

IWC68
Finance and Administration Committee

Paper submitted by the IWC Secretariat
Proposed Memorandum of Understanding between

IWC and Centre for Coastal Studies (CCS)

***Decision required by F&A and
Commission:***
Review and consideration of the MoU
between IWC and CCS for adoption
and implementation

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was drafted by the Secretariats of the Center for Coastal Studies in the USA and the IWC. The MoU recognizes the significant injury and mortality caused by active and passive fishing gear and the challenge of removing such gear from live animals.

The MoU renews and updates the existing MoU under which the CCS provides specific entanglement-related services (see 'areas of cooperation'). This collaboration has been underway since 2011 and has been extremely successful and highly visible, with over 1,200 trainees in five continents. CCS has partnered with the IWC to provide the services agreed to, at a cost of £40,000 GBP, plus insurance, per year.

This MoU has been approved by the Center for Coastal Studies and the IWC Secretariat and is now awaiting confirmation by the IWC.

Areas of cooperation include:

- Provide leadership and expertise in the area of entanglement response for cetaceans within the IWC.
- Design training materials and conduct training workshops on entanglement response in locations around the world, including 'train the trainers.'
- Participate in related international science and field work such as to avoid the entanglement in the first place.
- Hosting international apprenticeships
- Lead an international Expert Panel
- Outreach and fundraising

A number of specific projects and training opportunities are noted in the MoU for the initial years of its implementation.

The draft MoU is attached as Annex A.

Annex A

Memorandum of Understanding

Between

International Whaling Commission (IWC)

and

Center for Coastal Studies (CCS)

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets forth the terms and understanding between the International Whaling Commission (IWC) and the Center for Coastal Studies (CCS) in order to jointly support a partnership to mitigate nondeliberate human impacts to whales, in particular the entanglement of large whales in manmade ropes, cables, nets, etc.

Background

Growing evidence suggests that more whales may be killed globally by entanglement in manmade materials and by collisions with ships, than by any other current human activity, and that for some critical populations this may be hindering their recovery or even driving them toward extinction. Both the IWC and CCS have a long history of working to understand and mitigate these impacts. From October 2011 through September 2014, CCS provided an office and in-kind assistance to a technical expert, assigned to the IWC by the USA, in order to carry out certain initiatives endorsed by the 88 member countries of the IWC. From October 2014 through December 2022, CCS and the IWC jointly funded a technical expert to work on these initiatives, several of which included working jointly with other CCS staff and relevant projects.

Purpose

This MOU will renew the existing partnership, and will allow the two organizations to continue to pursue mutual goals to mitigate human impacts to whales. The primary focus of the partnership will be the ongoing work of the IWC entanglement initiative, but may also include other anthropogenic threats and relevant cooperative projects.

This work will be accomplished by CCS supplying relevant expertise in order to conduct the following activities:

- Continue convening the now established Global Whale Entanglement Response Network (GWERN)
- Continue to organize and carry out global capacity building for disentanglement through: "In country", and where applicable, virtual, trainings using the IWC endorsed curriculum;
 - Currently requested (pre-pandemic) training: Italy, Iceland, Costa Rica,
 - Current inquiries: Vietnam, Chile (Tierra del Fuego), El Salvador, French Territories in Polynesia, Caribbean and Indian Ocean,
- Host apprenticeships for key trainees, identified in consultation with their countries;

- Establish advanced training, and refresher curricula for growing national networks;
- Organize and convene a meeting of the IWC large whale entanglement expert advisory group when in-person meetings become feasible (Date and Venue TBD)
- Continue and expand work with other Intergovernmental Organizations who share similar responsibilities and goals on this topic (e.g., UNEP and other regional seas programs, FAO-COFI, CCAMLR, SPAW, IOTC, SPREP, and other Regional Fisheries Management Organizations, etc.)

Provide expertise to the IWC's subsidiary bodies (e.g., Conservation Committee, Scientific Committee, Whale Killing Methods & Welfare Issue, etc.) where applicable

- Work with the IWC's other initiatives where complementary (e.g. Bycatch Mitigation Initiative, Stranding, Ship Strike initiatives, Conservation Management Plans, etc.)
- Attend IWC meetings as needed (e.g. Scientific Committee and Commission meetings)
- Stay current in rescue techniques by participating in rescues with CCS staff.
- Work with CCS whale research programs on projects of mutual benefit (e.g. human impact studies, tagging)
- Raise funds for relevant projects for each organization
- Work with IWC convened intersessional group to develop "best practices" for releasing free-swimming small cetaceans
- Work with NOAA, Alaska Native community and others as appropriate to investigate the need for and feasibility to remove ghost crab gear from high risk bowhead whale habitat in the Arctic

Reporting

CCS will provide an annual work plan, and will produce biannual reports of key accomplishments.

Funding

The overall cost of this work is estimated to be £60,000 per annum. The IWC will provide £40,000 each year, to be invoiced quarterly, with CCS providing the remaining £20,000 each year. CCS will handle the administration of personnel required for the project

Insurance

The IWC will contribute towards the annual travel insurance premium costs for this agreement to a maximum of \$10,000 per year.

Duration

This MOU is at-will and may be modified by mutual consent of authorized officials from the IWC Secretariat and CCS. This MOU shall become effective upon signature by the authorized officials from the IWC and CCS, and will remain in effect until modified or terminated by any one of the partners by mutual consent. In the absence of mutual agreement by the authorized officials from the IWC and CCS this MOU shall end, and be considered for official renewal, on 31 December 2027.

_____ Date: _____

(Partner signature)

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