



Circular Communication to Commissioners, Contracting Governments and
Members of the Scientific Committee
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Submission of Scientific Progress Reports

Each IWC member nation is urged by the Commission to provide a national Scientific Progress Report following guidelines agreed by the Commission. Unfortunately, a very limited number of IWC member countries have submitted Scientific Progress Reports in recent years – an average of 15 reports per year (only 17% of member countries). **The Scientific Committee has repeatedly stressed that a higher submission rate will enhance the information available to it and therefore the quality of the advice presented to the Commission.**

Scientific Progress Reports have their origin in Article VIII, Paragraph 3 of the Convention and are formalised in the Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee (SC) (Rule E.1). They make a vital contribution to the work of the SC and the Commission. They also provide a valuable opportunity for countries to share an overview of their national cetacean research and data to the IWC community, and as such stimulate important cross-country collaboration in science and conservation actions.

Scientific Progress Reports are intended to provide a concise summary of the cetacean research undertaken in member countries as well as a summary of information on direct and incidental anthropogenic mortality, by calendar year. **The goal is to provide an overview rather than detailed data from each country.** For example, bycatch data are presented as a summary of the total bycatch estimated by species and area rather than detailing each individual bycatch incident. The reports also provide information on where the detailed information can be obtained. **Countries with newly established or developing data programmes are encouraged to submit whatever data are available as even partial reports are useful.** If countries also wish to submit their individual data, this should be sent to statistics@iwc.int.

In response to requests from national delegations, an online submission system was developed for ease of submission some years ago. The instructions have recently been enhanced with the goal of facilitating and thereby encouraging submissions. The reports are publicly available at <https://portal.iwc.int/progressreportspublic>. National representatives wishing to submit data and who are using the portal for the first time will need to [register online](#) and then contact it.support@iwc.int for further instructions.

At the 2020 SC68B meeting in Cambridge UK (12-24 May), Secretariat staff will be available to provide a hands-on demonstration of the on-line tool for submitting data. This instruction will be available in all three working languages of the Commission.

Although Scientific Progress Reports can be submitted at any time via the portal, **data received by 1 May 2020 will be available for statistical query at SC68B; this is strongly encouraged.**

Dr Rebecca Lent
Executive Secretary

c.c. Accredited observers to the IWC