

IWC/MAY18/CCSC/02

Review of draft database of IWC recommendations

IWC Secretariat



INTERNATIONAL
WHALING COMMISSION

Review of draft database of IWC recommendations

Submitted by the IWC Secretariat

May 2018

1. Introduction

This paper:

- (i) Provides an overview of a draft database of IWC recommendations that is under development following discussions at IWC66 and subsequent intersessional work.
- (ii) Asks a series of questions for the Working Group to answer in reviewing the database. These questions relate to: database format and accessibility; database fields and associated categories; and search functionality of the database and associated outputs.
- (iii) Recommends the continuation of the intersessional group on the database.

A copy of the draft database for initial testing is available online at <http://iwc-public.ns-client.xyz/pages/search.html>. This currently contains a limited amount of data for testing. A demonstration of the database will be given during the meeting.

2. Database Accessibility

There are three key interfaces for the database:

- 1) a basic search
- 2) advance search
- 3) editing function

The location and access rights for each interface are proposed in Table 1.

It is proposed that the ability to add and edit recommendations be restricted to Secretariat only. This is to avoid the scope for duplication/confusion that could be created with multiple editors

Table 1. Proposed access to the database for each user group

Proposed location	Access	Search option	Results	User group
IWC website	Open access	basic search	results on screen and as a .csv file	All
IWC portal	Password	basic and advanced search	results on screen and as a .csv file	Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Commission and its subgroups, Scientific Committee Convenors, Secretariat
IWC portal	Password	basic and advanced search, adding and editing recommendations and actions	results on screen and as a .csv file	Secretariat only

Question to Working Group

- 1) Are the proposed locations and access rights appropriate and should any changes be made?

3. Search options

Two search options will be available – basic and advanced. Tool tips will be available on both search screens to provide guidance on what the search fields are.

The public interface will have the basic search facility that allows searches by:

- Recommendation text
- Type of recommendation (resolution, recommendation, work plan action)
- Year recommendation was made
- Commission endorsed at*
- Commission body that made the recommendations*
- Theme
- Species
- To be Actioned by
- Also relevant to
- Status (Open or Closed)

(*these options are not available at the moment but it is proposed they be added)

The advanced search interface will be restricted access and provide a basic search option, as described above, and an advanced search option to allow for more detailed searches:

- Category of Action
- Review meeting
- Progress

Examples of tailored searches by specific user groups are outlined in Table 2. The Working Group is invited to comment on whether any additional search options are needed.

Table 2. Examples of tailored search options for specific user groups

User groups	'Search by' options
SC convenors	Search by recommendations of SC Sub-committee in one or more years Search for work plan actions. Search for recommendations on a species.
SWG chairs	Search by recommendations of Standing Working Groups in one or more years. Search for work plan actions. Search for recommendations on a species.
Contracting Governments	Search by recommendations aimed at countries in one or more years
Secretariat	Search for recommendations aimed at the Secretariat in one or more years. Search for recommendations on cooperation with other organisations
Observers	Search for recommendations on a particular theme
Other IGOs	Search for recommendations that reference specific IGOs

Questions to Working Group

- 1) Are the search options provided appropriate?
- 2) Are there any specific searches that user groups would need that are not currently included?
- 3) Should the advanced search option be available through the private portal only?

4. Search results

The Search results are displayed on screen (with a right-scroll option) and can also be downloaded in a .csv file.

The search outputs include the above fields along with additional information on the decision process, the date that the recommendation was last reviewed, the outcome of the recommendation and any identified further action.

The database will also display actions needed and this is currently being worked on.

Questions to Working Group:

- 1) Are any other fields needed in the results output?

5. Questions on data categorisation

A full list of the fields in the database is provided in Annex 1, as well as the categories to be used. It is proposed that the Secretariat should add new options to field drop-downs (e.g. new themes, species, organisations) as needed.

It is intended that the Secretariat could enter actions against each recommendation, which would also be categorised. This is currently being worked on and it is proposed that further advice on this is sought in due course from the intersessional group.

Comments on the database fields and categories are welcome with a number of specific questions to the Working Group outlined below.

