



THE HON PETER GARRETT AM MP

MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE AND THE ARTS

TRANSCRIPT

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**DOORSTOP, QUINTAY WHALE MUSEUM, CHILE
EVENT WITH THE PRESIDENT OF CHILE, MICHELLE BACHELET,
SIGNING DECREES FOR THE ONGOING PROTECTION OF WHALES IN CHILEAN WATERS
AND RECOGNITION AS A NATURAL MONUMENT
MONDAY 23 JUNE 2008**

Issues: IWC

REPORTER: Well Minister, we're standing at an old whaling station. I guess that is what you would like to see around the world, this type of technology gone.

MINISTER GARRETT: What a fantastic imitative of this country, Chile. To think that in the '70's this was a whaling station and this community made its living from whaling. And now they have taken this really positive step in declaring the whole area a conservation zone for whales and cetaceans and they are going to build an industry of whale watching, hopefully in time, as we have in Australia.

REPORTER: Would you hope that eventually perhaps facilities in Japan like this might be the same?

MINISTER: Well, what we say clearly is that the long term future for our whale populations is for us to get great pleasure and enjoyment from them by watching them and building sustainable economies instead of counting the numbers that we kill.

REPORTER: The Chairman of the IWC said late yesterday that he didn't think there was going to be any outcome; in fact he wasn't sure there was even going to be a vote this week. That doesn't auger well for what is going to come out of this week does it?

MINISTER: Let's see the way the discussions unfold, but if we have a strong agreed process that takes seriously the issues and views that Australia has put on the table, and if there is a consensus in the Commission that we can take those proposals forward, then that will be a positive step. But we've got a way to go. It is day one and we have got another four days after this one.

REPORTER: Do you think that Japan will try and reintroduce whaling of Humpbacks again this year. That sees to be their trump card that they pull out.

MINISTER: The Commissioner said yesterday that the Japanese had indicated that they wouldn't go ahead with a Humpback kill. This happened last year as well. We think that that is already something that has already been effectively decided. We wouldn't expect to see Humpbacks come through this time and neither should they.

But there are more important issues that we have to discuss as well. Let's make sure there is rigorous science in this Commission. Let's look at the positive proposals that Australia has brought forward which we're seeing very strong support for from some of the South American nations in particular, and let's make sure there is a way of discussing those solid and strong conservation proposals for this Commission, including when it meets again next year.

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