

**Statement by EU and its Member States
Parties to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling¹**

We, the EU and its Member States who are parties to the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling, as active advocates for cetacean conservation worldwide, noted with regrets and serious concerns the unexpectedly large catch of Atlantic white-sided dolphins that took place at Skálabotnur beach, in the Faroe Islands, in September 2021.

We condemn the cruel and unnecessary killing of over 1,400 Atlantic white-sided dolphins, assumedly one of the largest grinds ever recorded. Even before this particular grind, grinds have been considered gruesome and unethical by parts of the civil society and by most of EU Member States.

This hunt is deeply concerning from an animal welfare perspective, in particular regarding the reported duration and cruelty of the method applied to the slaughter of such an unexpected large number of animals belonging to a species of high intellectual development. Specimens are driven in high numbers into bays and on top of the suffering inflicted to each individual animal, additional stress and torture is brought upon the ones still living and witnessing the killings from ashore.

We are also concerned about conservation, as the impact on the populations of white-sided dolphins is not being scientifically investigated, taking into account that these are shared populations with the EU and other non-EU countries, and the additional threats that the species and populations face beyond the hunt.

The hunt for Atlantic white-sided dolphins does not appear to be an integral part of Faroese tradition as the pilot whale hunt is.

We call upon the Faroese Government to immediately stop the outdated practice of whale and dolphin hunting and provide the same strict cetacean protection as the EU Member States and as provided by relevant multilateral agreements.

We believe that the criticism over Faroe Islands whales and dolphin hunt will continue in the framework of the European Union and internationally.

¹ Denmark's position in international relations is characterized by the fact that Denmark, in addition to its membership of the EU, has an independent role as the State responsible for the Faroe Islands, which is not a member of the EU and therefore not bound by EU law. In this latter capacity, Denmark does not participate in this Statement, as it does not correspond to the interests of the Faroe Islands.

Therefore, we urge the Faroese Government to properly investigate such unprecedented hunt by taking into account the international agreements and commitments in the area of animal welfare and biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use. We also urge the Faroese Government to extend this evaluation to the pilot whale hunt.

In this regard, we welcome the announcement by the Faroese Government of a public review of the rules, operational procedures and methods for Faroese Atlantic white-sided dolphin hunt, which, as we believe, will be strongly restricted or completely banned in the near future.
