

Report of the Working Group on Ship Strikes

Submitted by the Chair of the Working Group on Ship Strikes (WG-SS)

The Commission is requested to:

- *note the intersessional progress made by the Working Group on Ship Strikes (WG-SS) and the Scientific Committee*
- *endorse the new Ship Strikes Strategic Plan 2022-2032*
- *adopt the proposed workplan of the Working Group on Ship Strikes for 2022-2024*
- *support funding application for the continuation of the Data Manager position*

BACKGROUND

In 2005, the Conservation Committee agreed to address the issue of whales being killed or seriously injured by ship strikes, and subsequently established the Working Group on Ship Strikes. Ship strikes appear on the Scientific Committee agenda because the Revised Management Procedure (RMP) requires that recommended catch limits take into account estimates of mortality from all factors including, for example, ship strikes and bycatch. In practice these issues are also examined in a broader conservation and management context. The role of the Working Group on Ship strikes (WG-SS) is to develop more detailed proposals and co-ordinate any work initiated. At IWC59, recommendations for further work proposed by the SSWG included: co-operation with IMO, development of a global ship strikes database; development of national and regional legislation, rules and action plans to reduce the impact of ship strikes, with priority for high-risk areas; preparations for a multidisciplinary expert workshop on ship strike mitigation. At IWC60 the CC endorsed the recommendations for the development of the Ship strikes database. It was also agreed at this meeting that the contracting governments should submit ship strikes data to the IWC Secretariat on a regular basis and communicate ship strikes data and information to relevant maritime sector bodies. These are ongoing work areas of the WG-SS within the Conservation Committee.

INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITY

Intersessional activity between IWC67 and the intersessional Conservation Committee (CC) meeting in 2020 focused on engagement with other organisations, work on ship strikes and Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs), collaboration with the IWC Scientific Committee (SC) and development of new proposals regarding the Ship Strikes Strategic Plan and Workplan, including on staffing needs for delivery. A summary of those activities is given in [CC/68A/09.2/01](#).

This report focuses on progress since the October 2020 virtual CC meeting.

In 2020 at the virtual CC meeting Dave Weller (USA) relinquished his chairmanship of the WG-SS. With the lack of a Chair no new activities were conducted by the WG-SS. This along with the pandemic during this period hampered significant engagement/progress with the workplan activities. After a period without a Chair, Russell Leaper (UK and Convenor of Non-deliberate Human Induced Mortality Sub-Committee (HIM)) volunteered to act as temporary Chair until Sharon Livermore (IFAW) agreed to take the role in mid-2021. It is with sincere appreciation that we thank Weller for his service as Chair and Leaper for stepping in to fill a gap and providing guidance to Livermore.

Ship Strikes Strategic Plan and Workplan

The "Strategic Plan to Mitigate the Impacts of Ship Strikes on Cetacean Populations: 2017- 20" was finalised in 2017. The Strategic Plan provides the necessary background, information and recommendations to help the IWC

develop approaches and solutions to achieve a permanent reduction in ship strikes of cetaceans, both regionally and on a global scale.

A new Ship Strikes Work Plan for 2020-2022 was developed by the WG-SS and was endorsed by the CC in 2020 as a living document, subject to further refinements before IWC68, in particular after a new Ship Strikes Strategic Plan was developed. The workplan outlined priority activities in support of the strategic plan's objectives, assigning timetables, and proposing roles and duties. This included a new Data Manager post and Expert Panel. The CC supported the proposed IWC Data Manager to be included in the Ship Strikes Work Plan.

Due to the postponement of IWC68, the workplan has been further amended covering the next intersessional term 2022-2024. The draft plan delegates authority to existing IWC entities, as well as the Data Manager and a new Expert Panel (Annex 1). A new draft Strategic Plan for the 2022-2032 ([SC/68D/HIM/03](#)) period has been developed based on the original with updates to both high-risk populations and areas, and the ongoing threat of ship strikes. The WG-SS shared the draft Strategic Plan and workplan with the Scientific Committee at SC68D and the Conservation Committee Planning Group in July 2022 for assessment and input. Both plans will now be presented to the Commission for endorsement at IWC68.

