

Statement by the Chair of the International Whaling Commission, Cristian Maquieira, on the Future of the IWC

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IWC Reform Discussions Continue

A group of officials from 12 countries charged with providing advice and material on the future of the International Whaling Commission to the IWC Chair ended a constructive three-day meeting today in Seattle, Wash.

The group, known as The Support Group to the Chair of the IWC, consists of 12 nations which represent a broad cross section of the 88 IWC member countries.

The group continued discussions that began in Santiago, Chile to address a number of topics regarding the future of the IWC and to equip the Commission to effectively address new and emerging challenges.

"I am pleased with the progress made in Seattle," said Cristian Maquieira, Chair of the International Whaling Commission. "Discussions are ongoing and I believe they could serve as the basis of a way forward for the IWC that will more effectively conserve whales and manage the whaling that is happening in our oceans."

Maquieira said the Support Group will convene again in January and the product of that meeting will be discussed in the larger meeting of the Small Working Group now set for March of next year. This timetable will provide ample time for governments and the public to review and discuss the matter prior to the next Annual Meeting of the IWC to be held in Agadir, Morocco in June 2010.

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