

**SC/68C/E/17**

**Sub-committees/working group name: E**

**IWC Strandings Initiative Four-Year Work Plan 2021-2024**

**IWC**



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High level objective & Description of activity	Timeframe				Lead	IWC community involved	Budget per year/ total budget	Potential funding source(s)	Priority
	2021	2022	2023	2024					Core= essential Top High Medium
Costings applicable to basic delivery of a programme costing a minimum of £75,000 per year.									
<i>Work area 1: Coordination and Funding</i>									
<b>1.1 Agree scope of strandings initiative.</b>  Review and agree core objectives of IWC Strandings Initiative in light of review process. Agree core objectives for year 1 and agree hierarchy for areas where subsequent efforts should be focused. Agree relationship to Global Strandings Network. Agree aspirational size of programme funding should be targeting. Update membership of Strandings Steering Committee.	X				IWC Secretariat	Stranding Initiative Expert Panel	N/A	N/A	<b>Core</b>
<b>1.3 Agree funding strategy for strandings initiative</b>  Review and agree a funding strategy for the SI, and a range and source of funding sources that could be approached . Possible options include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Direct governmental donations</li> <li>• Individual private donations</li> <li>• Industry/military funding</li> <li>• Academic research grants- co-funding/IWC as 'industrial partner)</li> <li>• Crowdsourcing/Social media campaigns</li> </ul>	X				IWC Secretariat	Stranding Initiative Expert Panel	N/A	N/A	<b>Core</b>

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<p><b>1.4 Recruit staff</b></p> <p>This deliverable will be further refined once staffing options have been agreed and costed accordingly. A vote by SEP members in April 2020 was strongly in favour of a hybrid model, where the administrative and technical aspects of the strandings coordinator role are separated, with technical input provided by members of the SEP supported by a part-time stranding administrator within the Secretariat</p>	X				IWC secretariat	IWC Secretariat, Strandings Initiative Expert Panel		Internal IWC voluntary funds required at least for year 1 however funding for subsequent years may be externally won.	Core
<b>Work area 2: Programme administration</b>									
<p><b>2.1 Implement agreed fundraising strategy for Strandings Initiative.</b></p> <p>In light of outputs from section 1.3 &amp; 1.4 above, pursue appropriate fundraising strategy for IWC strandings initiative with aim to have funding in place by FY 2023 onwards</p>	X	X	X		Strandings Initiative administrator	IWC Secretariat, Strandings Initiative Expert Panel	Included in SI administrator cost	n/a	Core
<p><b>2.2 Progress reports of IWC SI to the Commission, Working Group on Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues (WKM&amp;WI) and updates to Scientific Committee (SC).</b></p>	X	X	X	X	Chair of SI EP and Strandings Initiative administrator	Strandings administrator IWC Secretariat	Included in SI administrator cost	n/a	Core

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<p><b>2.3 Annual review of expert panel membership</b></p> <p>Including updating database of expertise, geographic scope and laboratory capacity to be shared with GSN.</p> <p>Wherever possible it is recommended members of the IWC EP are , in liaison with the IWC secretariat strandings initiative team, facilitated to take a technical lead advisory role on specific deliverables required to develop the IWC SI programme</p>	X	X	X	X	Strandings Initiative administrator, IWC secretariat, IWC data manager	Chair of Strandings Initiative Expert Panel	Included in SI administrator cost	n/a	Core
<p><b>2.4 Convening regular expert panel meetings</b></p> <p>Recommendation 3 months interval for virtual meetings with annual meeting coinciding with marine mammal conferences, e.g. WMMC events</p>	X	X	X	X	Strandings Initiative administrator	Strandings Initiative Expert Panel	£18k in 2021 (venue, catering etc.)	IWC welfare funds, external funds	High
<p><i>Work area 3. Development of IWC data management, curation and visualisation capacity <b>NOTE: The aims and activities of this work area will be further refined in collaboration with the new IWC data manager</b></i></p>									
<p><b>3.1 Liaise with international organisations and experts to identify sources of existing data available on cetacean strandings</b></p> <p>Collaborate with international organisations/bodies holding existing cetacean mortality information; evaluate their utility to assist the IWC SI (particularly for metrics of assessing health and existing and emerging threats) and identify key gaps and opportunities to fill knowledge gaps.</p>	X	X	X		Data manager	IWC Secretariat, Scientific Committee (IWC-SC)	Included in Data management role	n/a	High

