



## **Pew Welcomes Decision to Hold IWC Special Meeting on the Future of the IWC**

. Anchorage, 31 May 2007 – Monica Medina, director of the Pew Whale Conservation Project, welcomed today’s decision of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) to hold a special meeting to discuss thoroughly the challenges that lay ahead to reinforce the International Whaling Commission.

“Discussions this week on the future of the IWC clearly show that a thorough review and a fresh look are needed to bring the IWC into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”

“We are seven years into the new millennium, but the IWC has hardly changed since it was created in 1949. It is high time to reform the IWC. The world has changed, our understanding of the ocean has changed, whale watching has become prominent, international environmental governance needs have changed, and new environmental threats to whale populations have emerged.”

“It is clear from this week’s meeting that there is general agreement among the commissioners that the institution is itself at risk of extinction. If we can resolve the on-going controversy over commercial whaling, we will be in a better position to address conservation comprehensively, and bring the IWC into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.”

The report of a Pew-sponsored Symposium on the State of Whale Conservation in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century was one of three documents the IWC reviewed this week at its annual meeting in Anchorage to discuss and consider its future. Pew will continue to contribute in a constructive manner in the work of the IWC, with a view to its modernization.

### **About the Pew Environment Group**

For the past two decades, Pew has been a major force in both informing and promoting conservation policy in the United States and, in recent years, internationally. The Pew Environment Group works to advance environmental policy by supporting top-level scientific research; building, assisting and coordinating broad coalitions of organizations representing diverse constituencies concerned about environmental protection in the United States and abroad; and making strategic investments in strengthening the capacity of environmental groups to achieve shared policy goals. Our work is focused on reducing the scope and severity of three major global environmental problems:

- dramatic changes to the Earth’s climate caused by the increasing concentration of greenhouse gases in the planet’s atmosphere;
- the erosion of large wilderness ecosystems that contain a great part of the world’s remaining biodiversity; and
- the destruction of the world’s marine environment, with a particular emphasis on global fisheries

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