Questions to Working Group

- 1) Each of the recommendations will require a number. Bearing in mind the requirement for ease of use, what sort of numbering system should be used?
- 2) The database categorises the types of recommendations as 'Resolution, Recommendation, Workplan action, Draw attention'. Are these the correct categories?
- 3) The database intends to capture the way each decision has been made. It is proposed that this could include 'Consensus Resolution', 'Resolution by vote', 'Report adoption', 'Other-consensus', 'Other-vote'. The latter two options are proposed in order to capture decisions of the Commission that do not necessarily come through draft resolutions or reports of Commission subgroups (e.g. Schedule amendments). *Are these categories the right ones?*
- 4) The database includes a "Context" field, which can be completed, for example, if a recommendation does not clearly stand alone without further explanation. However,

experience from data entry so far has been that this is rarely strictly necessary and would be very time consuming to complete for all recommendations. *Is this field needed?*

- 5) The database currently includes fields for “Outcome” and “Further action” which is intended to capture post-implementation information, when progress against recommendations is subsequently reviewed.. Comments on this are welcome, though the working group may wish to review this during discussions of the process for reviewing implementation (see Section 6.)
- 6) Annex 2 provides three examples of recommendations from the database as a demonstration of how categorisation has been undertaken. Comments are welcome on the way the categorisation has been taken and to identify any changes needed
- 7) There are many recommendations that are a general call for further research (e.g. example 2, annex 2). Should these be categorised as ‘Actioned by’ the research community?

6. Data entry and data review process

Details on the process to enter data into the database, and how to use the database outputs to review implementation of recommendations, are included in document IWC/MAY18/CCSC/01 and will be presented separately during the Joint CC/SC Working Group. Potential amendments to the database may be needed to implement decisions on this process.

7. Funding requirements

The development of the database was made possible through a generous voluntary contribution from the Government of the UK. Once finalised, the database will require ongoing technical maintenance as well as population with data. Costs include:

Costs for finalisation of database

Existing provisions will cover some of the further work required. But depending on the extent of these, a modest additional resource may be required.

Ongoing costs

- Staff time for IT support (annual) -6-8 days
- Staff time for data entry (annual)- TBD
- Staff time to prepare outputs-TBD
- IT infrastructure (web and database hosting, other infrastructure, backup storage and software licensing). Approx. £500-£1500 per annum.

These costs will be further elaborated and included in proposals on the database when they are presented to the Commission at IWC67.

Suggestions are welcome from the Working Group on how these funding requirements could be met.

Annex 1

Data fields in database	Format	Category/Drop down	Validation/ Conditions	Search screen	Accessibility	Comments
<i>Recommendation data</i>						
Recommendation text	Free text from Commission reports	None	None	Basic	Public	
Number			Unique code		Public	This is a mandatory field. See questions in Section 5.
Type of recommendation	Standardised categories (drop down menu)	Resolution, Recommendation, Workplan action, Draw attention		Basic	Public	See questions in Section 5.
Year	Standardised categories (drop down menu) to reflect the year the recommendations was made.	2017, 2016, 2015 etc	Number only	Basic	Public	
Commission body (owner)	Standardised categories (drop down menu) to indicate the body that made the recommendation	Commission Budget sub-Committee Conservation Committee Finance & Administration ASW Sub-committee WG on WKM & WI Infractions sub-committee Scientific Committee		A	Public	It is proposed that SC Subcommittees should be added.
Endorsed at Commission?	Standardised categories (drop down menu)	Yes, No, Pending		This is provided in all outputs but is not a search category	Public	It is proposed that if a recommendation is not endorsed it should be removed from public view.
Commission endorsed at	Standardised categories (drop down) to indicate the Commission meeting	IWC66, IWC67		Public	Public	

