

2019.01.15

1 Deputy R.J. Ward of St. Helier of the Minister for the Environment regarding a statement condemning the resumption of whaling by Japan: [OQ.3/2019]

Will the Minister request the Council of Ministers, on behalf of the Government of Jersey, to issue a statement to condemn Japan's decision to withdraw from the International Whaling Commission and to resume commercial whaling?

Deputy J.H. Young of St. Brelade (The Minister for the Environment):

Japan's decision to withdraw from the International Whaling Commission and resume commercial whaling in their waters has been widely criticised by governments across the world, including the United Kingdom. That is referred to in a statement from their Environment Secretary on 28th December 2018. I share the concerns that have been raised and would like to make clear to the Assembly that as a Minister, as a member of what we now refer to as the Government of Jersey or Council of Ministers, I am both disappointed at Japan's withdrawal and opposed to commercial whaling.

3.1.1 Deputy R.J. Ward:

Issues such as this, and other wider environmental issues, given that Jersey is a small Island with a particular environment that we have to protect, should be on the agenda when we are talking to communities around the world with regards to our business and finance links, particularly after Brexit as we move around the world and look for other sources of investment in the Island. Can the Minister reassure us that that is one of the pressures that would be put on to other jurisdictions given the importance of protecting the planet that we have?

Deputy J.H. Young:

I think the Deputy raises an important point and I agree with the sentiment. In terms of how we achieve that I think is a matter that warrants further discussion. But as far as my brief as Minister for the Environment is concerned, that does not extend to myself communicating with other governments. We generally rely on the U.K.'s (United Kingdom) wider reach to lobby on areas such as this and defer to the U.K.'s foreign policy line.

[11:00]

This is especially true with countries that we do not have bilateral relations with, such as Japan. So I think this is a matter which I certainly will discuss with the Minister for External Relations, who is obviously the expert in these matters and protocols. I believe for now, I think it is sufficient that my answer to the question in the States Assembly is on record should suffice.

Deputy R.J. Ward:

May I suggest, as I have in the past, that climate change and environmental issues become a standing order on Council of Ministers' agenda as it is something that affects every single member of this Island and way beyond our shores?