



Dear Friends,

Our country finds itself in the midst of devastating pain and heartbreak. The recent senseless death of George Floyd at the hands of police officers in Minneapolis is just the latest in a string of excessive violent acts and killings directed to Black Americans. They are the victims of systematic abuse fueled by a culture of racism and indifference towards a community that has been oppressed for centuries.

The American Cetacean Society mourns and stands in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement in speaking out against this horrific injustice. We share a collective commitment for accountability and equal justice for all our citizens, regardless of race, ability, sexual orientation, or religion.

All of us have an obligation to raise our voices and continue to work towards a better world for all its citizens. Social and environmental justice go hand in hand. Saving whales and the marine environment cannot be done if we don't value diversity in our own community and recognize the intrinsic human rights enshrined in our laws and constitution. We need to embrace Intersectional Environmentalism, which recognizes that all aspects of humanity are inextricably linked to the wellbeing of our planet, and advocates for both human justice and conservation of our natural environment.

We recognize that organizations like ours can always do better, and understand the need to be more inclusive and provide opportunities to those who are disenfranchised and marginalized. ACS is fully committed to equality for all, and welcome diversity within our organization and community. To that end, we continue to have internal discussions to keep working towards that promise, and make sure to regularly update you with actions and tangible gains. We welcome feedback from our members and friends with suggestions and ideas to help us achieve these goals.

In solidarity and with respect,

Uko Gorter, *president*

*The ACS National Board of Directors:*

Diane Glim, Shelby Kasberger, Ric Matthews, Joy Primrose, Sabena Siddiqui, Kelsey Stone, Jayne Vanderhagen, Bob Wilson.