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<b>3.2 Identify main barriers and gaps in IWC strandings data (national progress reports)</b>  In the context of activity 3.1. develop a questionnaire to contracting & non-contracting governments on barriers to reporting for IWC monitoring programmes. Explore methods to make the IWC national reporting requirements more efficient to reduce reporting burden and ensure the most useful data is acquired for identifying threats to cetacean species	X				Data manager, Strandings Initiative administrator	IWC Secretariat, Scientific Committee (IWC-SC)	Included in costs for data manager		High
<b>3.3 Establish an overview of tissue archive and availability of samples</b>  Also in the context of activity 3.1. investigate appetite and mechanism to collate data on tissue archives in order to encourage the use of such tissue banks on a wider and international scale. Initially limit to high level metadata, comprising basic info on type, species and range of samples stored by individual stranding networks, contact details of the archive holder and conditions for sharing of samples.	X	X			Data manager, Strandings Initiative administrator	IWC Secretariat, Scientific Committee (IWC-SC)	Included in costs for data manager		High
<b>3.4 Develop methods to streamline IWC data reporting, validation and curation.</b>  Develop and publish a data-handling policy  Set up discussion group between with IWC secretariat, IWC conservation committee and IWC database manager to agree scope for how data requests could be streamlined. Consider	X	X			Data manager, SC Ad Hoc Group on databases, IWC secretariat	Strandings Initiative Expert Panel, IWC Conservation Committee	Included in data manager costs,  Database upgrading estimated at £20,000-£30,000 for	External funding sources- project based. Small scale projects potentially through IWC existing funds Or contributions from e.g.:	High

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<p>Costings applicable to basic delivery of a programme costing a minimum of £75,000 per year.</p> <p>developing online reporting form for member countries covering strandings, ship-strike, bycatch and entanglement reports. Incorporate opt-out to reporting forms for member countries to control what data is available online</p> <p>Set up mechanism to collate, validate and archive strandings data provided to SEP members, including image and video files</p> <p>Work with IWC-SI and database designers to develop online form enabling new reports can be added to the database as they occur rather than annually.</p>							initial development with £5000 per annum maintain ace costs	ASCOBANS/ACCOB AMS	
<p><b>3.5 Develop data analysis and visualisation methods</b></p> <p>Liaise with IWC secretariat, IWC conservation committee and IWC database manager to develop data dashboarding and analysis of high level data (where, what when), consider use of online mapping services to produce spatial visualisation of reports from member countries.</p>		X	X	X	Data manager, SC Ad Hoc Group on databases, IWC secretariat	Strandings Initiative Expert Panel, IWC Conservation Committee,	Data 'dashboarding' costs likely £5000-£8000 on top of database costs above	External funding sources- project based. Small scale projects potentially through IWC existing funds Or contributions from e.g.: ASCOBANS/ACCOB AMS	High
<p><b>3.6 Develop links with research institutions and</b></p>			X	X	Data Manager	IWC secretariat in consultation with EP	Varies- most programmes cover 80% of	As above, component may be supported	High

