

Brussels, 26 September 2014 (OR. en)

13596/14

**ENV 783 PECHE 442** 

#### **NOTE**

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	65 <sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) (Portorož, Slovenia, 15-18 September 2014)
	- Compilation of statements

Delegations will find in the <u>Annex</u> the written Opening Statement submitted on behalf of the EU and its Member States, as well as the statements delivered by the Presidency on behalf of the EU Member States Party to the International Whaling Commission (IWC) at the 65<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of IWC (Portorož, Slovenia, 15-18 September 2014).

13596/14 KZV/nv 1 DG E 1A **EN** 

#### 65<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF THE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION - Statements delivered by the Presidency -

#### Opening stattement by Italy on behalf of the EU and its Member States

At this meeting, Italy, currently holding the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, will be speaking on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. In this context, we note that Greenland and the Faeroe Islands are Danish Overseas Territories but not European Union Territories. Should divergences arise between the interests of the European Union and those of the afore-mentioned territories, Denmark may need to intervene on their behalf to pursue the latter's interests.

We wish to express our gratitude to the Republic of Slovenia, for its generosity and hospitality in hosting this meeting, as well as the SC meeting in May this year, and for the very warm welcome we have all received from the local authorities of Piran and the people of Portorož and Piran.

The EU and its Member States are strongly committed to the protection of whales and acknowledge that an effective conservation and management regime can only be created through joint efforts and by initiatives that promote mutual trust and cooperation between all International Whaling Commission parties. We therefore welcome the enormous amount of work undertaken through joint efforts and initiatives to further these objectives since IWC64. Despite going through difficult waters, we are confident that the IWC has begun a new course characterised by an increasing transparency in its working practices and increased understanding amongst contracting governments. This should help the IWC to move towards ensuring the effective conservation and management of whales worldwide.

This year, the IWC will deal with a number of crucial issues, both in terms of process and of substance. Among these issues, a decision on Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (ASW) strike limits for Greenland is particularly important. In this light, we – the EU Member States party to the IWC – propose a Resolution in document IWC/65/15, that is part of a broader package on ASW which also comprises a schedule amendment proposed by the Kingdom of Denmark, IWC/65/16, supported by a needs statement, IWC/65/17. The Resolution aims to strengthen IWC's management of all ASW issues through a more consistent and long term approach. We strongly hope that other contracting governments will support the Resolution and Schedule amendment with a view to achieving consensus on these at IWC65.

We have studied the two additional proposed amendments to the Schedule. Our position on the substance of these amendments is well known and remains unaltered. Thus, we welcome the creation of a South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary.

We understand that the Convention and the Schedule recognise three types of whaling: Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling, whaling under Special Permit and commercial whaling. We remain unable to agree to the introduction of any new types of whaling. We strongly support the moratorium on commercial whaling.

13596/14 KZV/nv 2
DG E 1A EN

Indeed, the EU and its Member States encourage all countries to adhere to the moratorium. We recognise the conservation efforts made by Iceland under other international agreements and hope that the Icelandic Government will be able to extend this stance to fully support global efforts for cetacean conservation. With others, the EU and its Member States are formally approaching the Government of Iceland to ask Iceland to adhere to the internationally agreed moratorium on commercial whaling and to re-examine its decision to issue fin and minke whale quotas.

The EU and its Member States read with great interest the judgment of 31 March 2014 of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in the case of Whaling in the Antarctic (Australia *v.* Japan: New Zealand intervening). We consider this judgment as a definitive interpretation of the Convention and its Schedule and an important milestone for all contracting governments of the IWC. The judgment clarifies the legal framework for scientific whaling. We hope that the ICJ judgment will allow all IWC Contracting Governments to move away from past confrontations on this subject and adopt a more cooperative approach in the framework of the IWC. It should help us to ensure an effective international conservation and management regulatory framework that guarantees a significant improvement in the conservation status of whales in the long term and that brings all whaling operations under IWC control. To this end, we believe that the principles and conclusions of the ICJ judgment should be fully incorporated into the working practices of the IWC, including by a revision of the current review system ('Annex P'). In this context we look forward to debating New Zealand's proposal for a draft Resolution set out in IWC/65/14. We firmly believe that the IWC should reach a view on Special Permits before new proposals are put forward.

