

Administration of Barack Obama, 2014

Memorandum on Pelly Certification and Icelandic Whaling

April 1, 2014

Memorandum for the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Education, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the United States Trade Representative, the Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, and the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisers

Subject: Pelly Certification and Icelandic Whaling

On January 31, 2014, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell certified under section 8 of the Fisherman's Protective Act of 1967 (the "Pelly Amendment")(22 U.S.C. 1978), that nationals of Iceland are conducting trade in whale meat and products that diminishes the effectiveness of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). In her letter, Secretary Jewell expressed her concern for these actions, and I share these concerns.

To ensure that this issue continues to receive the highest level of attention, and in accordance with an interagency-developed set of recommendations, I direct: (1) relevant departments and agencies to raise concerns with Iceland's trade in whale parts and products in appropriate CITES fora and processes and, in consultation with other international actors, to seek additional measures to reduce such trade and enhance the effectiveness of CITES; (2) relevant senior Administration officials and U.S. delegations meeting with Icelandic officials to raise U.S. objections to commercial whaling and Iceland's ongoing trade in fin whale parts and products and to urge a halt to such action, including immediate notification of this position to the Government of Iceland; (3) the Department of State and other relevant departments and agencies to encourage Iceland to develop and expand measures that increase economic opportunities for the nonlethal uses of whales in Iceland, such as responsible whale watching activities and educational and scientific research activities that contribute to the conservation of whales; (4) the Department of State to re-examine bilateral cooperation projects and, where appropriate, to base U.S. cooperation with Iceland on the Icelandic government changing its whaling policy, abiding by the International Whaling Commission moratorium on commercial whaling, and not engaging in trade in whale parts and products in a manner that diminishes the effectiveness of CITES; (5) the Department of State to inform the Government of Iceland that the United States will continue to monitor the activities of Icelandic companies that engage in commercial whaling and international trade in whale parts and products; (6) Cabinet secretaries and other senior Administration officials to evaluate the appropriateness of visits to Iceland in light of Iceland's resumption of fin whaling and ongoing trade in fin whale parts and products; and (7) relevant departments and agencies to examine other options for responding to continued whaling by Iceland.

It is my expectation that departments and agencies make substantive progress implementing the actions outlined above. To this end, within 6 months, I direct departments and agencies to report to me on their actions through the Departments of State, Commerce, and the Interior.

I believe that continuing focus on Icelandic whaling activities is needed to encourage Iceland to halt commercial whaling and support international conservation efforts. Just as the United States made the transition from a commercial whaling nation to a whale watching nation, we must enhance our engagement with Iceland to facilitate this change.

BARACK OBAMA

Categories: Communications to Federal Agencies : Iceland, whaling, Pelly certification, memorandum.

Names: Jewell, Sarah M.R. \"Sally\".

Subjects: Environment : Whaling; Iceland : Whaling; Interior, Department of the : Secretary; Whaling Commission, International.

DCPD Number: DCPD201400226.