

S A F E G U A R D I N G

Our marine biodiversity



The Australian Government remains a passionate world leader in the protection and conservation of whales and dolphins. In recognition of the place these creatures have in our marine ecosystem the Government is investing in a range of new conservation and diplomacy measures.

International Whaling – Conservation and Diplomacy Initiatives

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

The Australian Government has committed \$32.5 million over six years for national and international non-lethal research and conservation initiatives. Funding will provide for:

- the Southern Ocean Research Partnership which brings together countries to undertake non-lethal cetacean research in the Southern Ocean
- the Australian Marine Mammal Centre to provide competitive grants for non-lethal research and other strategic activities that will help Australian efforts in whale conservation
- the progression of the government's international and national whale conservation objectives by supporting broader marine mammal policy and science capacity.

This vital funding supports innovative surveys that use aircraft, ships and yachts to deploy the latest non-lethal research techniques, as well as track whales along Australian coasts.

Australia is also conducting outreach in support of our proposals to reform the International Whaling Commission into a conservation focused organisation.

A cooperative and coordinated global response to this issue is crucial and Australia is doing its part by focusing on whale conservation in the Southern Ocean and encouraging partner countries to join in this important initiative.

Special Envoy – Whale Conservation

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

The appointment and ongoing work of the Special Envoy for Whale Conservation fulfils the government's commitment to intensify Australian efforts to bring an end to 'scientific' and commercial whaling.

- Building on discussions involving the Prime Minister, Ministers and senior officials, the Special Envoy has had high level direct dialogue with Japan and other key countries in the International Whaling Commission (IWC).
- \$0.3 million will support the efforts of the Special Envoy in 2008–09 to achieve increased international support for Australian IWC reform initiatives.

Southern Ocean Maritime Patrol and Response Program

Australian Customs and Border Protection Service

- Since 2004, the Oceanic Viking has played a considerable role in protecting Australia's marine biodiversity and the ecologically sensitive Antarctic environment.
- Recognising this, the Australian Government will invest a further \$240.7 million from 2010–11 (with \$60.3 million in 2013–14) to allow the vessel to continue to patrol the Southern Ocean and protect our nation's environmental interests.
- The physical presence and highly visible nature of the Oceanic Viking, in addition to its unpredictable patrol patterns, has been very effective in deterring illegal fishing.

Illegal Foreign Fishing in Northern Waters – Increased Enforcement

Australian Customs and Border Protection Service

In addition to the government's responsibilities for whale conservation, preventing and deterring illegal foreign fishing is critical for the protection of our marine ecosystems.

- The government's \$39.1 million investment over four years will support strong on-water and on-land responses to illegal foreign fishing.
- Prevention, deterrence, enforcement and compliance action against illegal foreign fishing vessels will help to protect Australia's northern waters.