The contribution of IWC to the International Decade on Biological Diversity must be to ensure that all cetaceans become and remain a resilient and healthy component of marine ecosystems. We welcome the ongoing and important work being done by the Conservation Committee. In particular, we note the excellent progress being made on responding to entanglement and on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Whale Watching, as well as the recent workshops on ship strikes and marine debris.-Such initiatives are of universal benefit and should be a continuing focus for the IWC in the future, with an enhanced synergy between the Conservation Committee and the Scientific Committee.

In this respect, the EU and its Member States support the recommendations of the Intersessional Correspondence Group on Strengthening IWC Financing, including a proposal to establish a Voluntary Conservation Fund, which should help the IWC to tackle the various threats to cetaceans.

The EU and its Member States also welcome the work of the Scientific Committee on small cetaceans. We note with concern the recent extinction of the baiji in China. We welcome efforts by the Governments concerned to put in place measures to protect the critically endangered vaquita in Mexico, the Maui's dolphin in New Zealand and the Yangtze finless porpoise in China. We would encourage all involved to work together to find and implement practical solutions to prevent further declines in these species. Further, we urge the Scientific Committee to develop a priority list of small populations for which Conservation Management Plans should be prepared. At the same time we appeal to all Contracting Governments to provide data to the Scientific Committee on small cetaceans.

We note with satisfaction the work done annually under the State of the Cetacean Environment Report (SOCER), which provides a useful non-technical summary of the positive and negative events, developments and conditions in the marine environment.

13596/14 KZV/nv 3
DG E 1A EN

We also believe that integrating animal welfare into the full spectrum of the IWC's work would help the coherent consideration of this important issue. We, therefore, support proposals aimed at securing improvements in welfare standards for whales. We welcome the outcomes of the workshop on the euthanasia of large stranded whales, and the endorsement of the Scientific Committee for continuing this work. We also support the proposals of the Intersessional Group on Welfare, which will improve the IWC's ability to identify and deal with the whole range of cetacean welfare issues.

On all other proposals, we would like to express our willingness to discuss with the proponents and achieve better understanding of their rationale. On the basis of the new spirit of cooperation within IWC over the past years, we believe we should strive to reach consensus decisions on the various proposals and draft resolutions that have been tabled.

The EU and its Member States will work actively and constructively to ensure that this 65<sup>th</sup> meeting is successful and produces tangible results.

Statement on the ASW quota for Greenland (IWC 65 agenda item 3.5; IWC/65/16; IWC/65/17)

Italy is speaking on behalf of Italy, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The EU and its Member States are committed to protecting the social, economic and cultural needs of indigenous people, including the defence of their livelihoods. In this respect, we reiterate that ensuring proper management of Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (ASW) is a fundamental and integral part of the duties to be performed by the IWC. As a general principle, we support proposals for the management of aboriginal subsistence whaling (ASW) that ensure the conservation of cetacean populations, having due regard to the precautionary principle and the advice of the Scientific Committee, while also ensuring that whaling operations are properly regulated and catches remain sustainable within the scope of subsistence needs for local use, so that nutritional and cultural requirements can be met over the long term. We recognise that the IWC intends that the needs of, what the Convention calls, aboriginals shall be determined by the Governments concerned and explained in needs statements that are submitted to the Commission.

We also acknowledge the need to regulate ASW in the future through a more consistent and long-term approach and call on all IWC contracting governments to engage actively in the framework of the IWC to increase understanding and address unresolved issues, particularly through the work of the Scientific Committee, the ASW sub-committee and the ASW Working Group.

The proposed schedule amendment submitted by the Kingdom of Denmark is therefore part of a broader package on aboriginal subsistence whaling which also includes a draft resolution on strengthened IWC management of ASW submitted by all members of the European Union that are members of the IWC as well as a revised needs statement for Greenland prepared by the Government of Greenland and submitted by the Kingdom of Denmark in explanation of their proposed schedule amendment.

