

India Reaffirms Commitment to Conservation of Whales and Other Cetaceans at IWC-70 in Hobart, Australia

Science-based conservation, international cooperation and practical measures essential to address threats to cetaceans, stresses India

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India today underlined the need for conservation of whales and other cetaceans at the 70th meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC-70), being held in Hobart, Australia, from 28.09.2026 to 02.10.2026.



In its Opening Statement at IWC-70, India emphasized the importance of continued collaboration among range countries, scientific institutions and relevant international organisations for effective cetacean conservation. India highlighted that improved scientific information on population status, distribution, movements, breeding ecology and threats is essential for strengthening conservation measures and supporting informed decision-making.

India reaffirmed its support for scientific studies and evidence-based approaches to ensure that the conservation and management of cetaceans remain grounded in sound scientific understanding. It also emphasized the importance of greater cooperation among governments, researchers and local communities in developing practical and locally appropriate approaches to address threats to cetaceans.



The meeting assumes special significance as it coincides with the 80th anniversary of the signing of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling.

The International Whaling Commission (IWC) was set up under the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, signed in Washington DC on 02.12.1946, as the global body responsible for management of whaling and conservation of whales. Its membership includes 89 governments from all over the world. India has been a member of the International Whaling Commission since 1981 and has played a proactive and prominent role in the conservation of whales.

Cetacean species occurring in Indian waters receive the highest level of legal protection under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. Several Marine Protected Areas have also been notified in the country to provide protection to the rich marine biodiversity, including whales, dolphins, dugongs, sharks, rays, turtles and corals.

The Government of India has further initiated Project Dolphin, adopting a holistic approach towards the conservation of dolphins, whales, porpoises and associated aquatic ecosystems. India also attaches particular importance to the conservation of the Arabian Sea humpback whale, which has been identified among the 25 species for focused conservation efforts.

India reiterated that the future work of the International Whaling Commission should continue to be guided by science-based conservation priorities, international cooperation and practical measures for addressing the diverse threats faced by whales and other cetaceans.

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