

## **The RMS and Animal Welfare: Why the proposed package fails to address the inherent cruelty of whaling practices**

**Whalewatch believes that implementing the RMS could act as an incentive to the expansion, not the reduction, of commercial whaling.** Whalewatch believes that:

- The RMS does not have the power to bring all whaling under control
- The RMS does not guarantee a long-term reduction in catches
- The RMS cannot stop illegal whaling <sup>1</sup>

As such, **if the RMS were implemented, more whales are likely to be killed than at present and this will have a serious impact on the welfare of whales**, as Whalewatch believes there is no guaranteed humane way to kill a whale at sea.

**Not only could the RMS mean more whales will be killed, the proposed RMS fails to resolve the serious welfare problems in the following ways:**

- No provision to ensure that whales are killed humanely by being rendered immediately and irreversibly insensible or dead;
- No requirement for avoiding pain, distress or other suffering to hunted whales;
- No limit on pursuit times or the welfare implications of protracted hunts;
- No minimum specifications for the type of gear used; covering the type and size of the harpoon used and its associated explosive charge, the calibre of rifle bullets and the number of bullets that can be deployed on one animal; referenced to the specific species and size of individual concerned;
- No consideration of the impact of sea and weather conditions on killing;
- No specific requirements for training of the gunners and testing of their marksmanship;
- No satisfactory criteria for determining death or irreversible insensibility, given that the current IWC criteria are recognized as “inadequate” (Resolution 2004-3)
- No limitations on the number of animals that may be struck and lost.

### **Conclusion**

For these reasons, the Whalewatch coalition, comprising of over 140 non-governmental organisations from 55 countries, is opposed to an RMS package that will lead to the lifting of the moratorium and the resumption of commercial whaling. Whalewatch urges your delegation to take these concerns into account during IWC negotiations on the RMS.

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<sup>1</sup> For more information see the WDCS/HSUS briefing “Why the RMS won't bring whaling under control”