Annex 1

Data fields in database	Format	Category/Drop down	Validation/Conditions	Search screen	Accessibility	Comments
	recommendation was endorsed at.					
Decision process	Standardised categories (drop down)	Consensus Resolution, Resolution by vote, Report adoption, Other-consensus, Other-vote	This needs to be filled in, when endorsed at Commission	O	Public	Proposed options for further discussion. See questions in Section 5.
Theme	Standardised categories (drop down)	Bycatch & Entanglement Climate Change Conservation Management Plans Disease Marine debris Noise Pollution Sanctuaries Ship strikes Strandings Takes of Small cetaceans Whale Watching		Basic	Public	New categories to be added by the Secretariat as required
Species		Amazon River dolphin Arabian Sea Humpback Whale Bottlenose dolphin Finless porpoise Franciscana Harbour porpoise Hector's dolphin Humpback dolphins Irrawaddy dolphin Killer whales Maui's dolphin North Atlantic Bowhead whales North Pacific Gray Whales River dolphins of India Sousa South Asian river dolphins		Basic	Public	Additional species to be added by the Secretariat as required

Annex 1

Data fields in database	Format	Category/Drop down	Validation/ Conditions	Search screen	Accessibility	Comments
		Southern Right Whales Vaquita Yagtze finless porpoise				
Context/Notes	Free text				not public	See questions in Section 5.
Category of action	Standardised categories (drop down)	Communication Data/monitoring/research Cooperation with industry Cooperation with Governments Cooperation with other organisations Fundraising Hold meeting Policy and/or Policy implementation Recruitment Training/capacity building		A	Visible in private search only	New categories to be added by the Secretariat as required.
Actioned by	Standardised categories (drop down)	Commission Budget sub-Committee Conservation Committee Finance & Administration ASW Sub-committee WG on WKM & WI Infractions sub-committee Scientific Committee Governments (general, range States etc) Government – individually named Governments IWC Secretariat		Basic	Public	Not correct in database at present- to be adjusted. New categories to be added by the Secretariat as required.
Relevant to		Any of the above plus: ACCOBAMS ASCOBANS CBD CMS FAO		B -	Public	Not correct in database at present- to be adjusted. New categories to be added by the Secretariat as required.

Annex 1

Data fields in database	Format	Category/Drop down	Validation/ Conditions	Search screen	Accessibility	Comments
		IOTC IMO Industry Research community To be added as needed				
Document reference	Free text or standardised category (drop down)?	Standardised way of writing section number.		o		
Document URL	URL format	Reference to the online report		o		
Target completion date	a calendar options to choose a date	e.g. 01/01/2018		o		
Meeting to be reviewed	Add a reference?	Meeting reference with year	Required field	A		
Preceded by				O		Example 1: a Recommendation may suggest further work which is completed and leads onto a subsequent Recommendation. Example 2: a Recommendation is repeated in multiple years
Superseded by				O		
<i>Implementation information</i>						Relevant to discussions on the process for data entry and review. Amendments to database may be required depending on outcome of these discussions
Progress		Not started ongoing unknown	Only visible if recommend ation is open	a	Public	
Actions taken	Free text			o	Public	
Actions needed	Free text			O	Not public	
<i>Review information</i>						

Annex 1

Data fields in database	Format	Category/Drop down	Validation/ Conditions	Search screen	Accessibility	Comments
Status	Standardised categories (drop down)	Open Closed		B	P	
Last reviewed				O	P	First day of the meeting
Outcome	Free text			O	P	To be discussed. See Questions in Section 5.
Further action	Free text			O	P	To be discussed. See Questions in Section 5.

Annex 2 Example of recommendations that have been entered and how they have been categorised.

EXAMPLE 1. Recommendation Data

- **Replaces:**
- **Year:** 2016
- **Text:** The Committee recommends the continuation of modelling work on the importance of population characteristics in assessing the effects of disturbance from whalewatching; this is directly relevant to its work plan
- **Type of Recommendation:** Workplan action
- **Decision Process:** Report adoption
- **Commission Body:** Scientific Committee
- **Endorsed At:** Yes
- **Commission Endorsed At:** IWC66
- **Context:**
- **Document reference:** Journal of Cetacean Research and Management, Volume 18 Supplement April 2017
- **Document url:**

