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PROJECT PROPOSAL REQUEST

1 . PROPOSAL TITLE

Please provide the title of the project or the name of the workshop/meeting.

Review of the Spanish statistics in the IWC catch database

2 . BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSAL AND ITS EXPECTED OUTCOME

Give a very brief overview (max 150 words) on your proposal and its expected outcomes. Use bullet point to list outcomes. Be succinct and clear as this may be used to summarise your project for the report.

Modern whaling in Spain started in 1921 and, with some interruptions, ended in 1985. During this period, ca21.000 whales were caught. The IWC catch databases are incomplete for some years and contain discrepancies with the company's internal documentation held by the University of Barcelona and the Museo Massó, especially regarding the individual catch records. The expected outcome of the project is improving the accuracy of catch records in the IWC catch database for this particular region.

3 . RELEVANT IWC SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE GROUPS OR SUB-GROUPS

List all the IWC Scientific Committee groups or sub-groups that the outcomes of this work would be relevant to and provide a brief (1-2 lines) explanation of how it would contribute more widely to their ongoing programmes of work. Where possible, do not simply list only the sub-committee within which or for which the project proposal was generated.

The IWC catch database are a main source of data for the modelling of whale population. Having access to accurate databases is thus central to allow robust modelling. Whaling in Spain focused mainly on fin and sperm whales, with sei, blue and humpback whales also caught in small numbers. The improvement of the database is therefore of relevance to the NH -Sub-Committee on the other Northern Hemisphere whale stocks.

4 . TYPE OF PROJECT (PLEASE TICK)

Research project	
Modelling	
Workshop/meeting	
Database creation/maintenance	✓
Compilation work/editing (e.g. on whalewatching regulations, SOCER, etc.)	
Other (please specify below)	

5. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL AND ITS CONNECTION WITH SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS (DO NOT EXCEED 1500 WORDS)

(A) BACKGROUND, RATIONALE, AND RELEVANCE TO THE PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE IWC SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE:

Provide a clear explanation of the background and rationale for the proposal and its relevance to Scientific Committee identified priorities. Clearly identify the most relevant and recent Scientific Committee recommendations.

With some interruptions, modern-type commercial whaling was carried out in Spain from 1921 to 1985. The activity involved 7 different companies, although several of them only operated for a single season or during a limited number of seasons. Fin and sperm whales were the main target of the fishery, but moderate takes were also made of sei, blue and humpback whales. Since Spain did not become a member of the IWC until 1979, catches of species that were protected elsewhere in the North Atlantic continued until that year. Catch statistics were provided by all companies but their level of detail, completeness and accuracy strongly varied among companies and periods. Internal documentation from the three main companies (Compañía Ballenera Española, Hector Whaling Company and Industria Ballenera SA), which together were responsible for ca70% of the catches, is available with variable degree of detail, thus permitting cross-checking with statistics currently reported to and held in the IWC catch database. A preliminary review has evidenced that, although the “internal” versus the “official” records differ moderately in gross numbers, the specific details of the catches (i.e. body lengths, species identification, etc), may vary. For example, about half of the blue whales caught according to the internal documentation (n=60) were not reported or were misidentified as fin whales probably to avoid unwanted criticism. Also, some companies did not report individual records of the catch for a few years of operation (for example, during 1952-56). Because catch data are central to modelling, this information is of relevance for the RMP Implementation process of the affected species.

(B) SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OR TOR AND DELIVERABLES/OUTCOMES:

Provide the specific objectives and the expected deliverables. In the case of workshops and meetings, include the Terms of Reference (ToR) and expected outcomes.

The objective of this proposal is to compare the individual catch records of the IWC database (ca11,000 records) with the various sources of information available, namely the internal records and documentation of the three companies mentioned above (Compañía Ballenera Española, Hector Whaling Company and Industria Ballenera SA, the latter operating with three land factories). Differences and gaps will be identified and a revised individual catch records data base will be produced, with every correction or addition highlighted for identification. For every set of corrections, reference to the source document and example copies (scans or photographs) of the type of document used to show evidence of the changes to the existing data will be provided.