Engagement with other organisations

During 2019/20 the database was populated with a large number of additional ship strike incidents through a successful collaboration with a student from the Galway-Mayo Institute for Technology (GMIT). An updated summary and statistical analysis of the complete data set held in the ship strike data base was produced and a summary of this work was presented at SC68B ([SC68B/HIM/09_rev1](#)).

The Secretariat and members of the Committee have continued to work with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) on ship strike related issues by attending Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) meetings. In 2021 (MEPC 77) this included discussion of the creation of a Particularly Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) in Northwestern Mediterranean Sea in order to respond effectively to the protection of biodiversity in the face of maritime transport development.

The Data Manager has also maintained contact regarding ship strikes with ASCOBANS, ACCOBAMS, the Pelagos Sanctuary Agreement, MMC, and with NGOs and shipping and other relevant organisations. The Pelagos Sanctuary held the 8th Meeting of the Parties of the Pelagos Agreement on 15-16 December 2021 and the Ship Strikes Workshop on 17 December 2021. The IWC was invited as virtual observers for both.

There is a strong, long-standing collaboration between the IWC and ACCOBAMS including matters related to population assessment, ship strikes, bycatch, whale watching, noise, chemical pollution and CMPs. The need to continue and improve co-operation has continually been underscored and opportunities for further collaboration were recently discussed in a virtual meeting between the IWC and ACCOBAMS Secretariats.

The Secretariat continue to work with the SC HIM Convenor to request AIS data as needed for scientific research. The plan to develop an MoU between IWC and Marine Traffic has been set aside for now, however the provision of data on shipping for scientific studies is still possible, for which the IWC is most grateful. An MoU would allow the IWC to serve as a single point for data requests in a standardised format, minimising work for the data provider. Should it eventually be possible to prepare a draft MoU, the IWC Secretariat will take them forward to the IWC Commissioners for consideration.

Collaboration with the Scientific Committee

Delivery of the Ship Strikes Strategic Plan 2017-2020 has been undertaken in collaboration with the SC and the HIM Sub-committee. The SC has provided research funds to support the Data Manager and reviewed progress reported on this work. The SC has also been involved with the development of both the updated workplan and strategic plan.

DATA MANAGER

The CC supported the development of the Data Manger role at its intersessional meeting in 2020. Because of the postponement of the in-person Commission meeting the CC agreed that an initial one-year contract for this position would be included in the CC Work Plan 2020-21 to allow the work of the CC to advance under these unusual circumstances and extended intersessional period. The Data Manager has been in place since April 2021 with funding from the Voluntary Conservation Fund (VCF) and the SC. The Data Manager, in collaboration with the IWC Ship Strikes Working Group, Scientific Committee, and proposed Expert Panel, works to progress the strategic development of the Ship Strike Database and delivery of the Ship Strikes Workplan.

During SC68C, the Committee endorsed the proposal for £10,000 partial funding for the position of Data Manager. At SC68D a further £10,000 was agreed by the Scientific Committee to continue supporting the Data Manager position in progressing the development of the Ship Strikes Database and delivery of the Ship Strikes workplan for 2023-2024. The CC is requested to support the Data Manager with VCF funding so that this position can continue to work on ship strikes and strandings work within the Secretariat (Annex 2).

SHIP STRIKES DATABASE

Since 2007, the IWC has been compiling a global database of collisions between vessels and whales with assistance from other international organisations. The objectives of this database are to contribute to a better understanding of the scale of the problem, of the factors that relate to risk (such as vessel type and speed), to estimate ship strike mortalities for different whale populations, to identify High Risk Areas and inform mitigation measures. The database went online in 2009. Between 2013 and 2020, the IWC employed two part-time data coordinators to help address this issue. Their three main tasks were broadly Data gathering, Outreach and communication, and Database management. As was proposed at SC68B and CC2020, a dedicated Data Manager has been employed at the Secretariat since April 2021 to continue this work.

An evaluation of the IWC Global Ship Strikes Database data model and records over the last year has revealed areas of strength and improvement. Some of the Portal's strengths include data entry and verification. Some areas for improvement include standardising open text fields and incorporating quality control measures into data entry steps. Additionally, the Portal has been improved to fix automatic emails and alerts. There are currently 1,154 cases in the database, with 60 new reports assigned to cases since April 2020. There are an additional 191 records received from Australia in July 2022 to either input new records or update existing records. Approximately 45 percent of the new reports are ready to be finalised, 10 percent lack sufficient data to proceed, and 35 percent require additional follow-up. The Data Manager will collaborate with the IWC Ship Strike Data Review Group to ensure that all new entries are verified and classified in accordance with the data processing protocol.