13596/14 KZV/nv 4
DG E 1A EN

In light of the above, I am happy to say that all EU Member States party to the IWC support the proposal in IWC/65/16 put forward by Denmark and would like to see it adopted alongside the Resolution in IWC/65/15 tabled by the EU members that are parties to the IWC. We strongly hope that other contracting governments will support the Resolution and Schedule amendment with a view to achieving consensus on these at IWC65.

#### EU/MS Resolution on ASW

(IWC 65 agenda item 3.1; IWC/65/15)

Italy is speaking on behalf of Italy, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

The EU and its Member States support aboriginal subsistence whaling to satisfy aboriginal subsistence needs. In drafting this proposal, we were further guided by the progress since IWC 64, taking into account the recent findings and management advice from the Scientific Committee and the updated Needs Statement submitted by Greenland.

As we have already explained, the proposed Resolution we have tabled is part of a broader package on aboriginal subsistence whaling, which includes the proposed schedule amendment submitted by the Kingdom of Denmark, together with a revised needs statement for Greenland prepared by the Government of Greenland and submitted by the Kingdom of Denmark in explanation of this schedule amendment (see document IWC/65/17).

This draft resolution aims to strengthen the IWC management of ASW through a more consistent and long-term approach. It further aims to stimulate the proactive participation of all contracting governments in the work of the ASW Sub-committee and its related Working Groups.

The proposed resolution requests that the Scientific Committee give high priority to all AWMP-related activities and ensure their timely completion in line with its own medium term workplan (2014-2018). It also includes what, in our mind, are the most pressing issues that should be considered and resolved by the ASW Sub-committee in a new mid-term work plan (2014-2018), including the standardisation of Needs Statements. A further aim, which is implied in the text of the draft Resolution, is that by 2016 the Commission will agree on the SLA approach and amend paragraph 13a of the Schedule accordingly.

Madam Chair, we have considered very carefully both the content and the wording of this resolution, before tabling the text. Our aim was to address all relevant issues and problems in a balanced way. We therefore very much hope that this resolution will be received positively and that all IWC members will be able to support it. We stand ready to work constructively with Contracting Governments with the aim of reaching consensus.

13596/14 KZV/nv 55
DG E 1A EN

#### Statement on the South Atlantic sanctuary

(IWC 65 agenda item 4.1; IWC/65/8)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States party to the IWC.

The EU and its Member States are strongly committed to the protection of whales and thus welcome any initiative that could contribute to a significant improvement of their conservation status. In this context, we support proposals for the establishment of sanctuaries that are in accordance with IWC rules.

We consider sanctuaries to be a valuable component in a range of measures for the conservation of whales affording them greater protection in specific areas important for their life cycles.

We welcome the consultations that have taken place with many countries on this proposal, including the Western African countries bordering the proposed sanctuary.

We are therefore happy to express once again our clear support for this proposal.

Statement on the schedule amendment to permit the catching of minke whales from the Okhotsk Sea-West Pacific stock by small-type coastal whaling vessels (Submitted by Japan) (IWC 65 agenda item 5.1; IWC/65/09)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States party to the IWC.

We have considered this proposal carefully and have assessed it against the three types of whaling operations identified under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling and its Schedule.

The EU and its Member States strongly support the maintenance of the moratorium on commercial whaling and do not agree that the moratorium can be lifted without an express decision to this effect.

We reiterate our serious concerns about the impact of small scale whaling on whale populations, taking into account the commercial aspects.

In addition to the above, some of the scientific and procedural aspects of this proposal also give us cause for concern, such as the abundance estimate for formal use in CLAs or the choice of the management variants (see Scientific Committee, IWC 2014, 11-15 pp).

For these reasons, Madam Chair, we cannot support this proposal.

13596/14 KZV/nv 6

DG E 1A EN

## Statement on Resolution for IWC 65 Highly migratory cetaceans (Submitted by Monaco) (IWC 65 agenda item 6.1; IWC/65/11)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States party to the IWC.

We would like to thank Monaco for proposing ways forward for a greater commitment of the IWC to the conservation of cetaceans. As stated on several occasions, we want to ensure the best possible conservation status of all cetacean species. In terms of international governance, we believe that the IWC is the most appropriate forum for discussions on the conservation of all cetacean species.

