

# JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

**The Hon Peter Garrett MP**

Australian Minister for the Environment,  
Water, Heritage and the Arts

**The Hon Steve Chadwick MP**

New Zealand Minister of Conservation

## **AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND AFFIRM CLOSE RELATIONSHIP ON WHALE CONSERVATION**

New Zealand and Australia will continue to work together to lead the global debate on the conservation of whales.

“By working together, we believe Australia and New Zealand can maximise their efforts for international whale conservation” Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett and New Zealand Conservation Minister Steve Chadwick said today.

The two Ministers met in Melbourne where they were attending meetings of all Australian ministers of conservation and environment. Their discussions focussed particularly on concerns over the continuation of so-called ‘scientific’ whaling in the Southern Ocean Sanctuary, and proposals to improve the functioning of the International Whaling Commission.

“We are not only anti-whaling; we are pro-conservation: it is time to move beyond the old debate about whaling quotas and to recognise that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century we need to discuss goals for whale conservation,” said Mr Garrett.

The ministers agreed that it was important to continue to seek a diplomatic solution to the problems of whaling in the Southern Ocean and continue discussions on reforms commenced in London.

They also agreed that the proposals to reform the processes of IWC, which Australia put forward earlier this year, need to be supported by the wider IWC community so that they can achieve their full effect of bringing the organisation into line with modern standards and expectations.

“The IWC needs to become a properly functioning, modern organisation that recognises where the public sentiment currently is on whales,” said Minister Chadwick.

Officials from both countries have been asked to work together in the lead up to the next meeting of the IWC in June this year. The Ministers agreed they would continue their dialogue and work closely together at the meeting.