

United Kingdom reiterates strong anti-whaling stance at International Whaling Commission

Press release

The United Kingdom helps secure agreement on a Resolution on Marine Plastic Pollution and is appointed Chair of the IWC's Conservation Committee



The Government upheld its long-standing opposition to commercial whaling at the 68th meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in Slovenia this week, advocating to uphold the moratorium that was agreed 40 years ago.

The United Kingdom also secured further support for the protection of whales, dolphins and porpoises (cetaceans) and has been appointed Chair of the IWC Conservation Committee which carries out vital work to address the wide-ranging challenges facing these species including bycatch, ship strikes, strandings and pollution.

Marine plastic pollution poses a significant issue for cetaceans and the United Kingdom is pleased to have co-sponsored a Resolution on Marine Plastic Pollution, adopted by consensus at the IWC meeting. This will allow the IWC to engage in the UN Environment Assembly process to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution to drive forward effective measures to prevent or mitigate marine plastic pollution impacts on cetaceans.

International Oceans Minister Scott Mann said:

“Whales, and other cetaceans, are awe-inspiring creatures. We must continue to protect these extraordinary animals and bring an end to the unnecessarily cruel practice of commercial whaling globally.

“I’m proud of the leading role we are taking in securing continued support for the IWC and the moratorium on commercial whaling, as well as encouraging countries to recognise the important threat of marine plastic pollution.”

The United Kingdom is strongly opposed to commercial whaling and continues to call on whaling nations to cease their whaling activities in favour of well-managed, responsible tourism. A founding member of the IWC in 1946, the United Kingdom is proud to have supported the IWC over the last 75 years.

The United Kingdom was disappointed that the IWC did not agree to create a South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary but will continue to push for the conservation of these unique creatures that play a vital role in our wider ecosystem.

The IWC is the only global body with the competence and mandate for the conservation and management of cetaceans and we are pleased that a budget was agreed for the IWC to continue its critical work.

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