Priority should be given to the existence of country-specific datasets that can be added to the global database. The database currently contains some records from the United States and Australia, but not the official records from their respective national databases. The intake of known country datasets would add significant value to all data involved, whether it was submitting new reports to the database or adding additional information to already existing cases within the database. With the employment of the Data Manager at the Secretariat, it is ideal to begin adding these datasets into the global database. Regardless of differences in data format and standardisation within

datasets, the Data Manager will be responsible for data processing into the database to reduce the effort load for current data holders. Additional data sharing and analysis can take place after these data have been ingested into the database.

There have been four data requests in the last year. Ship strike data along the US east coast, data on human injury and vessel damage, spatial data for students to create an ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute) Story Map, and records from Norwegian waters are among the requests. Three of the data requests were met, with data usage and metadata documentation included. The data request for Norway, however, could not be fulfilled because there is no data for those waters. To increase data access and usage, the IWC website should consider hosting a data platform. This could include a data exploration dashboard and a graphical user interface for downloading high-level data to csv files.

SHIP STRIKES EXPERT PANEL

The structure for supporting IWC work on ship strikes was agreed at CC 2020 (CC/68A/09.2/01) and SC68B (SC/68B/HIM/13) and all elements are now in place, except the Expert Panel.

As a reminder it was proposed that the Expert Panel, which will report to the WG-SS and SC, be established by the WG-SS in consultation with the SC.

At SC68B it was agreed that the Expert Panel could initially be formed from the existing Ship Strikes Data Review and Ship Routing Groups within the Scientific Committee, but also include those with expertise on management of shipping and knowledge of the shipping industry.

The proposed responsibilities for the Expert Panel are briefly set out below and detailed Terms of Reference (TORs) will be developed following discussion with the WG-SS and the convenor of HIM, with SC input.

The Expert Panel will provide scientific and technical advice to the Data Manager and WG-SS in support of implementation of the Ship Strikes workplan including through:

- Supporting the development and use of the ship strikes database, including through undertaking review of database records (as per the TORs of the existing Data Review Group)
- Collate information on high-risk populations and areas and on monitoring of impacts of mitigation measures taken
- Input of technical expertise to support development and application of mitigation measures and the review of technological approaches
- Work with the Data Manager, SC and others to develop tailored advice specific to different shipping sectors and related training/capacity development programmes
- Provide advice and support to states bringing forward mitigation proposals on stakeholder engagement, design considerations or routing or other measures, and the requirements for proposals made to IMO

As outlined, the Expert Panel needs to be established. New members with relevant expertise are invited to contact the Chair of the WG-SS and HIM convenor should they wish to join the panel.

FUNDING

The full costings for implementation of the workplan, including but not limited to the cost of the Data Manager post, are included in the workplan. Regarding the Data Manager position, the SC (SC69D) endorsed a contribution, as before, allocated specifically for work on the ship strikes database to be undertaken by the Data Manager.

However, additional funds are necessary to cover full time salary. The Conservation Committee requests the SC funds be supplemented by additional voluntary contributions from Contracting Governments and other sources. Additional core support (for implementation of the workplan) from the Secretariat would continue to be provided through the IT team (technical support for the database), and funding needs for Data Manager travel (where this meets existing Secretariat mandates) could potentially be met from Secretariat travel funds.

ANNEX 1
DRAFT IWC SHIP STRIKES WORKPLAN 2022-2024

High level objective & Description of activity	Timeframe			Lead	IWC community involved	Budget per year/ total budget	Potential funding source(s)	Priority
	2022	2023	2024					Core = essential Top High Medium
Coordination of programme								
All aspects of programme coordination including liaison with the SSWG; coordinate work on ship strikes database; coordinate with ship strike data holders to facilitate national/regional database upload; coordination with other IWC bodies and initiatives; engagement with other Inter-governmental Organisations (IGOs) and organisations; fundraising; monitoring of progress and communication.	x	x	x	IWC Data Manager, Secretariat		See Objective 3		Core

