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May 7, 2005

To whom this may concern,

Re: Korea's Position on Distorted Claims from Greenpeace

The Korean government has prohibited whaling activities under the control of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) since the IWC imposed a moratorium on commercial whaling from 1986.

In Korea, whales that die after being accidentally caught in nets or after beaching themselves can be used for edible purposes, but only after an inspection confirms that the whale was not caught illegally. Inspections are conducted scrupulously by the Korea Coast Guard. Such whales are dealt with by experts. The whale treatment facility, which the Ulsan Metropolitan City is planning to establish, is a check point for dealing with whale carcasses in an environment-friendly and sanitary manner.

Korea had conducted whaling activities and eaten whale meat traditionally before the IWC moratorium took effect in 1986. Since then, the Korean government allows whales which die not from whaling activities but from net-entangled to death or being stranded to death, to be used for edible purposes.

In addition, the Korean government is making its utmost efforts to conduct scientific management such as the assessment of, and ecological and environmental surveys on Korea's cetacean resources. It is also seeking measures to use aquariums and dolphin shows. These policies are based on the results of scientific and rational studies on cetacean resources.

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Therefore, the Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries kindly asks that Greenpeace shows more interest in and understanding of Korea's whale policies, designed to promote the rational and scientific conservation and sustainable use of whales and dolphins. The Ministry also hopes that the organization ensures that the information it provides to the public is accurate and undistorted.

Sincerely yours,

Ki-Hiok Bang
IWC Commissioner