



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
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Kyoto, 4 December 1998

Letter from the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee to the Environmental Groups concerning the Whale Sanctuary of El Viscaïno (Mexico)

This is to acknowledge the receipt of the about 30,000 petitions presented to me on 1 December 1998 and more that 1500 letters and e-mails sent to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre concerning the World Heritage site of the "*Whale Sanctuary of El Viscaïno*" (Mexico).

I would like to thank all individuals, organizations and environmental groups for their concern about the protection of this precious World Heritage site. I can ensure you that the World Heritage Committee and its Bureau has discussed the state of conservation of the site at several occasions, including its twenty-first and twenty-second sessions.

The Bureau has been informed of new reports received, which the Secretariat, the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, will transmit to the Advisory Body of the World Heritage Committee, the World Conservation Union (IUCN), for review. I can ensure you that we will continue to work with the Mexican authorities to monitor the state of conservation of the site and to guarantee that the values for which the site has been inscribed on the World Heritage List be protected for future generations.

I wish to thank you for your support in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and for your interest in safeguarding the Whale Sanctuary of El Viscaïno in Mexico.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Koichiro Matsuura'.

Koichiro Matsuura
President of the World Heritage Committee

To: Mr Mark Spalding
International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW)
Mr Richard Forrest
Environmental Diplomacy Institute
Mr Jacob Scherr
Natural Resources Defence Council
Ms Laura Martines Rios
Pro Esteros, Mexico

cc: Permanent Delegation of Mexico to UNESCO
IUCN