<p>1.1 Identify at risk populations</p> <p>The Scientific Committee should provide an estimate of annual incidence rate of ship strikes for each of the following:</p> <p>a. Western North Atlantic right whale b. Eastern North Pacific right whale c. Chile-Peru right whale d. Arabian Sea humpback whale e. Western gray whale f. Blue whale - Sri Lanka and Arabian Sea g. Blue whale - Chile h. Sperm whale - Mediterranean Sea i. Fin whale - Mediterranean Sea j. Bryde’s whale - Gulf of Mexico k. Omura’s whale - North-western Madagascar l. Sperm whale - Canary Islands region</p> <p>The Scientific Committee should continue to identify and review potential high risk populations for ship strikes.</p>	x	x	x	Chair of HIM, IWC Data Manager, Secretariat, Ship Strikes Expert Panel and SSWG	IMO IUCN - IMMAs	Expert Panel no extra cost if meets virtually or in margins of SC meetings. Other costs in Objective 3		Top
<p>1.2 Identify high risk areas</p> <p>The Strategic Plan identifies high risk areas for ship strikes. The IWC should work with relevant stakeholders to develop proposals for ship strikes reduction measures in high-risk areas. The Scientific Committee should review the high-risk areas, to update on new areas and progress with existing areas.</p> <p>See High risk ship strike areas table in the Strategic Plan for further details of location and species of concern, alongside associated stages in identifying high risk areas and developing appropriate mitigation strategies</p>	x	x	x	Chair of HIM, Ship Strikes Expert Panel and SSWG, IWC Data Manager and Secretariat		Expert Panel no extra cost if meets virtually or in margins of SC meetings. Potential travel costs £1000 per annum for engagement with countries. Other costs in Objective 3.	Secretariat funding for travel or VCF (application to be submitted, if needed).	Top

1.3 Continued monitoring of measures implemented The SC should regularly review the impact of measures for high-risk populations and in high-risk areas implemented to reduce the incidence of ship strikes. Develop case studies to demonstrate benefits, anticipated and actual costs of measures introduced to reduce ship strikes.	x	x	x	Chair of HIM, SC		Included in core costs SC meetings		High
1.4 Improve the understanding of the relationship between vessel speed and risk of injury, death and damage to the vessel	x	x	x	Chair of HIM, SC		Included in core costs SC meetings		Medium
2.1 Implementation of measures IWC member countries put in place speed and re-routing where necessary	x	x	x	IWC Contracting Governments , SSWG				High
2.2 Communication of mitigation measures to the IMO The IWC continues to promote mitigation options at the IMO. Prepare a paper for MEPC in 2023 that provides an update on research, risks, and mitigation opportunities on ship strikes.		x		Secretariat; Chair of HIM; Ship Strikes Expert Panel, SSWG		Travel to IMO meetings £200 per annum	To be met by core Secretariat travel costs	Medium
3.1 Systematic outreach to data providers Systematic outreach to countries (members and non-members) and regional authorities to help obtain and secure data for entry to the database. Systematic outreach to shipping sectors, including shipping associations, to seek support with data entry Data from National Progress reports assessed and entered where appropriate.	x	x	x	IWC Data Manager, Secretariat		£38,000 per annum for Data Manager	SC, VCF, welfare funds	High
3.2 Review and provision of data Inclusion of known datasets (e.g., USA, Australia) and development of bulk upload tool Records included and reviewed in a reasonable timeframe	x	x	x	IWC Data Manager, Secretariat, Ship Strikes Expert Panel,		Included in Data Manager costs		High

				IWC Contracting Governments				
3.3 Availability of database Update the website with the most recent version of data Ongoing, regular publication of routine summary statistics from the ship strikes database Maintain a compendium of relevant papers and reports of ship strikes issues	x	x	x	IWC Data Manager, Secretariat		Included in Data Manager costs		Medium
3.4 Use of the database Undertake review of the database to understand how it can be used and improved to help meet the IWC Strategic Plan Undertake analysis of the database to assess the scale of the problem, factors that relate to risk, estimate ship strikes mortalities for whale populations and assess effectiveness of mitigation measures taken		x	x	IWC Data Manager, Secretariat, Chair of HIM, Ship Strikes Expert Panel		Included in Data Manager costs		Medium
3.4 Outreach to other organisations When database has been updated, communicate results to IMO, CMS, ACCOBAMS, ASCOBANS and others as appropriate.	x	x	x	IWC Data Manager, Secretariat, WG-SS		Met by core Secretariat costs		Medium
4.1 Technological approaches Regular review and monitoring of new technologies by the Scientific Committee. Consult with shipping industry on technologies used.	x	x	x	Chair of HIM, Ship Strikes Expert Panel		Included in core SC meeting costs. Potential costs for additional research/ review work	VCF or SC science fund proposals to be submitted if needed	High

