



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture

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25 May 1999

**Second 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 about 20,000 petitions which I received on 3 May 1999 and numerous individual 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 appreciate the growing concern expressed since the last session of the World Heritage Committee and I would like to thank all those individuals, organizations and environmental groups for their support to protect this unique World Heritage site. As I have informed you in my previous letter of 4 December 1998, the World Heritage Committee and its Bureau has discussed the state of conservation of the site. On 7 May 1999 the World Heritage Centre has received an invitation from the Mexican Government for an international mission to review the situation at the Whale Sanctuary of El Viscaïno. The World Heritage Committee and the UNESCO World Heritage Centre will continue to work with the Mexican authorities to monitor the state of conservation of the site. The World Heritage Convention is an international legal instrument to ensure that effective and active measures are taken for the protection, conservation and presentation of World Heritage properties.

I wish to reiterate my appreciation for your personal support in the implementation of the World Heritage Convention and for your continuing interest in the preservation of the Whale Sanctuary of El Viscaïno in Mexico.

Yours sincerely,

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

Koichiro Matsuura  
President of the World Heritage Committee

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

cc: Permanent Delegation of Mexico to UNESCO  
IUCN