

June 15, 2015

President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500



Dear President Obama:

On May 22, 2015, the undersigned member organizations of the Whales Need US (WNUS) coalition, representing millions of US citizens, wrote to the Secretaries of Commerce, Interior and State to express our concerns with the start of the 2015 whaling season in Iceland and ongoing exports of whale products (see attached). Specifically, the undersigned organizations requested that your administration immediately impose targeted economic trade sanctions on Icelandic companies linked to whaling, based on the Pelly Amendment certifications of Iceland in July 2011 and February 2014, and your subsequent Presidential Directives of September 15, 2011 and April 1, 2014.

Since that letter, it has been confirmed that 1,800 metric tons of endangered fin whale products have left Iceland on board the *Winter Bay*, destined for Japan. Although the vessel destination was initially listed as Luanda, Angola and then Tema, Ghana, the *Winter Bay* has been tracked across the North Atlantic and docked at Tromsø, Norway on June 11. In a recent interview with local media, Kristján Loftsson, the head of the Hvalur whaling company, confirmed that he is looking to ship the whale products to Japan through the Arctic via the Northeast Passage, following the stop in Norway.<sup>1</sup>

While we appreciate the heightened diplomatic measures taken against Iceland under your 2011 and 2014 directives, we believe that these measures clearly have not been sufficient to deter Iceland from whaling and trade in whale products. We believe that stronger actions are necessary, and should be taken as quickly as possible to avoid another season of whaling in 2015 and more trade.

We therefore urge you to immediately impose more substantive measures as allowed under the Pelly Amendment, including the imposition of targeted trade sanctions against companies in Iceland with ties to the whaling industry (see Annex), until such time as Iceland ceases its commercial whaling program and international commercial trade in whale products.

---

<sup>1</sup><http://www.visir.is/eigandi-hvals-segir-dyraverndunarsinna--smaklikur-sem-kalla-sig-mjog-flottum-nofnum-/article/2015150608932>

Respectfully,

*Diane Alps*

Diane Alps  
President  
American Cetacean Society

*Cathy Liss*

Cathy Liss  
President  
Animal Welfare Institute

*Hardy Jones*

Hardy Jones  
Executive Director  
BlueVoice

*A. Daniel Knaub*

Dan Knaub  
President  
Cetacean Society International

*Nancy Azzam*

Nancy Azzam  
Executive Director  
Dolphin Connection

*Allan Thornton*

Allan Thornton  
President  
Environmental Investigation Agency

*Gershon Cohen Ph.D.*

Gershon Cohen  
Campaign Director  
Great Whale Conservancy

*Phil Kline*

Phil Kline  
Senior Ocean Campaigner  
Greenpeace

*Will Anderson*

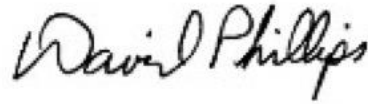
Will Anderson  
President  
Green Vegans/The New Human Ecology

*Kitty Block*

Kitty Block  
Vice-President  
Humane Society International



Dr. Toni Frohoff  
Elephant and Cetacean Scientist  
In Defense of Animals



David Phillips  
Executive Director  
International Marine Mammal Project of  
Earth Island Institute



Deb Adams  
Executive Director  
legaSeas International



Scott Leonard  
Director of Operations  
Nantucket Marine Mammal Conservation  
Program



Taryn Kiekow Heimer  
Senior Policy Analyst  
Natural Resources Defense Council



Candace Crespi  
Campaign Director  
Oceanic Preservation Society



Peggy Oki  
Founder and Director  
Origami Whales Project



Lauren Bickley  
Conservation Manager  
Pacific Whale Foundation



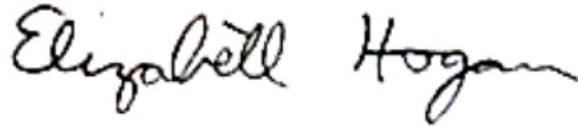
Charles Owens  
President  
Peninsula Citizens for the Protection  
of Whales



Regina Asmutis-Silvia  
Executive Director – North America  
Whale and Dolphin Conservation



Jeff Pantukhoff  
President and Founder  
The Whaleman Foundation



Elizabeth Hogan  
Campaigns Manager for Ocean and Wildlife  
World Animal Protection



Leigh Henry  
Senior Policy Advisor, Wildlife Conservation  
World Wildlife Fund

cc:

The Honorable John Kerry, Secretary, U.S. Department of State  
The Honorable Sally Jewell, Secretary, U.S. Department of Interior  
The Honorable Penny Pritzker, Secretary, U.S. Department of Commerce  
Mr. Russell Smith, Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Fisheries, National  
Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Commissioner to IWC, USA  
Ms. Christina Goldfuss, Council on Environmental Quality  
Dr. Rebecca Lent, Executive Director, Marine Mammal Commission