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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Conservation Group Condemns Dolphin Bribes**

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**Bangkok, 4 October 2004:** IWMC, the leading international pro-sustainable use conservation group, today condemned the Sea Shepherd environmentalist organization for offering substantial financial prizes to individuals who can provide the most sensational pictures of dolphins being caught in Japan.

Sea Shepherd has offered \$10,000.00 to the person that provides it with “the most graphic and damning images” of the seasonal drive fisheries in the remote town of Taiji. The pictures will be used in Sea Shepherd’s fundraising and publicity campaigns.

Eugene Lapointe, President of IWMC, said: “The traditional animal rights movement has lost the plot and is now more interested in obtaining publicity by any means than in conserving genuinely rare species.” Taiji fishermen catch dolphins according to quotas calculated by Japan’s Fisheries Agency. The quotas insure that overall stocks are not threatened.

By trying to incite Japanese villagers, with a one-off cash payment, into taking clandestine actions that are calculated to damage the local fishing industry, Sea Shepherd is, in reality, offering bribes.

Mr. Lapointe added: “Sea Shepherd wants local people to do its dirty work for it. It is running out of ways to publicize its activities and is offering blood money as a last resort.”

Sea Shepherd is underwritten and supported by several Hollywood movie stars, including Martin Sheen, Pierce Brosnan and Sean Penn.

IWMC is currently in Bangkok for COP 13 of CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered in Species, where it is promoting conservation programs that conserve wildlife species. IWMC calls on other conservation groups gathered in Bangkok to join it in condemning Sea Shepherd’s bribery program.

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The IWMC World Conservation Trust is an international organization that promotes the Sustainable Use as a conservation mechanism, the protection of the sovereign rights of independent nations and the respect of diverse cultures and traditions. It is a non-profit body supported by donations.

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

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