

Ambassador Hjálmar W. Hannesson
Embassy of Iceland
House of Sweden
2900 K Street N.W. #509
Washington DC 20007-1704

Dear Ambassador Hannesson:


Enclosed, please find a demarche signed by eleven states expressing opposition to Iceland's continuing and increased commercial harvest of whales.

We are also copying this letter to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Fisheries and Agriculture, and the Minister of Environment.

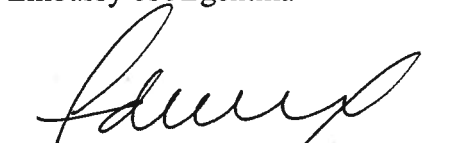
Yours Sincerely,




Ruben Eduardo Tempore
Embassy of Argentina




Cameron Archer
Embassy of Australia



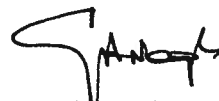
Eduardo Maragna Guimarães Lessa
Embassy of Brazil




Paola Palma
Embassy of Chile



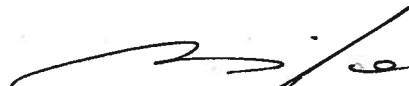
Paul Moreno
Embassy of Ecuador



Ambassador Gilles Noghes
Embassy of the Principality of Monaco



Michael Appleton
Embassy of New Zealand



Pedro Braxo
Embassy of Peru



Monica Medina
Principal Deputy Undersecretary for Oceans and Atmosphere
United States IWC Commissioner

We, the governments of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Israel, Mexico, Monaco, New Zealand, Peru, and the United States of America wish to express our strong opposition to Iceland's continuing and increased commercial harvest of whales, particularly the endangered fin whale, and to its recent international trade in whale products.

Iceland is well known for its responsible marine resource management practices. However, we are deeply troubled by Iceland's harvest of 125 fin whales in 2009 and 148 fin whales in 2010, a significant increase from the seven fin whales harvested over the last 20 years. The current quota of 150 fin whales is considered unsustainable under IWC stock assessment methods.

We also object to Iceland's international trade in whale products. Iceland's harvest and subsequent trade of fin whales does not appear to meet any market demand or need, and it undermines effective international whale conservation efforts.

We recognize the conservation efforts made by Iceland in other international agreements and hope the Icelandic Government will be able to extend this stance to fully support global efforts for cetacean conservation. Furthermore, we would like to draw attention to the considerable economic, social and educational benefits of Iceland's growing whale watching industry as a possible alternative to commercial whaling. We hope the Icelandic Government will seriously consider the benefits of eliminating commercial whaling and return to its previous position of acceptance of the moratorium on commercial whaling that was put in place by the International Whaling Commission in 1986.