Implementation Data

- **Theme:** Whale Watching
- **Species:**
- **To be Actioned by:** Scientific Committee
- **Also Relevant to:**
- **Category of action:** Data/monitoring/research
- **Target completion date:** 23/04/2018

Review Data

- **Review meeting:** SC67B
- **Last Reviewed:** N/A
- **Status:** Open
- **Progress:** Ongoing
- **Outcome:**
- **Further Action:**

Actions

Action

Scientific Committee to undertake modelling work on the importance of population characteristics in assessing the effects of disturbance from whalewatching

EXAMPLE 2. Recommendation Data

- **Replaces:**
- **Year:** 2016
- **Text:** Noting cetacean dependence on listening to and producing sounds for their survival, the Committee: (a) recommends increased research and management consideration of the importance of acoustic habitat in cetacean conservation efforts; (b) recommends the set of research efforts (SC/66b/Rep10, Table 2) be undertaken to better quantify the factors underlying masking in cetaceans and encourages further work on acoustic masking in small cetacean species; (c) recommends focussed research to quantify the relationship between reduction in acoustic space and reduction in prey intake; (d) recommends research that explores linkages between masking of sounds and the effect on other life functions than foraging; (e) recommends efforts to expand both statistical frameworks to predict population consequences of masking; (f) recommends that the report of the acoustic masking workshop (SC/66b/Rep10) be conveyed to the Western Gray Whale Advisory Panel Noise Task Force (chaired by Donovan) to support a collaborative approach to noise management (Annex F, Item 3.2.3); (g) notes that many 'quiet areas' are likely to be found in the less industrialised waters of the Southern Hemisphere and, therefore agrees that efforts are needed to involve more scientists from such areas in the Committee's ongoing work on ocean noise.
- **Type of Recommendation:** Recommendation
- **Decision Process:** Report adoption
- **Commission Body:** Scientific Committee
- **Endorsed At:** Yes
- **Commission Endorsed At:** IWC66
- **Context:**
- **Document reference:** Journal of Cetacean Research and Management, Volume 18 Supplement April 2017

- **Document url:**

Implementation Data

- **Theme:** Noise
- **Species:** gray whale
- **To be Actioned by:** Scientific Committee, IWC Secretariat
- **Also Relevant to:** IUCN, IWC Contracting Governments
- **Category of action:** Data/monitoring/research, Communication
- **Target completion date:** 10/09/2018

Review Data

- **Review meeting:** SC67B
- **Last Reviewed:** 23/05/2018
- **Status:** Open
- **Progress:** Ongoing
- **Outcome:**
- **Further Action:**

Actions

Action	Date	#
The set of research efforts (SC/66b/Rep10, Table 2) be undertaken to better quantify the factors underlying masking in cetaceans	N/A	
Convey the report of the acoustic masking workshop (SC/66b/Rep10) to the Western Gray Whale Advisory Panel Noise Task Force (chaired by Donovan) to support a collaborative approach to noise management (Annex F, Item 3.2.3)	31/05/2018	
Involve more scientists from the Southern Hemisphere in the Committees work on noise	N/A	

EXAMPLE 3. Recommendation Data

- **Replaces:**
- **Year:** 2016
- **Text:** The CC recommended dialogue between the Government of Oman and other IWC member Governments to discuss the potential of a CMP for Arabian Sea humpback whales.
- **Type of Recommendation:** Recommendation
- **Decision Process:** Report adoption
- **Commission Body:** Conservation Committee
- **Endorsed At:** Yes
- **Commission Endorsed At:** IWC66
- **Context:**
- **Document reference:** IWC/66/Rep05
- **Document url:**

Implementation Data

- **Theme:** Conservation Management Plans
- **Species:** humpback whale
- **To be Actioned by:** IWC Secretariat
- **Also Relevant to:** OMAN, INDIA
- **Category of action:** Communication
- **Target completion date:** 10/09/2018

Review Data

- **Review meeting:** CC2018
- **Last Reviewed:** N/A
- **Status:** Open
- **Progress:** Ongoing
- **Outcome:**
- **Further Action:**

Actions

Secretariat to send letters to the range states of the Arabian Sea Humpback Whale