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<p>Costings applicable to basic delivery of a programme costing a minimum of £75,000 per year.</p> <p><b>universities</b></p> <p>Develop mechanism to involve student projects in historic data analysis. Reach out to universities with marine ecology courses and explore collaborations /data-sharing agreements for student projects. Many PhD programmes also involve industrial placements, e.g. NERC doctoral training programmes where IWC would host the student as an 'industrial partner' for up to 3 months. Student input could provide direct epidemiological analysis on historical incidence rates or assist in technically developing data collection, curation or visualisation methods outlined in sections 3.1-3.3 above</p>							placement costs so 3 month programme likely <£5,000	direct by DTP with 20% contribution from IWC as industrial partner	
<i>Work area 4. Emergency stranding response advice and support</i>									
<p><b>4.1 Clarify role and mechanism of Strandings Initiative Expert Panel input in emergency response</b></p> <p>Agree, document and publicise how IWC SI EP can assist during strandings response. Agree framework for how calls are triaged, e.g. hierarchy of regional WhatsApp groups and social media policy. In conjunction with objectives 1.2 and 3.1 develop protocols for how emergency scenarios can most rapidly be responded to deliver consistent, high-quality response to stranded marine mammals globally. Consider setting up an online group for each request for assistance, e.g. MS Teams site, to collate information</p>	X				Strandings Initiative administrator, SI Expert panel	IWC secretariat	Included in SI administrator cost		Core

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<p><b>4.2 Further develop IWC contact and resource list for emergency response in liaison with the Global Strandings Network</b></p> <p>Working with members of the expert panel involved in the Global Strandings Network collate and maintain an up to date global list of strandings responders, including their areas of expertise, government agencies and associated laboratories. Ensure all data protection legislation is followed.</p>	X	X	X	X	Strandings Initiative administrator, SI Expert panel	SI Expert panel, IWC secretariat	Small scale projects potentially through IWC existing funds	Top	
<p><b>4.3 Develop travel policy for on-site emergency response</b></p> <p>Agree mechanism and funding structure by which IWC SI EP members or nominated teams could provide on-site strandings response assistance. This should include strategy to liaise with in country teams, insurance and remuneration policy for external teams</p>	X	X			Strandings Initiative administrator, SI Expert panel	IWC secretariat	Included in SI administrator cost	Core	
<p><b>4.4 Collate and develop toolbox of digital online resources for emergency stranding response</b></p> <p>Desk based task to compile and online resource of existing documentation suitable for emergency strandings response. Develop portal to host these online and maintain version control of any updates. Liaise with webmaster for GSN to upload versions to this platform</p>	X	X	X	X	Strandings Initiative administrator, Data manager	SI Expert panel, IWC secretariat	Included in SI administrator cost, up to £5000 for data hosting and website modification costs	Top	



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<p><b>4.5 Develop 'beach friendly' online material to support emergency stranding response</b></p> <p>Following on from 4.4, develop simplified protocols and 'off the shelf' digital resources which could be used in emergency response situations, including Welfare considerations and key considerations for live animal response, Euthanasia options and contacts to provide remote advice of guidance for dead animal investigations (the "3 minutes/ 30 minutes/ 2 hours necropsy guide).</p> <p>Seek endorsement of validated training aids from IWC Scientific committee</p>		X	X	X	Strandings Initiative administrator, IWC expert panel	SI Expert panel, IWC secretariat	Included in SI administrator cost		High
<p><b>4.6 Liaise with CITES/CBD to streamline the movement of specimens and samples between laboratories to support both emergency response and diagnostic investigations</b></p> <p>Work on simplifying procedures for permits and certificates is currently in progress with derogations being sought as a minimum for OIE reference laboratories. Liaise with CITES as to mechanism and publish/link to protocols/-proforma online to facilitate granting of permissions. Establish if this is limited to UME/MSE emergency investigations or any movement of CITES specimens where the trade will have a negligible impact on the species concerned</p>	X	X			Strandings Initiative administrator, IWC expert panel	SI Expert panel, IWC secretariat	Included in SI administrator cost		High