<p>4.2 Avoidance of overlap between whales and ships Reduction of ship strikes will focus on avoidance on overlap between whales and ships, or a reduction in speed. The IWC should look into technology to help mariners understand where to slow down or where seasonal areas e.g., mapping tools that show whale distribution or IMMAs.</p>	x	x	x	Chair of HIM, Ship Strikes Expert Panel		Included in core SC meeting costs. Potential costs for additional research/review work	VCF or SC science fund proposals to be submitted if needed	Medium
<p>4.3 Using AIS data Investigate systems for monitoring all types of vessel traffic in high-risk areas including expanding requirements for vessels to transmit AIS signals to smaller vessels.</p>				Chair of HIM, Ship Strikes Expert Panel		Included in core SC meeting costs. Potential costs for additional research/review work	VCF or SC science fund proposals to be submitted if needed	Medium
<p>4.4 Application of technology Assess the feasibility and support the application of technology for known high risk areas. Work with IUCN MMPA Task Force and regional stakeholders to ensure that recently identified IMMAs, in which ship strikes are a risk, be added to "Whale Alert" for the Mediterranean Sea Evaluate efficiency of the REPCET system for reducing the risk of Ship Strikes (SC2019)</p>	x	x		IWC Data Manager, SSWG and other named leads		Included in Data Manager and core SC meeting costs. Potential costs for additional research/review work	VCF or SC science fund proposals to be submitted if needed	Medium
<p>5. 1 International Maritime Organization Continue to liaise with the IMO on issues relating to ship strikes, including high risk species and areas. Development of an appropriate protocol to enable consideration of cetacean distribution and occurrences for proposed new or revised routing schemes or speed restrictions. Inform the IMO that the IWC SC is "available" to review new TSS, PSSAs and ATBA for relevance and impact on avoiding ship strikes.</p>	x	x	x	Secretariat with WG-SS and other named leads		To be delivered with core Secretariat funding		Top

Maintain SC group to advise on intersessional requests from IMO. Provision of appropriate information to the IMO MEPC								
5.2 IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Area Task Force Continue work on the use of Important Marine Mammal Areas to help identify high risk areas for ship strikes. This could include review of potential uses of IWC databases in helping identify Areas of interest (AOIs) for surveys and verification of longevity of IMMAs	x	x	x	Secretariat		To be delivered with core Secretariat funding		High
5.3 Convention on Migratory Species Liaise with the CMS and daughters agreements ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS	x	x	x	Secretariat		To be delivered with core Secretariat funding		Medium
5.4 Arctic Council						To be delivered with core Secretariat funding		Medium
5.5 UNEP-CEP-SPAW: Collaborative activities under new MoC to be presented for endorsement at IWC68	x	x	x			To be delivered with core Secretariat funding		Medium
5.6 CPPS		x	x			To be delivered with core Secretariat funding		Medium
5.7 SPREP		x	x			To be delivered with core		Medium

						Secretariat funding		
5.8 NGOs	x	x	x			To be delivered with core Secretariat funding		Medium
5.9 Marine Traffic Continue to develop MOU for use of AIS data on shipping activity	x			Secretariat		To be delivered with core Secretariat funding		Medium
6.1 Training and education Identify and evaluate various training/education programmes to determine which might feasibly expand to other marine resource groups. Identify opportunities for IWC input.		x	x	Secretariat				
6.2 Specific advice to particular sectors Develop advice for vessels/sectors where there may be specific issues not covered by the IMO's general guidance documents. Discussion needed on which sectors to include here, including timelines for the development of guidance. This could include consideration of: Service vessels for offshore renewables, Fast ferries, Offshore sailing yachts (racing) - review needed by Expert Panel, update and promote guidance already produced. Cruise ship guidance - review needed by Expert Panel, update and promote guidance already produced. Oil & Gas.		x	x	Expert Panel and Secretariat		£500 per annum for communications activities	Core Secretariat and VCF (application to be submitted if needed)	
6.3 Public outreach Circulate leaflet on ship strikes for countries to distribute to their maritime networks		x	x	Data Manager and Secretariat		Included in communications budget above		

6.4 Review of impact Assess the receptiveness of outreach efforts				As above		As above		
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ANNEX 2
Funding proposal



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PROJECT PROPOSAL REQUEST

1 . PROPOSAL TITLE

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

Progressing the development and use of the IWC Ship Strikes 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.

