

International concern over ocean fertilization received unanimous backing from key meeting in London

The Contracting Parties to the London Convention and London Protocol, at their Joint Meetings in London this week (29 October to 2 November 2012), agreed on the following statement of concern regarding the iron fertilization project in ocean waters west of Canada

1 *The Parties to the London Convention and London Protocol (LC/LP) express grave concern regarding the deliberate ocean fertilization activity that was recently reported to have been carried out in July of 2012 in waters off the Canadian west coast. This activity, reportedly conducted by the Haida Salmon Restoration Corporation, involved the deliberate introduction into surface waters of 100 metric tonnes of iron sulfate. The Parties recognize the actions of the Government of Canada in investigating this incident.*

2 *Ocean fertilization has the potential to have widespread, long-lasting, and severe impacts on the marine environment, with implications for human health.*

3 *The Parties to the London Convention and London Protocol reiterate, as agreed in 2008, that ocean fertilization activities, other than legitimate scientific research, should not be allowed. The Parties reiterate that legitimate scientific research is defined as those proposals that have been assessed and found acceptable under the 2010 "Assessment Framework for Scientific Research Involving Ocean Fertilization." The 2010 Assessment Framework should be used to determine, with utmost caution, whether a proposed ocean fertilization activity constitutes legitimate scientific research or is contrary to the aims of the Protocol or Convention. The Parties re-emphasize that the consultation, notification and reporting provisions of the Assessment Framework are integral to the assessment of any proposed ocean fertilization activity.*

4 *The Parties to the Convention and Protocol emphasize that they will continue to work towards providing a global, transparent, and effective control and regulatory mechanism for ocean fertilization activities and other activities that fall within the scope of the LC/LP and have the potential to cause harm to the marine environment.*