

December 1, 2010



BY ELECTRONIC MAIL

President Barack Obama
The White House
1000 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of the undersigned member organizations of the Whales Need US coalition representing over 20 million members and supporters nationwide and the overwhelming majority of Americans who care deeply about the great whales, we write to thank your administration for its recent public stand against Iceland's commercial whaling and international trade in whale products.

Our organizations welcome the unequivocal statements made by Secretary of Commerce Gary Locke and U.S. IWC Commissioner Monica Medina on the 23rd of November 2010. We are eager to work with the administration as it reviews its options to persuade Iceland to end its commercial whaling in defiance of the moratorium adopted by the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in 1982 and its international trade in whale products in defiance of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Collectively, we believe that strong U.S. leadership is necessary to address Iceland's renegade whaling and trade. Despite numerous bilateral and multilateral diplomatic efforts undertaken in recent years by the U.S. and others to persuade Iceland to bring its whaling back under IWC control, Iceland continues to disregard both the IWC and CITES as pointed out by both Secretary Locke and Commissioner Medina. Neither diplomacy nor public condemnation of Iceland's whaling practices have worked and, therefore, we urge the U.S. now to consider trade sanctions against Iceland under the "Pelly Amendment" to the Fishermen's Protective Act of 1962.

In 2004 the U.S. certified Iceland under the Pelly Amendment for its so-called "scientific whaling" program, but President Bush opted to implement only "non-trade actions" to address Iceland's defiance of the IWC. Emboldened we believe by this response, Iceland subsequently resumed commercial whaling under its legally disputed reservation to the IWC's moratorium, dramatically increased its whale hunts, including on an endangered species, and escalated its international exports of whale products.

Since the Icelandic government allowed its whalers to resume commercial whaling in 2006, 370 endangered fin whales and 193 minke whales have been killed (148 fin whales and 60 minkes in 2010 alone), and more than 700 tons of whale products have been exported to Japan, Norway, the Faroe Islands, Latvia, Belarus, and possibly Denmark. It has authorized the killing of more whales in 2011 and has rejected efforts within the IWC to limit its trade to domestic use only. The

actions of the Icelandic government and its whaling industry are undeniably diminishing the effectiveness of both the IWC and CITES.

The United States has acknowledged that the Pelly Amendment "has been one of our most effective tools in the effort to conserve the greatest (sic) whales"¹ and, in addition to Iceland, has certified Japan, Norway and Russia for diminishing the effectiveness of the IWC. The United States has also imposed trade sanctions under the Pelly Amendment, including on Japan in 1990 and Taiwan in 1994, for diminishing the effectiveness of CITES.

Mr. President, given Iceland's persistent and increasingly serious undermining of both the IWC and CITES, as well as our own Endangered Species Act which lists the fin whale as an endangered species, we believe that a Pelly certification and trade sanctions against Iceland are necessary to uphold and confirm the United States' long-standing policy of opposing commercial whaling and trade in whale products. A Pelly Petition will be submitted shortly to Secretary Locke and Secretary Salazar setting out the case for targeted sanctions against Icelandic products linked to whaling being imported into the USA.

We thank you and your administration again for its recent public stand against Iceland and respectfully urge you now to take all necessary measures against Iceland until such time as it ceases its commercial whaling program, withdraws its reservations to both the IWC's moratorium and the Appendix I listing of great whales by CITES, and desists from conducting trade in whale products.

Respectfully yours,



Fred O'Regan
President
International Fund for Animal Welfare

On behalf of:

American Cetacean Society
Animal Welfare Institute
Cetacean Society International
The Cousteau Society
Defenders of Wildlife
Dolphin Connection
Environmental Investigation Agency
Friends of the Gray Whale
Greenpeace USA

¹ 12 H.R Rep. No. 95-1029, 95 Cong., 2d Sess. (1978), reprinted in 1978 U.S.C.C.A.N. 1773-1775, 1780.

Green Vegans/The New Human Ecology
The Humane Society of the United States
Humane Society International
In Defense of Animals
International Marine Mammal Project of Earth Island Institute
Natural Resource Defense Council
Nantucket Marine Mammal Conservation Program
Origami Whales Project
Peninsula Citizens for the Protection of Whales
Vote the Coast
Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society
The Whaleman Foundation
World Society for the Protection of Animals

Cc: Secretary Hillary Clinton, United States Department of State
Secretary Gary Locke, United States Department of Commerce
Secretary Ken Salazar, United States Department of the Interior
Ms. Nancy Sutley, Chair, Council on Environmental Quality
Dr. Jane Lubchenco, Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration
Ambassador Ron Kirk, United States Trade Representative
The Honorable John F. Kerry, Chair, United States Senate Committee on
Foreign Relations
The Honorable Howard L. Berman, Chair, United States House
Committee on Foreign Affairs
Ms. Monica Medina, U.S. Commissioner to the International Whaling Commission
United States Delegation to the International Whaling Commission