The purpose of this proposal is to further progress the development of the ship strikes database and to ensure the increased reporting of ship strikes incidents into the IWC database including through:

- Systematic outreach to data providers
- Review and provision of data
- Promoting access to information in the database
- Increase use of the database
- Outreach to other organisations

This funding request is to continue work that has been undertaken on the ship strikes database since 2021 which could be undertaken in two different ways depending on the endorsement by the Commission:

It is proposed that this work would continue to be undertaken by the Ship Strikes Data Manager and this funding requested would cover an appropriate portion of the costs of this position.

If the coordinator cannot be retained for work in 2023 then this funding requested would cover delivery of this work by another means, to be determined by the Chair of the Committee and Chair of the Ship Strikes Working Group in liaison with the Secretariat and convenor of HIM.

A key task for the Data Manager is to progress submission of data from national databases into the global IWC effort. This will be reliant on external factors, but making progress on including these large existing data sets into the IWC database is likely to take a substantial proportion of the coordinators time.

3 . RELEVANT IWC 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.

Both the Conservation and Scientific Committees of the IWC are working to understand and reduce the threat posed by ship strikes. The Data Manager works within both committees to provide the technical and data support needed to gather and process ship strike reports as well as assess ship strikes risk and mitigation. Section 5 of this funding proposal provides a thorough description of work.

Within the Conservation Committee, Ship Strikes is a priority topic, and the Data Manager works closely with the Ship Strikes Working Group. The Data Manager’s work is vital to the Ship Strikes Standing Working Group to help governments to address issues relating to ship strikes and their mitigation.

Within the Scientific Committee, the Data Manager’s work encompasses three groups. The Sub-committee on Non-deliberate Human-Induced Mortality of Cetaceans prioritizes ship strikes work and has related recommendations made, and the funding previously requested, by this group over many years. The Sub-committee on Environmental Concerns will be supported by the Data Manager through scoping strandings data and propose data management options which is an important part of the sub-committee with information feeding into other groups. Lastly, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Databases and Related Issues will utilize the Data Manager for ongoing review of all IWC data holdings.

In addition, strandings and welfare issues related to ship strikes (and other areas such as whale watching, bycatch and entanglement) are also dealt with within the Whale Killing Methods and Welfare Issues Working Group (WKM&WI) and its Action Plan. The Data Manager position supports the work outlined in the Action Plan to address cetacean welfare.

4 . TYPE OF PROJECT (PLEASE TICK)

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

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

(A) BACKGROUND, RATIONALE, AND RELEVANCE TO THE PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE IWC CONSERVATION COMMITTEE AND 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.

At IWC57 in 2005 the Conservation Committee agreed to address whales being killed or seriously injured by ship strikes, recognising that the issue is also considered by the Scientific Committee through its Subcommittee on Non-deliberate Human-Induced Mortality of Cetaceans. The Scientific Committee established a Ship Strikes Working Group which has reported progress regularly since 2006.

Since 2007 the IWC has been developing a global database of collisions between ships and cetaceans. The ongoing development of the IWC Ship Strike Database requires data gathering, communication with potential data providers and data/database validation and management. The objectives of this database are to: (1) contribute to a better understanding of the scale of the problem and the factors that relate to risk (such as vessel type and speed); (2) estimate ship strike mortalities for different whale populations; and (3) identify High Risk Areas and inform mitigation measures.

The database went online in 2009 and the total number of records in the database is around 1,600 (as of May 2020). All new entries are verified and categorised by the current IWC Ship Strike Data Review Group. From 2013 to 2020, two dedicated data coordinators were contracted by the IWC to crosscheck and verify the data entries and thereby enhance the quality of the database, as specified by the Scientific Committee. In 2020 it was proposed, and approved, to hire a Data Manager attached to the Secretariat and the post was successfully filled in April 2021.