Once the individual catch records data base is reviewed and completed, the IWC Summary Catch Database will be revised and, similarly, as above, gaps and modifications will be highlighted for identification.

(C) METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH/WORK PLAN/ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Specify the methods to be applied (novel methods require more explanation than standard ones) and the broad workplan – the detailed timetable appears under Item 5 below.

The work will be directed and supervised by Alex Aguilar, who has long experience in the use of original documentation sources and is familiar with the IWC catch database. The crosschecking of the data (ca11,000 individual records) will be carried out by a technician specifically contracted for the purpose. Most of the documentation, or copies of it, are currently available at the University of Barcelona. However, part of it is at the Museo Massó in Bueu (Galicia), for which reason a short trip (ca 1 week) to this location is also planned with the objective of completing the records database and for the further cross-checking of the data.

The workplan schedule is to administratively set the activity (contracts, etc) in June-July, conduct the effective work of cross-checking during March – June 2023 and provide the report with the revised databases by July 2023.

The project will be administratively channelled through the knowledge transfer agency of the University of Barcelona, the *Fundació Bosch I Gimpera de la Universitat de Barcelona* (FBG). Details about the FBG can be found at:

<http://www.fbg.ub.edu/en/>

The works will be conducted at the Department of Evolutionary Biology, Ecology and Environmental Sciences at the Faculty of Biology of the University of Barcelona (UB), located at Diagonal 643, 08009 Barcelona. Infrastructure, logistics and administrative support will be provided by the UB/FBG.

(D) SUGGESTIONS FOR OUTREACH

Please, note that successful proponents will be requested to produce ad hoc material that will be used by the IWC Secretariat for dissemination and outreach.

6 . TIMETABLE FOR ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Specify the timetable for project activities and expected outputs separately. For projects with multiple distinct elements please indicate interim goals and timeframes. Add as many rows as you need to the tables below. If publications are an expected output please note whether you will submit the manuscript to the IWC's Journal of Cetacean Research and Management.

Activity to be undertaken	Key person(s)	Start(mm/yy)	Finish (mm/yy)
Preparation work and administrative setting of works	Alex Aguilar	January 2023	February/2023
Cross-checking of individual catch records	Technician	March 2023	May 2023
Supervision of cross-checking	Alex Aguilar	March 2023	May 2023
Revision of the IWC Summary Catch Database	Alex Aguilar	June 2023	June 2023
Production of report and final revised databases	Alex Aguilar	July 2023	July 2023

Expected outputs	Completion date (mm/yy)
Revised IWC Individual Catch Records Database with modifications highlighted and associated documentation	July 2023
Revised IWC Summary Catch Database with modifications highlighted	July 2023

7 . RESEARCHERS' (OR STEERING GROUP) NAME(S) AND AFFILIATION

Please, also specify if the project team has any direct connection (e.g. same research group or institute, collaborator on common project) with people involved or likely to be involved in taking the funding decision (e.g. IWC SC heads of delegations, SC convenors, etc.). Add as many rows as you need to the table below.

Name	Affiliation	Connection with decision

9 . DATA ARCHIVING/SHARING

Please state your plans for data archiving and sharing. Note that data collected primarily under IWC grants are considered publicly available after an agreed period of time for publication of papers, usually about two years. The work of the IWC depends on the voluntary contribution of data to the various databases and catalogues IWC supports. Please consult the Secretariat (secretariat@iwc.int).

The objective of the project proposal is to provide more accurate catch databases to the IWC, so the data provided will become immediately available and publicly usable.

10 . PERMITS (PLEASE TICK)

Do you have the necessary permits to carry out the field work and have animal welfare considerations been appropriately considered?	Not required
Do you have the appropriate permits (e.g. CITES) for the import/export of any samples?	Not required

If 'Yes' please provide further details and enclose copies where appropriate: