

The Honourable Gaston Alphonso Browne MP
Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and
Corporate Governance of Antigua and Barbuda
Office of the Prime Minister
Factory Road
Queen Elizabeth Highway
ST. JOHN'S
ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

By email: foreignaffairs@ab.gov.ag; pmsecretariat@ab.gov.ag

Portorož, Slovenia, 22nd October 2022

Dear Honourable Prime Minister Gaston Browne,

We, the undersigned organisations, are writing to express our concern over the position and activities of Antigua and Barbuda at the 68th International Whaling Commission (IWC68).

In the [article](#) published on 20th October 2022 on LOOP NEWS Online, your government stated that the: **“Cabinet has NOT agreed to lift the ban on hunting of whales and is not aware of any statement which suggests otherwise.”**

We appreciate this clear position, however, it stands in marked contrast to the official draft Resolution 8.3. submitted by Antigua and Barbuda for adoption at IWC68 entitled **“Resolution on the Implementation of a Conservation and Management Program for Whale Stocks aimed towards the lifting of the moratorium and the orderly development of the whaling industry”**. The title speaks for itself and so does its content. This resolution was originally put forward by Antigua and Barbuda with St. Lucia joining as a co-sponsor at the meeting.

The Resolution is in complete contradiction to the Florianópolis Declaration adopted by the IWC at its meeting in Florianópolis, Brazil in 2018, which provides the basis for future work of this Commission. Nevertheless, the initiative by Antigua and Barbuda pursued at IWC68 was not a surprise, as it reflects the content of interventions and activities by the delegation of the State within the IWC over many years. Ultimately, this resolution was not put to the vote, but the representative from Antigua and Barbuda announced that they would continue to work on it and bring it back to the next Commission meeting in 2024. It is hard to understand why the delegation continues to act as a promoter of the legalization and resumption of commercial whaling when Antigua and Barbuda has no history of commercial whaling nor has it announced any interest to undertake commercial whaling.

Additionally, we note Antigua and Barbuda joined a group of 16 countries that left the IWC conference room on Thursday, 20th October 2022, which prevented the Commission from

agreeing a proposal from Latin American countries to adopt the South Atlantic Whale Sanctuary.

We, the undersigned organisations, are very concerned by this and other initiatives by your country within the IWC, especially when Antigua and Barbuda acts with a clear and strong voice towards conserving the ocean in other fora. Indeed, we compliment Antigua and Barbuda for being a staunch supporter of the international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution which is being negotiated under the auspices of UN Environment Assembly.

Likewise, we congratulate you on the support you have provided to the climate change initiative by Vanuatu at the UN General Assembly in September 2022, urging the General Assembly requests the International Court of Justice to provide an advisory opinion on the obligations of States under international law to protect the rights of present and future generations against the adverse effects of climate change.

Considering these excellent examples of Antigua and Barbuda's commitment on marine protection and climate change issues on the global stage, we kindly request that you provide clarifications to our organisations and to the general public regarding the role and mandate of Antigua and Barbuda at the IWC.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Fabienne McLellan
Managing Director
OceanCare



Nicolas Entrup
Director of International Relations
OceanCare

On behalf of:

Centro de Conservación Cetacea
Cetacean Society International
Dolphin Connection
ECCEA
Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA)
Fundación Cethus
Humane Society International
Instituto de Conservación de Ballenas
International Marine Mammal Project of
Earth Island Institute
Natural Resources Defense Council
(NRDC)

NOAH
OceanCare
Oceanic Preservation Society
Pro Wildlife
Robin des Bois
Society for the Conservation of Marine
Mammals in Denmark
The Whaleman Foundation
WeWhale
Whale and Dolphin Conservation
Whales Alive