IWC/J16/SC-CC/01

Update on IWC progress in engaging other Intergovernmental Organisations

IWC Secretariat

INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION

Papers submitted to the IWC are produced to advance discussions within that meeting; they may be preliminary or exploratory.
It is important that if you wish to cite this paper outside the context of an IWC meeting, you notify the author at least six weeks before it is cited to ensure that it has not been superseded or found to contain errors.

Update on IWC progress in engaging other Inter-Governmental Organisations
Submitted by the Secretariat

This document should be read in conjunction with IWC/66/04(2016) rev1 which provides observer reports from attendance at other meetings

SUMMARY

At its last meeting the Scientific Committee/Conservation Committee Working Group noted that there were a number of IWC recommendations for increased engagement with a range of organisations. It highlighted that these efforts would increase the likelihood of IWC priorities being picked up and acted on by other organisations and could improve the success of bids to international funding agencies. As a result the Working Group agreed that the Secretariat would establish contact with the Arctic Council; the IMO; the CMS and the CBD and other organisations in order to progress recommendations arising though the Scientific Committee, Conservation Committee and IWC workshops.

Subsequently, the Secretariat has worked with the Chairs of the Scientific Committee and of the Conservation Committee, and of their respective working groups (as appropriate) to identify and take forward a number of opportunities for engaging other organisations. This work has responded to existing IWC recommendations and mandates; Resolution 2014-2[1] and new and emerging opportunities. This paper provides a report on progress to date and suggestions for next steps. The Working Group is **invited** to discuss the progress made and to comment on or endorse the suggestions in this document.

The Secretariat is ready to continue working with Chairs of the relevant committees and IWC experts as appropriate, to take forward IWC recommendations for engagement with other organisations; and to be proactive in identifying future opportunities and bringing these to the attention of the relevant committees. Suggested actions include the following:

(i) An increased focus on strengthening engagement at regional level (e.g. with UNEP regional offices and organisations; RFMOs; SPREP and the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS)). This presents opportunities with respect to mitigation of threats to cetaceans; identification and dissemination of best practice; capacity building and the potential for joint fundraising efforts.
(ii) Continued efforts to cooperate with the IMO on issues of mutual interest, and to input substantively to future meetings of the IMO and its Marine Environmental Protection Committee (MEPC) as appropriate, particularly with respect to ship strikes and marine debris.
(iii) The progression of outstanding recommendations for closer engagement with the Arctic council; and continuing to explore potential for collaboration with PAME.
(iv) Continued engagement with the biodiversity-related conventions, particularly the CBD, CMS, ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS to explore and take forward opportunities for further collaboration; and a review of the relevance of the strategic plan for biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets to the work of the IWC.
(v) Continued efforts to strengthen relationships with FAO and COFI with regards to by-catch and entanglement (in the immediate term, on the issue of gear marking) and to explore opportunities for engagement on other issues.
(vi) Discussions with NAMMCO with respect to shared interests and to identify any opportunities for closer collaboration.
(vii) Continued efforts to strengthen engagement with the UN system including UNGA and the Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (DOALOS) on issues relevant to UNCLOS; as well as with UNEP and a watching brief on developments under UNEA.
(viii) A review of the relevance of the SDGs to IWC work; and taking forward (as appropriate) opportunities for engagement with the process for SDG review and implementation.

[1] In Resolution 2014-2 the Commission "Decides to seek enhanced collaboration in the conservation of migratory cetaceans with other intergovernmental organisations whose cooperation is essential to secure the lasting protection of these species in the world ocean".

In addition to the above list, IWC Contracting Governments may wish to explore the potential for increasing co-ordination between national focal points for other intergovernmental organisations and the IWC. This would support implementation of IWC Resolution 2014-2 which "Invites Contracting Parties to raise the need for increased international collaboration regarding highly migratory cetaceans in relevant international fora with a view to contributing to the conservation efforts of the IWC".

DETAILS OF PROGRESS TO DATE AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

1. The International Maritime organisation (IMO)

The Secretariat, working with the convenor of the Scientific Committee subcommittee on Human Induced Mortality, has undertaken a number of recent activities to strengthen engagement with the IMO. A meeting with the IMO Secretariat on January 15th 2016 discussed a range of issues of mutual interest and identified a number of follow up actions including (i) the IMO and IWC will continue efforts to cooperate on issues of mutual interest; (ii) joint follow up with contacts in Sri Lanka regarding addressing the blue whale ship strike offshore of Dondra Head; (iii) further liaison on marine debris including, potentially through IMO work with the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP) (www.gesamp.org) and with respect to port reception facilities and (iv) updating IMO on the progress on Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) and discussions in the Scientific Committee on this issue.

