measures favoring the creation of a Whale Sanctuary in Latin America.
 - c. Initiate and follow up on the necessary diplomatic procedures for the inclusion within the International Whaling Commission of Colombia, El Salvador, Honduras, Venezuela and the Dominican Republic.
 - d. Promote, as a central part of the International Whaling Commission's modernization process, a resolution to finally achieve its openness to real and effective participation of the civil society, as it is already taking place in all the other intergovernmental organizations.

2. We call on the countries in the Latin American region to continue to promote:
 - a. the development of a responsible and high quality whale watching tourism industry in Latin America that will benefit its coastal communities.
 - b. the creation of a Whale Sanctuary in the South Atlantic.

FIRMAN:

ARGENTINA
 Instituto de Conservación
 de Ballenas
 Fundación Cethus
 Greenpeace Internacional

BRASIL
 Projeto Baleia Franca
 Projeto Golfinho Rotador

CHILE
 Centro Conservación Cetacea
 Centro Ecoceanos
 Greenpeace Chile

COLOMBIA
 Fundación Omacha

COSTA RICA
 Fundación Promar

GUATEMALA
 Asociación de Biología Marina

MEXICO
 IFAW Latinoamérica
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 Org. para la Conservación
 de Cetáceos

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3. We call on the island countries of the Caribbean that support whaling to reconsider their position, taking into consideration the even more promising benefits of the non lethal use of cetaceans, as the International Whaling Commission itself has recognized in its resolution 2007-3.
4. We encourage the Government of Belize to heed the call of its civil society to fully join with the group of Latin American countries, considering that the non lethal use of whales is congruent with its aspiration to become a world class ecotourism destination.
5. We congratulate the Governments of Costa Rica, Ecuador and Uruguay for their active reincorporation into the International Whaling Commission, and the Government of Guatemala for joining this agency.
6. We call upon those countries illegally practicing so called “scientific whaling” to strictly adhere to the stipulations of article VIII of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling and article 64 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.
7. We urge the organizations of Latin American civil society committed to the conservation and non lethal use of cetaceans to participate actively in the International Whaling Commission, especially during its 60th annual meeting.
8. We urge the Government of Chile, as host nation of the 60th annual meeting and a member of the Buenos Aires Group, to assume a leadership role in favor of the conservation and non lethal use of cetaceans, as well as offer the necessary spaces to facilitate a broad public participation during the meeting.
9. We urge the Government of Chile to permanently ensure that its jurisdictional waters remain free from any form of cetacean hunting operations.

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