In this respect, we welcome the ongoing and important work brought forward through the Conservation Committee. In particular, we note the excellent progress being made on responding to entanglement, implementation of the Strategic Plan for Whale Watching as well as the recent workshops on ship strikes and marine debris. These kinds of initiatives are of universal benefit and should be a continuing focus for the IWC in future, working together with the Scientific Committee.

It is well accepted that the main conservation threats to cetaceans involve several factors, such as entanglement, marine debris and maritime traffic. Strengthening the cooperation with other global and regional organizations dealing with these pressures will only improve the governance of the IWC and help streamlining pertinent international policies.

We, therefore, support this Resolution and stand ready to work constructively with Contracting Governments.

## Statement on Resolution on Civil Society Participation and Transparency at the IWC (Submitted by Chile)

(IWC 65 agenda item 6.#; IWC/65/12)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States party to the IWC.

We thank Chile for their proposal.

We are convinced that, undertaking steps to move governance reforms forward and improve the overall effectiveness of the Convention, will not only result in concrete benefits in improving protection and management practices but will also sustain the spirit of partnership among IWC members. In this regard, we are already engaged in ongoing work in this respect carried out within the IWC relevant bodies and would thus welcome all further efforts to improve the effectiveness of the Commission and enhance transparency within the IWC.

We recognise the steps taken by the IWC in Panama to improve the participation of NGOs. And we support further engagement of NGOs in the work of the IWC.

We therefore support the principle of the Resolution proposed. We know that the distinguished delegate from Chile has been actively discussing with IWC parties which we welcome. We too stand ready to discuss, and believe that it is possible to reach a consensus at this meeting.

13596/14 KZV/nv 7
DG E 1A EN

### Statement on Resolution on Scientific Committee (Submitted by Chile) (IWC 65 agenda item 6.#; IWC/65/13)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States party to the IWC.

We thank Chile for their proposal.

As previously stated, we are fully committed to improving transparency and operational effectiveness of the Scientific Committee, as one of the most important bodies of the IWC. We also recognise the ongoing effort by the Scientific Committee to improve its working methods. In particular we welcome the new procedure to approve the budget that was used provisionally at the last meeting and its continuous improvement in the next biennium. We hope it can be endorsed by the Commission.

We recognise the necessity to update the Scientific Committee mandate, taking into account the most recent resolutions, as proposed by Chile. We would, therefore, welcome the opportunity to engage with Chile and other Contracting Governments and believe it is possible to reach a consensus at this meeting.

## Statement on Whale killing Methods and Associated Welfare Issues (IWC 64 agenda item 11)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States Parties to the IWC.

We believe that the IWC, as the global body responsible for the conservation and management of the world's whales for over 60 years, has a clear role to play in addressing animal welfare issues.

We also believe that integrating animal welfare into the full spectrum of the IWC's work will help ensure a coherent and cohesive consideration of this important issue across the full range of threats facing cetaceans.

We also support proposals aimed at securing improvements in welfare standards for whales. To that effect, we welcome the outcomes of the workshop on the euthanasia of large stranded whales, and the endorsement of the Scientific Committee for continuing this work.

We therefore support the proposals of the Intersessional Group on Welfare, which will improve the IWC's ability to identify and deal with the whole range of cetacean welfare issues.

# Statement on Resolution on food security (Submitted by Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and the Republic of Guinea)

(IWC 65 agenda item #.#; IWC/65/10)

Italy, speaking on behalf of the EU Member States that are party to the IWC, considers that food security is a vital global concern.

We are grateful to the proponents for bringing the important issue of food security to the attention of this Meeting.

13596/14 KZV/nv 8
DG E 1A EN

It is unfortunate that we did not have the benefit of an early orientation discussion in Plenary. This would have enabled all of us to understand what is required for us to reach consensus, and has proven helpful for other proposals we have been considering.

Unfortunately the revised draft Resolution does not yet reflect some key comments submitted by EU MS in writing two days ago. We would like to highlight some of our main concerns now.

Recalling international instruments such as the International Covenant on Economic Social and cultural rights, the EU and the Member States recognise every person's right to safe, sufficient and nutritious food. We also recognise the need to implement the FAO's Voluntary Guidelines to support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the context of National Food Security. The EU provides substantial support to the FAO including to the Right to Food Team in FAO. The IWC can recognise the work done by competent international organisations, such as the FAO, but is not itself the forum for taking resolutions on human rights.

