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MEDIA RELEASE

Whaling Commission makes Progress with Quota Decision

Florianopolis, Brazil. 14 September 2018 - As the International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting concluded today, IWMC World Conservation Trust commended member states for approving so-called Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (ASW) quotas for communities in Alaska, Russia, Greenland and St. Vincent and the Grenadines, but warned that the IWC is clearly applying double standards by rejecting future commercial whaling of abundant whale stocks.

The ASW quota represents a significant positive progression in attitude by IWC member states. Focus has shifted away from the need for communities to hunt whales to agreeing a process for the automatic renewal of quotas, subject to certain conditions. This removes the jeopardy faced by indigenous communities from six-yearly quota renewals, which put their culture and livelihoods at risk.

Nevertheless, the IWC voted in favor of a Declaration that rejected commercial whaling. This puts the IWC at odds with its founding convention, which is based on both conservation and the orderly development of the whaling industry. The IWC also rejected Japan's proposal to reform decision-making processes in a way that would have protected whales from over-exploitation while allowing limited sustainable commercial whaling.

Eugene Lapointe, President of IWMC World Conservation Trust, said: "The IWC is to be commended for finally recognizing the rights of indigenous communities but it is still failing with its core task of regulating commercial whaling. There is no scientific reason why the IWC should endorse sustainable whaling for some communities but reject it for others. When it picks winners and losers in this way, the IWC brings itself into disrepute."

The IWC also once again rejected the creation of a South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary in an area where whales are not hunted.

— ENDS —

The International Wildlife Management Consortium (IWMC) World Conservation Trust is an international organization that promotes Sustainable Use as a conservation mechanism, for the protection of the sovereign rights of independent nations and for the respect of diverse cultures and traditions.

Eugene Lapointe, President of IWMC World Conservation Trust was Secretary General of CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) from 1982 to 1990.

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