A document *'Information on recent outcomes regarding minimizing ship strikes to cetaceans'* was submitted to the 69th meeting of the IMO Marine Environmental Protection Committee in April 2016 (MEPC 60/10/3, SC/66b/ForInfo28), attended by the Secretariat and Convenor of HIM. The paper was discussed under the agenda item related to Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs) and drew attention to work by the IWC on ship strikes including identification of high risk areas and potential mitigation measures and the collection of data through the IWC ship strike database. The presentation was widely welcomed with supportive comments from Belgium, Chile, New Zealand, United Kingdom, ACOPS, IFAW and the World Shipping Council (WSC).

Proposed next steps:

(i) Secretariat to continue efforts to cooperate with the IMO on issues of mutual interest
(ii) Secretariat/Convenor of HIM to attend future IMO meetings, including the MEPC (as appropriate) and consider the opportunity for side bar presentations on particular issues
(iii) Secretariat to explore the potential advantages of IWC engagement with GESAMP.

2. Arctic Council

The IWC Secretariat's Head of Science attended the first meeting of the Arctic Council Working Group for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Meeting (PAME) from 1st-3rd February 2016 and gave a presentation on IWC's Arctic relevant programmes and activities. In response, PAME expressed its support for ongoing communication, cooperation and collaboration between PAME, IWC and NAMMCO on issues of mutual interest. These include conservation measures; Arctic marine shipping assessment and marine traffic systems; engagement with Arctic indigenous marine communities and Arctic indigenous resource use; and off-shore oil and gas guidelines.

There are outstanding Scientific Committee recommendations for further engagement with the Artic Council including the IWC requesting observer status on the Arctic Council, and the proposal to write to the Arctic Council with proposed measures to reduce ship strikes along arctic shipping routes.

Proposed next steps: IWC Secretariat and Scientific Committee progress outstanding recommendations for closer engagement with the Arctic council and continue cooperation with PAME.

3. The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS); Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANs) and Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS).

The IWC Secretariat has an existing Memorandum of Understanding with the CMS Secretariat which acts as a framework for cooperation on issues of mutual interest. In June 2015 the IWC Secretariat and the Secretariats of CMS and ASCOBANS met to discuss opportunities for strengthening engagement. A number of

opportunities were identified including ongoing consultation and information sharing on respective programmes (e.g. on entanglement, marine debris, ship strikes and climate change); immediate opportunities for collaborative working (e.g. joint work on strandings guidance and necropsy protocols and IWC input to the development and implementation of CMS boat based wildlife watching guidelines); the potential for collaborative research and joint fundraising; and the opportunity to jointly engage other stakeholders of interest including the RFMOs and the FAO. The Secretariat attended meetings of the ASCOBANS advisory committee (28th Sepember-1st October 2015) and the ACCOBAMS advisory committee (20th-22nd October 2015) to input on issues of concern to the IWC.

Proposed next steps: Secretariat to continue its ongoing cooperation with CMS, ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS and to take forward immediate areas for collaboration including development of strandings protocols and advice; and IWC input to CMS boat based whale watching guidelines.

4. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

The Secretariat has undertaken a number of recent efforts to establish and to strengthen engagement with the CBD. This included an exchange of letters, and a meeting between the Secretariats of the IWC and the CBD in March 2016 at which a range of issues of mutual interest were discussed including marine debris; whale watching; underwater noise and ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs). Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara represented the IWC at a CBD expert meeting on the future of EBSAs, 22-24 February 2016.

In February 2016 the Secretariat submitted an information document on IWC work on cetacean conservation and the sustainable management of whaling (UNEP/CBS/SBSTTA 20/INF/57) to the 20th meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological advice (SBSTTA). This document gave a brief description of IWC work on the conservation and management of cetaceans and provided some detailed information on the status and recovery of large whales.

The next meeting of the CBD Conference of Parties from 4-17th December 2016 will include an in-depth review of the CBD work programme on marine and coastal biodiversity including issues such as marine debris, anthropogenic underwater noise and training activities. The IWC has the opportunity attend and contribute to this meeting.

Proposed next step: Secretariat to continue to explore opportunities for cooperation with the CBD including input and attendance at its forthcoming Conference of Parties in 2016.

4.1 The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

At its tenth meeting (18 -29 October 2010, Nagoya, Japan) the CBD Conference of Parties adopted a revised and updated Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, for 2011-2020. This plan has since been adopted by all the biodiversity-related conventions [2] and is accepted as an overarching framework on biodiversity for the entire United Nations system as well as for other partners engaged in biodiversity management and policy development.

