



TEXTS ADOPTED

P8_TA(2017)0328

Whale hunting in Norway

European Parliament resolution of 12 September 2017 on whale hunting in Norway (2017/2712(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the International Whaling Commission (IWC) agreement on zero catch limits for commercial whaling which came into effect in 1986 ('the moratorium'),
- having regard to IWC Resolution 2016-3 on cetaceans and their contribution to ecosystem functioning,
- having regard to IWC Resolution 2014-2 on highly migratory cetaceans,
- having regard to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets agreed under the International Convention on Biological Diversity,
- having regard to Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora¹,
- having regard to Commission Regulation (EC) No 865/2006 of 4 May 2006² and Commission Regulation (EU) No 791/2012 of 23 August 2012³,
- having regard to Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) No 792/2012 of 23 August 2012 laying down rules for the design of permits, certificates and other documents provided for in Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating the trade therein and amending Regulation (EC) No 865/2006⁴,
- having regard to its resolution of 15 September 2016 on the EU strategic objectives for the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in endangered species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)⁵,
- having regard to its resolution of 19 February 2009 on Community action in relation to

¹ OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7.

² OJ L 166, 19.6.2006, p. 1.

³ OJ L 242, 7.9.2012, p. 1.

⁴ OJ L 242, 7.9.2012, p. 13.

⁵ Texts adopted, P8_TA(2016)0356.

whaling¹,

- having regard to the EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking of 2016,
 - having regard to the question to the Commission on whale hunting in Norway (O-000058/2017 – B8-0324/2017),
 - having regard to Rules 128(5) and 123(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas in 1982 the International Whaling Commission (IWC) introduced a moratorium on all commercial whaling, which came into effect in 1986 and is still in force, in order to protect species and populations from extinction and allow them to recover;
 - B. whereas Norway, despite this international ban, has continued its whaling activities, and in 1993 fully resumed commercial whaling using a formal objection to the moratorium, as well as entering and maintaining reservations regarding the CITES listings;
 - C. whereas Norway became a party to CITES on 19 December 1979, making it one of the first countries to agree to be bound by that convention;
 - D. whereas media sources estimate that approximately 90 % of whales killed by Norway are female, most of them pregnant, by reason of their slower response time;
 - E. whereas Norway has killed over 13 000 whales since the moratorium came into effect in 1986²;
 - F. whereas whaling causes severe suffering to individual animals, threatening both the complex social structures of intelligent mammals and the conservation status of whale populations as a whole;
 - G. whereas all species of great whales are listed in Annex A to Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97, reflecting the fact that they are threatened with extinction and that any level of trade would imperil the survival of the species; whereas Article 8(1) of that regulation prohibits the purchase, offer to purchase, acquisition for commercial purposes, display to the public for commercial purposes, use for commercial gain and sale, keeping for sale, offering for sale or transporting for sale of specimens of the species listed in Annex A;
 - H. whereas there is increasing scientific evidence to suggest that whales enhance ecosystem productivity and may play a role in regulating atmospheric CO₂ levels;
 - I. whereas Norway unilaterally establishes its own catch limits; whereas for the 2017 whaling season Norway increased its quota of minke whales to 999 (up from 880 in 2016);
 - J. whereas Norway's exports of whalemeat have increased sharply in recent years; whereas some of these exports are shipped through EU ports;

¹ OJ C 76 E, 25.3.2010, p. 46.

² https://iwcc.int/table_objection

- K. whereas in October 2016 alone, 2 948 kg of Norwegian whale products were found to have been exported to Japan, transiting through at least three EU ports¹;
- L. whereas the transit of whalemeat through EU ports is permitted provided shipments are accompanied by valid CITES documentation pursuant to Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97;
- M. whereas the primary objective of CITES is the protection of biodiversity, and in particular the conservation of species; whereas the EU Habitats Directive, which defines the Community position with respect to whales (and dolphins), does not allow the resumption of commercial whaling in respect of any stock of whales in EU waters;
- N. whereas Norway is closely associated with the Union and its policies through its membership of the European Economic Area; whereas this has ensured that the peoples and governments of both Norway and the EU have maintained strong cultural links, a healthy trading relationship and a commitment to conservation;
1. Calls on Norway to cease all its commercial whaling operations and to abide by the IWC moratorium;
 2. Calls on Norway to withdraw its reservations concerning the CITES Appendix I listings of large whale species and to cease all trade in whalemeat and whale products;
 3. Regrets that Norway is subsidising the whale industry and promotes the consumption and use of products resulting from whaling; urges Norway to cease these subsidies;
 4. Strongly supports the continuation of the global moratorium on commercial whaling and a ban on international commercial trade in whale products;
 5. Notes that the Member States signed up to the EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking; recalls action 9 of that plan, which calls on Member States and the Commission to develop strategies to improve compliance with existing EU wildlife legislation at a national level;
 6. Regrets that at the debate which Parliament held in plenary on 6 July 2017 the Commission was not able or willing to provide Parliament with data on shipments of whalemeat transferred through EU ports; urges the Commission to collect and provide the necessary data;
 7. Calls on the Commission to look into all possible ways of ensuring that whalemeat is no longer legally allowed to transit through EU ports, including by recommending a ban on such transits as an exceptional measure;
 8. Regrets that Norway has so far not reconsidered its decision, despite past and ongoing diplomatic reactions and widespread international protests; calls on the Commission, the European External Action Service (EEAS) and the Council to make use of bilateral and multilateral channels to urge Norway to stop all commercial whaling;
 9. Urges the Council and Commission, at the forthcoming IWC-67 meetings, to take a

¹ <http://www.maritime-executive.com/article/norways-whaling-comes-under-fire>

common approach to whaling that is at least as precautionary as the present common position, and to engage with third countries in order to achieve majority support for the creation of whale sanctuaries;

10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, and the Government and Parliament of Norway.