The activities in this proposal are elaborated in the Ship Strikes Workplan 2020-2022 and drafted Ship Strikes Workplan 2022-2024. The workplan represents an ambitious programme of work and it was agreed that a dedicated staff member focussing on ship-strikes would be able to develop the necessary expertise across all aspects of the issue, implement the programme of work and represent the IWC.

There are numerous Conservation Committee recommendations setting out priorities for ship strikes, specifically [CC2022](#) in which the Conservation Committee supported the proposed IWC Data Manager post to be included in the Ship Strikes Work Plan.

(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 objectives for 2023-2024 are to ensure the increased reporting of ship strikes incidents into the IWC database including through:

- **Systematic outreach to data providers**
 Systematic outreach to countries (members and non-members) and regional authorities to help obtain and secure data for entry to the database.
 Systematic outreach to shipping sectors, including shipping associations, to seek support with data entry.
 Data from National Progress reports assessed and entered where appropriate.
- **Review and provision of data**
 Inclusion of known datasets (e.g. South Africa, USA, Australia).

Records included and reviewed in a reasonable timeframe.

- **Promoting access to information in the database**
 Maintain up-to-date documentation that describes the data fields, classification criteria, review process and caveats and can be sent out with any data requested.
 Update the website with the most recent version of data through data visualisations.
 Ongoing, regular publication of routine summary statistics from the ship strikes database.
 Maintain a compendium of relevant papers and reports of ship strikes issues.
- **Increase use of the database**
 Undertake review of the database to understand how it can be used and improved to help meet the IWC Strategic Plan.
 Prompt review and fulfilment of data requests.
- **Outreach to other organisations**
 When database has been updated, communicate results to IMO, CMS, ACCOBAMS, ASCOBANS, industry organisations and others as appropriate.

(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.

In the case of workshops and meetings, include the broad work plan including any pre-requisites for the workshop/meeting to take place (apart from funding, e.g. completed analyses, papers etc.) and administrative details (e.g. location, dates, number of participants).

The Data Lifecycle illustrates the data management stages that will guide the workplan and describe the methods used to manage the ship strikes data. Data and data needs will vary; therefore, the Data Lifecycle stages do not need to be sequential to achieve high quality data. However, it is important that the data management work accounts for each step of the Data Lifecycle to ensure the integrity and quality of the data. The following are the Data Lifecycle stages, their definitions and the steps to be taken at each stage.

Plan

Definition: Scoping the data management needs of the project and creating a strategy for how data will be managed throughout the lifecycle.

Steps:

1. Review the current ship strikes database using a SWOT analysis to understand how the database can be advanced to meet the IWC Strategic Plan.
2. Have scoping meetings with relevant individuals and groups pertinent to the ship strikes database to understand how the database can be advanced to meet the IWC Strategic Plan.

Acquire

Definition: Collecting or generating new data or obtaining existing data.

Steps:

1. Systematic outreach to countries and regional authorities to obtain and secure data to integrate into the database.
2. Systematic outreach to shipping sectors, including shipping associations, to seek support with incident reporting.
3. Review the National Progress reports for potential data to be integrated into the database.
4. Collaborate with countries and regional authorities with known datasets to include in the database.

Process

Definition: Handling new or previously collected data inputs through validating data, transforming data, and integrating data into a database.

Steps:

1. Review and include records in a reasonable timeframe.
2. Amend incorrect records from input of data providers.
3. Update documentation that describes procedures and protocols for processing and storing the data.

Analyse

Definition: The exploring and interpreting of processed data.

Steps:

1. Regularly publish summary statistics from the ship strikes database.
2. Develop documentation on the data workflow to document the process of how data are analysed and transformed after collection.

Preserve

Definition: The actions and procedures used to ensure long-term viability and accessibility of data.

Steps:

1. Maintain up-to-date metadata that describes the data fields, classification criteria, and data review caveats.
2. Maintain documentation on data storage specifications and the database schema.
3. Work with the IWC Secretariat IT Team to ensure regular maintenance and systematic backups of the database.

Share

Definition: The preparation and release of data and the communication to relevant stakeholders of data availability.

Steps:

1. Update and maintain documentation to be included when responding to data requests.
2. Communicate database updates to relevant individuals and organisations.
3. Maintain a compendium of relevant papers and reports of ship strikes issues.
4. Develop platform for data exploration and access through the IWC website.