We would be grateful for further explanation of the purpose of the Resolution. We do not believe that the proponents intend to undermine the moratorium on commercial whaling: yet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> operative paragraphs are so open that they could be read as doing so.

We believe that the IWC, as the most competent body on cetacean conservation and management, should continue to draw attention to the consequences of unregulated/unmanaged hunts and cooperate with others in making them sustainable. If the Resolution is to be acceptable to all, we consider that it should concentrate on identifying how this could be done.

We note the reference to Rio+20 outcome document, but this needs to be reflected more fully in the Resolution. We would recall the consensus the Heads of State of the world reached at Rio + 20 in 2012. They stressed the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and seas and of their resources for sustainable development, including through their contributions to poverty eradication, sustained economic growth, food security and creation of sustainable livelihoods and decent work, while at the same time protecting biodiversity and the marine environment. They made a global commitment to protect, and restore, the health, productivity and resilience of oceans and marine ecosystems, and to maintain their biodiversity, enabling their conservation and sustainable use for present and future generations, and to effectively apply an ecosystem approach and the precautionary approach in the management, in accordance with international law, of activities having an impact on the marine environment, to deliver on all three dimensions of sustainable development.

We would need our concerns to be addressed in the text of the Resolution before we can support it. The EU Member States that are Party to the IWC stand ready to engage in further discussions, as you see fit, Madam Chair.

13596/14 KZV/nv 9
DG E 1A EN

# Statement on Resolution for IWC 65 Whaling under Special Permit (Submitted by New Zealand) (IWC 65 agenda item 6.#; IWC/65/14)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States party to the IWC.

We thank New Zealand for their proposal. We welcome the judgment of the International Court of Justice, as a definitive interpretation of the Convention and Schedule and an important milestone for all contracting governments of the IWC. In our view, the judgment clarifies the legal framework for scientific whaling, particularly the findings that scientific whaling must not only be scientific in nature but must be carried out for scientific purposes only. The judgment also stresses that lethal sampling should be as limited as possible. We support this finding, as we support the promotion of non-lethal research programmes. We hope that the ICJ ruling will allow all IWC contracting governments to move away from past confrontations on this subject and adopt a more cooperative approach in the framework of the IWC. To this end, we believe that the principles and conclusions of the ICJ judgment should be fully incorporated into the working practices of the IWC. This should include appropriate revisions to 'Annex P'. This judgment should help us to ensure an effective international conservation and management regulatory framework that guarantees a significant improvement in the conservation status of whales in the long term and that brings all whaling operations under IWC control. We look forward to discussing New Zealand's proposal for a draft Resolution as set out in IWC/65/14 which we support. We will work constructively to reach a consensus.

# Statement (Made after the vote) (IWC 65 agenda item 6.#; IWC/65/14)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States party to the IWC.

We thank New Zealand for all their efforts to reach a consensus. We regret we have not been able to reach it. In the interest of time I will not repeat our arguments in support of this resolution. These were in our original statement, which will be included in the records of this meeting.

We really hope that this resolution will still assist us in our future work.

### Statement on Icelandic commercial whaling (IWC 65 agenda item 20)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States Party to the IWC.

The Member States of the EU strongly support the moratorium on commercial whaling, and we encourage all countries to adhere to it.

With others, the EU and its Member States are formally approaching the Government of Iceland to ask Iceland to adhere to the internationally agreed moratorium on commercial whaling and to reexamine its decision to issue fin and minke whale quotas. We are also urging the Government of Iceland to withdraw its reservation to the listing of these species on CITES Appendix I, and to safeguard these and other cetacean species from international commercial trade.

13596/14 KZV/nv 10 DG E 1A EN We also note that the Government of Iceland maintains its reservation to the ICRW Schedule and we now urge it to withdraw it, thereby helping to restore a situation where all provisions of the Convention, including the time limits for lodging Objections to Amendments of the Schedule, are accepted by all Contracting Governments in equal measure regardless of whether their adherence to the Convention has been continuous or interrupted.