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<p><b>4.7 Develop and implement a communication strategy for the Strandings Initiative for engagement with national governments (contracting &amp; non- contracting) and broader outreach.</b></p> <p>Includes promotion of IWC data archive, emergency response and capacity building activities, raising awareness of global strandings data resource. Establish list of in-country contacts in government who would be approached in the event of an incident.</p> <p>Provide any required organisational support/endorsement/letters to institutions employing members of the expert panel outlining what level of assistance can be provided to cover their time in IWC-EP strandings events.</p>	X	X			Strandings Initiative administrator	IWC Secretariat, Strandings Initiative Expert Panel, IWC- CC	Included in SI administrator cost		Core
<i>Theme 5: Capacity building of strandings response networks</i>									
<p><b>5.1 Scope out opportunities to collaboratively deliver outreach and capacity building within IWC programmes</b></p> <p>Scope out opportunities to deliver capacity development/training/promotion of stranding response through existing IWC programmes where a joined up approach may be mutually worthwhile e.g., BMI and GWERN entanglement programmes. Information exchange &amp; collection of technical advice/lessons learnt</p>	X	X	X		Strandings Initiative administrator, IWC expert panel	SI Expert panel Bycatch coordinator and Bycatch Standing working group GWERN entanglement programme, IWC Secretariat	Included in SI administrator cost	VCF, External funds- potentially approach affiliated projects	High

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<p>Costings applicable to basic delivery of a programme costing a minimum of £75,000 per year.</p> <p><b>5.2 Develop a clear programme for capacity building training to be offered by the IWC SI, identify routes by which this can be funded and mechanisms for how the work is delivered assessed and followed up.</b></p> <p>Include a structured follow up, review and audit process to training courses and an open review and debrief process involving steering group to assess , further needs for the country and improve future training events</p>		X	X	X	Strandings Initiative administrator, Data manger	<p>Expert panel, IWC Secretariat, Strandings Initiative Expert Panel, GWERN</p> <p>Coordinator, IWC-CC, Contracting Governments</p>	<p>Travel costs variable but budget around £1500 per person travel and subsistence per short (3-4 day) course excluding administration time.</p> <p>This is based on based on: Flight £800 Hotel 4 x £100pn Subsistence 4 x £50pn Ground Transport £100</p>	<p>Various: Requesting governments; external funds; collaborating partners</p>	High

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<p><b>5.3 Identify strategies for identifying training needs and protocols for triaging requests for capacity building</b></p> <p>Follow on from 5.2 above, collate training and capacity development needs for national governments on strandings response and work with members of the expert panel and IWC data manager to identify regions where clear need for capacity building</p> <p>Identify assessment criteria for triaging training requests, e.g. emerging hazards, recent UME, data-deficient region, in-country support, local support/funding</p>			X	X	Strandings Initiative administrator, Data manger	Expert panel, IWC Secretariat, Strandings Initiative Expert Panel, GWERN  Coordinator, IWC-CC, Contracting Governments		VCF, requesting governments; external funds; collaborating partners	Top
<p><b>5.4 Develop links and collaborations with institutions and organisations who deliver disaster response training or veterinary surveillance programmes</b></p> <p>Develop synergies with external terrestrial and marine surveillance and wildlife veterinary response programmes. Identify cross-shared skills, equipment or experience between both terrestrial and marine wildlife veterinarians and stranding responders. Investigate appetite for training provision through network of veterinary schools.</p>		X	X	X	Strandings Initiative administrator,	Expert panel, IWC Secretariat, Strandings Initiative Expert Panel	Included in SI administrator cost	Various, costs likely to be covered by universities if offered as part of training to students	High

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<p><b>5.5 Develop ‘training of trainers’ capacity</b></p> <p>Develop methods to support training those involved in developing and supporting strandings response, including investigating capacity of expert panel members to offer a mentorship programme</p>		x	x	x	Strandings Initiative administrator,	Expert panel, IWC Secretariat, Strandings Initiative Expert Panel	Included in SI administrator cost	Various, costs likely to be covered by universities if offered as part of training to students	High
<p><b>5.6 Publicise the capacity of the IWC strandings initiative as a training provider to member countries and scientific, welfare and conservation funding bodies</b></p> <p>Linked to 4.6 above aim is to 1) improve visibility amongst governments and statutory agencies of IWC capacity and 2) improve awareness of possible funding sources to support training events. Scope opportunities to deliver training in collaboration with others (including 5.1) such as investigating opportunities to do capacity building with OIE, ICES, NAMMCO, CMS etc.</p>	x	x			Strandings Initiative administrator	SI Expert panel IWC secretariat	Included in SI administrator cost		Core