



Circular Communication to Commissioners and Contracting Governments
IWC.CCG.1427

Budget Discussion Groups
Call for Participants for Group Two (Scientific Priorities)

At its meeting on 16 October 2020, the Bureau endorsed a proposal from the Budgetary Sub-Committee to establish two informal discussion groups to facilitate the development of balanced budget options for 2022/23. The Bureau encouraged strong participation from the Commission's membership in the groups. The full proposal is attached.

The Budgetary Sub-Committee will present options for a balanced 2022/23 budget to IWC68 for the Commission's consideration. The two informal discussion groups will assist the Budgetary Sub-Committee in this task by identifying where adjustments could be made across all three budget streams (Secretariat, Meetings, Scientific Committee Research Fund) to reduce expenditure.

The recent practice of agreeing deficit budgets has depleted the Commission's cash reserves and is not sustainable. The Commission is facing financial challenges due to an extended period of frozen contributions, the rising cost of meetings, and an expanding work program. Agreeing a balanced budget for 2022/23 and beyond is fundamental to ensuring the ongoing function and stability of the Commission, and is particularly important given the economic implications of the Covid-19 pandemic for Members.

Group one (Process) will comprise the Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission; the Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Scientific, Conservation, ASW and Finance and Administration Committees; and the Secretariat, to develop recommendations for how the Commission could operate more cost effectively.

Group two (Scientific Priorities) provides an opportunity for Commissioners to examine the Scientific Committee's work program and identify areas where savings could be achieved. Group two is open to all Commissioners. The Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Scientific Committee and Conservation Committee will participate in an advisory capacity.

Timing: Both groups will meet virtually in mid-December 2020 and twice in the first quarter of 2021, with the aim of reporting on progress to the next Bureau meeting in April/May 2021. Some engagement and outreach between meetings will be required.

The Budgetary Sub-Committee is seeking expressions of interest from Commissioners for participation in Group two. Commissioners with a background in science or experiencing engaging with the Scientific Committee are encouraged to participate. Heads of Delegation to the Scientific Committee are welcome to participate to support their Commissioner's engagement.

For further information, or to register your interest in participating in group two, please contact Paula Perrett, Chair of the Budgetary Sub-Committee, by emailing whales@awe.gov.au. **Please register your interest by Friday 20 November.**

Budget discussion groups:

	Group one: <u>Process</u>	Group two: <u>Scientific Priorities</u>
Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission • the Secretariat • Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Scientific Committee and Conservation Committee • Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee • Chair of ASW Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioners (with support from Heads of Delegation to the Scientific Committee as needed) • Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Scientific Committee and Conservation Committee (advisory role)
Budget focus	Secretariat, Meetings, Research fund	Research fund
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss options and develop recommendations for how the Commission could operate more cost effectively. • Strategically prioritise and weigh savings options and agree which options to propose to the Commission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the Scientific Committee’s work program and reports, and prioritise activities. • Provide recommendations to group one on which Scientific Committee/research activities could be reduced or stopped if the Commission decides to reduce the research budget. • Assess the potential impact of cost reductions and consider risk management strategies.

Sent on behalf of Paula Perrett, BSC Chair

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c.c. Accredited observers to the IWC