We note the increasing economic and social value of responsible whale-watching in Iceland, and are concerned that continued commercial whaling would undermine the growth of this more profitable and sustainable industry.

We recognise the conservation efforts made by Iceland under other international agreements and hope that the Icelandic Government will be able to extend this stance to fully support global efforts for cetacean conservation.

### Statement on small Cetaceans

(IWC 65 agenda item 19.1)

Italy will be speaking on behalf of the EU Member States Party to the IWC.

We are deeply concerned about the findings in the Scientific Committee report regarding the conservation status of three critically endangered species of small cetaceans. We welcome efforts by the Governments concerned to put in place measures to protect these species, the vaquita in Mexico, the Maui's dolphin in New Zealand and the Yangtze finless porpoise in China. We would encourage all involved to work together to find and implement practical solutions to prevent further declines in these species. We also support all recommendations of IWC64 Scientific Committee Report on small cetaceans and we invite the SC to develop a priority list of small populations for which Conservation Management Plans should be prepared.

At the same time we appeal to all relevant Contracting Governments to share on a voluntary basis data with the Scientific Committee on small cetaceans, including *inter alia* data on human-induced mortality.

We finally applaud the good use of the Small Cetaceans Voluntary Fund, which has been used to co-finance outstanding conservation and research projects in four continents and to allow the participation of experts from developing countries to be involved in the work of the Scientific Committee. We will continue supporting this Fund and we hope other countries will also do so.

#### Statement on Cooperation with other Organizations

(IWC 65 - Agenda item 21)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States party to the IWC.

Many of the problems facing the marine environment, and cetaceans can only be solved in cooperation with other national and international organizations. We need to know what these organizations are doing and, importantly, they need to know what we are doing. This is increasingly being reflected in the work of major organizations, such as CMS, ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS and very importantly the IMO (International Maritime Organization), which refers to, or calls upon, IWC expertise and actions. We also see great interest in enhancing cooperation with MOUs on cetaceans in the South Pacific, RFMOs, Regional Seas Conventions, as well as CCAMLR, and would like to recall the Resolution adopted during this meeting just a day ago, on highly migratory cetaceans, calling for further cooperation and data sharing.

A most recent case in point is Decision I.6 adopted at the latest meeting of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which, in its operative paragraph 13, "also welcomes the work undertaken by the IWC on assessing the impacts of marine debris on cetaceans"

We acknowledge that establishing and pursuing contacts with international organizations can be demanding, and we thank the IWC and its secretariat for their continuous efforts in this regard. We believe this is the right path to pursue.

#### Statement on Health & Environment and SOCER

(IWC 65 agenda item 18)

Italy is speaking on behalf of the EU Member States Party to the IWC.

The health of oceans and marine biodiversity has been the focus of increasing attention and a cause for serious concern, including amongst Heads of State at Rio + 20. Environmental degradation from a number of sources has taken its toll on the state of the marine environment, creating a range of environmental threats to cetaceans that are widely recognised as often being severe. Many of these are of increasing conservation importance. In this respect, we very much appreciate the work of the Scientific Committee to further understand and evaluate these threats through the Standing Working Group on Environmental Concerns.

We believe that sound science and reliable information are essential if we are to enhance the conservation status of whales and cetaceans, in general.

We, therefore, welcome the work done under the State of the Cetacean Environment Report (SOCER), which provides a non-technical periodic summary of the positive and negative events, developments and conditions in the marine environment.

13596/14 KZV/nv 12

DG E 1A EN

#### Statement on Conservation Management Plans proposals

(IWC 65, Agenda item 10)

Italy speaking on behalf of the EU Member States Party to the IWC supports all recommendations of IWC65 Scientific Committee on Conservation Management Plans.

# Statement on Finance and Administration Committee (IWC 65, Agenda item 22)

Italy speaking on behalf of the EU Member States Party to the IWC can support the recommendations of the Inter-sessional Correspondence Group on Strengthening IWC Financing, including a proposal to establish a Voluntary Conservation Fund, which will help the IWC to tackle the many types of threat to cetaceans.

13596/14 KZV/nv 13 DG E 1A EN