The 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets address a range of issues on which the IWC also has a mandate or interest including conservation of threatened species (target 12); sustainable consumption and production (target 4); sustainable fisheries (target 6); pollution (target 8); protected areas (target 11); traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities (target 18) and research and technology transfer (target 19). Thus there is the opportunity for engagement with the Aichi Targets, and the relevant policy planning processes at international and national level, to strengthen the progression of IWC priorities.

Proposed next step: The IWC Secretariat to present a review of the relevance of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets to work of the IWC to the Conservation Committee at IWC66 in 2016.

[2] A self-identified group of seven conventions working on international biodiversity issues- the Convention on Biological Diversity the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the World Heritage Convention and the International Plant Protection Convention.

5. Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)

IWC recommendations with respect to strengthening its relationship with FAO refer in particular to the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and its work on gear marking, and the value that gear marking can contribute to entanglement mitigation approaches. The Secretariat recently submitted information relevant to entanglement in marine debris to an FAO-organised expert consultation on the marking of fishing gear. The culmination of this consultation will be the production of Draft Guidelines for the implementation of a System for the Marking of Fishing Gear, which will be presented to the forthcoming meeting of FAO COFI, 11-16 July 2016. The Secretariat will attend this meeting and proposes to make a statement in support of the gear marking proposal.

Proposed next steps:

(i) Secretariat to attend forthcoming COFI meeting and make a supportive statement on gear marking, seeking input from IWC experts as appropriate.
(ii) The Secretariat continue its efforts to strengthen its relationship with FAO with regards to by-catch and entanglement and to explore opportunities for engagement on other issues

6. International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

The IWC has continued its engagement with IUCN in a number of areas particularly Conservation Management Plans (CMPs) and participation in the IUCN Western Gray Whale Advisory Panel (WGWAP) and has maintained its observer arrangement through the Scientific Committee.
David Mattila (Secretariat) is a member of the IUCN Task Force on Marine Mammal Protected Areas. This Task Force is leading work on the establishment of criteria for Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) and there are opportunities for this work to be further discussed in the IWC, including for the utility of the IMMA approach (along with other area based measures) in the planning of mitigation strategies for ship strikes and other threats to marine mammals.
Proposed next step: Continue liaison with the IUCN Task Force on Marine Mammal Protected Areas, including to explore ways to progress the recommendations made at the workshop of the Joint IWC-SPAW Workshop to Address Collisions Between Marine Mammals and Ships with a Focus on the Wider Caribbean.

7. Regional Marine Fisheries Organisations (RFMOs)

The IWC has a number of shared interests with the RFMOs, most particularly in relation to by-catch; entanglement and marine debris. It currently liaises with the RFMOs through observers at meetings and through the Regional Fisheries Body Secretariats network (RSN). At the last meeting of the RSN the Executive Secretary gave a presentation on the IWC global entanglement programme.

Proposed next steps: The Scientific Committee and Conservation Committees may wish to raise any issues for communication to particular RFMOs on which IWC are represented as observers, or for the Executive Secretary to bring to the RSN.

8. North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO

The IWC has continued to develop its engagement with NAMMCO on several issues including hunting safety and continued improvement in humane killing methods. In February 2016 the IWC's Executive Secretary attended the NAMMCO Council meeting as observer. NAMMCO is expected to attend IWC66 in order to present the outcomes of its recent expert workshop on improvement in hunting methods. In October 2015, the IWC Head of Science attended the NAMMCO symposium on the impacts of human disturbance on Arctic marine mammals and gave a presentation on relevant work within the IWC. The development of this work area, along with emerging NAMMCO work streams on entanglement and strandings, present opportunities for continued collaboration with the IWC.

Suggested next step: IWC Secretariat to take forward further discussions with NAMMCO with respect to shared interests and identify any opportunities for closer collaboration.

9. Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

The IWC has ongoing cooperation with SPREP in a number of areas including entanglement (trainings in Tonga and Vanuatu). SPREP has designated 2016-2017 as the Year of the Whale and there are a number of opportunities for strengthening collaboration with SPREP during this biennium and beyond including on research; whale watching (dissemination and development of IWC best practice in the region); entanglement and marine debris. There are potential opportunities for joint fundraising.

Proposed next step: Secretariat to hold further discussions with SPREP on opportunities to strengthen collaboration and for joint fundraising efforts.

10. Permanent Commission of the South Pacific (CPPS)

The IWC has worked with CPPS on entanglement training and they attended the ship strikes workshop (2014) in Panama. Their Marine Mammal Action Plan and the Conservation Management Plan for Southern Right Whales were used recently to justify and inform entanglement training in Peru.

Proposed next steps: IWC to continue engagement with CPPS and explore opportunities for further collaboration in the future.