(D) SUGGESTIONS FOR OUTREACH
<p>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.</p> <p>The Ship Strikes Data Manager will work closely with the Secretariat lead for communications to produce relevant promotional materials on IWC ship strikes work and the ship strikes database and to develop relevant content for the IWC website.</p>

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)
Outreach to data providers and identification of data to be included in the database	Data Manager	04/23	04/24
Data review within a reasonable timeframe	Data Manager	04/23	04/24
Inclusion of known datasets	Data Manager	04/23	04/24
Production of summary statistics from the database	Data Manager	04/23	04/24
Promote access to information in the database through IWC website	Data Manager	04/23	04/24

Expected outputs	Completion date (mm/yy)
Interim report and summary on new data added to database	05/23
Report from strategic review of database	05/23
Bulk upload capability added to data ingestion platform	04/24
Platform on IWC website for data exploration and access	04/24

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
Sharon Livermore	Chair, Ship Strikes Working Group	Advice on tasks required for database
Russell Leaper	Convenor HIM Sub-committee	Advice on tasks required for database

8 TOTAL BUDGET

PROJECT BUDGET					Please indicate when funds will be needed		Co-funding funds only
	Description	Cost per unit £GBP	Number of units	Total Cost £GBP	2022 £GBP	2023 + £GBP	Co-funding £GBP
(1) Salaries (by person)	Voluntary conservation & Welfare funds contributions to relevant staff costs (25% of full costs)	£40,000	.75	£30,000		X	£10,000
(2) Travel/subsistence (by person or est. total for IPs)							
(3) Services (by item)							
(4) Reusable equipment							
(5) Consumables							
(6) Shipping & Customs (by Item)							
(7) Insurance (by item)							
(8) Other							
TOTAL							

Co-funding Memo:

Source	Purpose of Funding	Cost £GBP	Secured/Tentative?
SC Funds	Contributions to staff costs	£10,000	Secured (pending Commission endorsement)
TOTAL			

Total value of project:	Cost £GBP
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Funds requested from IWC	£30,000
Co-funding	£10,000
TOTAL	£40,000

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).

10 . PERMITS (PLEASE TICK)

Do you have the necessary permits to carry out the field work and have animal welfare considerations been appropriately considered?	
Do you have the appropriate permits (e.g. CITES) for the import/export of any samples?	

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

DRAFT SCORING SHEET

If a project presents multiple primary objectives which are achieved using sub-projects, a sheet should be used to evaluate each single sub-project. Note that not all criteria are equally applicable depending on the nature of the project (e.g., field work versus workshops).

VOLUNTARY CONSERVATION FUND - EVALUATION CRITERIA

	Criteria	Weighting	Score
1	Do the expected outcomes of the project address the identified priority area in the Conservation Committee's strategic plan?	0 – Not addressed 1 – Poorly addressed 2 – Reasonably addressed 3 – Well addressed 4 – Very well addressed 5 – Excellently addressed	
2	Does the methodology outlined effectively and efficiently address the research questions in the proposal?	0 - Not demonstrated 1 - Poor methodology 2 - Reasonable methodology 3 - Good methodology 4 - Very good methodology 5 - Excellent methodology	
3	Does the project involve good participation and engagement of regional participants?	0 - Not demonstrated 1 - Poor engagement proposed 2 - Reasonable engagement proposed 3 - Good engagement proposed 4 - Very good engagement proposed 5 - Excellent engagement proposed	
4	Is the proposed project feasible, well organised and timeline achievable?	0 - Not demonstrated 1 - Feasibility, organisation and timeline unrealistic 2 - Feasibility, organisation and timeline not properly addressed 3 - Feasibility, organisation and timeline sound 4 - Feasibility, organisation and timeline demonstrated well 5 - Feasibility, organisation and timeline very well demonstrated	
5	Have the project leads demonstrated that they are capable of carrying out the proposed work and disseminating the outcomes accordingly?	0 - Not demonstrated 1 - Poor record 2 - Reasonable record 3 - Good record 4 - Very good record 5 – Project leads have an excellent record relevant to the proposed work	

6	Does the project demonstrate good value for money?	0 - Not demonstrated 1 – Poor value for money 2 - Reasonable value for money 3 - Good value for money 4 - Very good value for money 5 – Excellent value for money	
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