11. UN General Assembly (UNGA) and the UN Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

The IWC Executive Secretary met with the UN Division on Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) in March 2016 to discuss issues of mutual interest and the potential for cooperation, including on the opportunities summarised below.

The UN General Assembly annually updates two relevant resolutions each year that are relevant to IWC priorities and to which the IWC could input. These are the Sustainable Fisheries Resolution and the annual Resolution on the Law of the Sea UNCLOS. As an observer to UNCLOS the IWC is invited to report on the implementation of the annual resolution. A report on its implementation of 69/245, was provided by the Secretariat in July 2015.This addressed issues such as marine debris, climate change, ship strikes, habitat degradation, capacity building, and marine science.

The IWC was invited by the UN Division on Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) to contribute to the report of the Secretary General on the issue of "Marine Debris including Plastics and Microplastics" to the seventeenth meeting of the United Nations Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and Law of the Sea, to be held from 13-17 June 2016, and the Secretariat submitted a report (SC/66B/E10). This will be published at http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm

Proposed next steps: IWC Secretariat to continue its efforts to strengthen engagement with DOALOS including on issues relevant to UNCLOS.

12. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

In September 2015 the Secretariat met with UNEP (Heidi Savelli) to discuss IWC and UNEP collaboration on marine debris. Several opportunities emerged from this including an invitation to join the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML); and for the IWC to review the draft report on marine debris from the Executive Secretary of UNEP to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) (12.1 below).

There are also opportunities for closer engagement between IWC and UNEP regional offices and organisations, for example on entanglement, by-catch and marine debris on the development and dissemination of best practice and capacity building and joint fundraising. There is a history of cooperation in the Caribbean between the IWC entanglement programme and UNEP-SPAW in the context of the SPAW Protocol's Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean (MMAP), including the delivery of a joint workshop on ship strikes in 2014. Parties to the Cartagena Convention and the SPAW Protocol have requested UNEP-SPAW to explore the development of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with the IWC to enhance cooperation and collaboration.

12.1 United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)

A recent Resolution on "Oceans and the Seas" from the second meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 2) held from 23-27th May 2016, called for 'continued cooperation and coordination among a range of global and regional for a and organisations on marine issues, including the International Whaling Commission, to deliver coherently on Sustainable Development Goal 14 and its interrelated targets'.

At the invitation of UNEP, the IWC Secretariat commented on UNEP's report on marine plastic debris and marine microplastics to the second meeting of UNEA, held from 23-27th May 2016. At this meeting, UNEA adopted a Resolution on marine debris which welcomed the work of the IWC (and others) on the impacts of

marine debris on marine biological diversity and invited the coordination of this with other relevant work under the GPML.

Proposed next steps:
(i) The Secretariat continue in its efforts to strengthen engagement with UNEP, with particular focus on opportunities to collaborate with UNEP regional offices and organisations; and explores the potential for agreeing a memorandum of cooperation with UNEP-SPAW
(ii) Consideration is given to the IWC Secretariat joining the Global Partnership on marine litter http://www.marinelitternetwork.org/page/global-partnership-marine-litter as a means of networking, information sharing, knowledge exchange and progress monitoring
(iii) The Secretariat continue to take a watching brief on developments under UNEA.

13. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25th September 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), under which sit a total of 169 targets. Several of the SDG targets provide a clear mandate for action on issues related to IWC priorities. In particular, SDG 14 is to "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development". Targets under SDG 14 address issues of interest to IWC including pollution; marine debris; fishing practices; area based conservation (marine protected areas); sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable tourism; scientific research and technology transfer. The SDGs present the opportunity for these issues to be addressed in an integrated manner along with other sustainable development issues such as poverty elimination (Target 1); food security (Target 2); public health (Target 3); water quality (Target 6); sustainable consumption and production (Target 12); action to address climate change (Target 13) and biodiversity conservation (Target 15).

The inclusion of issues relevant to IWC priorities in the SDGs presents opportunities for the IWC to engage in this global discussion on progress and priorities relevant to its mandate; to influence action by governments, regional bodies and the private sector; and for enhanced cooperation with other organisations on issues of mutual interest relevant to the SDGs. It could also present opportunities for fundraising. The UN General Assembly has recently agreed to organize a global conference on the implementation of SDG once every three years. These global conferences will be the main forum at which the global community will review progress and decide on future action to achieve Goal 14 and its various targets. The first of these conferences will be organized in 2017 in Fiji and the IWC has the opportunity to participate in this meeting.

Proposed next steps:
(i) The IWC review the relevance of the SDGs to IWC work
(ii) The IWC Secretariat keep a watching brief on and take forward (as appropriate) opportunities for engagement with the process for SDG review and implementation.