

Strategic plan for the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) program, 2022 – 2032

Established by the IWC in 2008, the CMP program provides a mechanism for IWC member governments to work together towards conservation of their shared cetacean species by addressing transboundary gaps in existing conservation measures. CMPs are science-driven and focus on practical management actions that have the greatest chance of achieving improvements in the recovery of cetacean populations.

Conservation management planning is a priority action under the IWC Conservation Committee's strategic plan 2016 – 2026, and implementing CMPs is one pathway towards the Conservation Committee's vision of *'healthy, well managed, and recovered cetacean populations worldwide.'*

The success and uptake of the program to date is due to the leadership of participating range states (IWC Contracting Governments) and coordinators, and their dedication to improving the trajectory of at risk cetacean populations including collaboration with researchers and industry. The Standing Working Group on Conservation Management Plans (SWG-CMP) acknowledges the invaluable support of the IWC Secretariat in program administration, management and reporting.

This strategic plan represents a 'first principles' approach, with achievable and complementary priorities, designed to strengthen the CMP program's foundations and support its further development.



Franciscana dolphins: Leo Russo Lacerna and Mauricio Failla/Fundacion Cethus

The strategic plan is a living document and will be reviewed and updated on an ongoing basis, with updates reported to the Conservation Committee at its biennial meetings.

Stakeholders should suggest updates and actions to the SWG-CMP at any time. The Chair will consider the suggestions and provisionally update the document until changes are endorsed by the Conservation Committee at its biennial meetings.

Table 1: CMP Program strategic priorities and actions

V.1 Presented to IWC68, Oct 2022.

Priority area	Description/objective	Actions	Measures of success
1. Program leadership and management	Implementation and leadership of individual CMPs is led by range states and/or coordinators appointed by the range states. Strengthening oversight and leadership of the program by the SWG-CMP will improve support for range states and aid in cohesive and coordinated management and administration of the CMP program as a whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish and fill a co-chair or vice chair position for the Standing Working Group on Conservation Management Plans (SWG-CMP). This position should be a representative of an IWC Contracting Government and be held for at least a period of two years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capacity and output of SWG-CMP leadership is improved by sharing effort and responsibilities between two parties.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen communication and information sharing between the SWG-CMP, SC-CMP, and IWC Secretariat. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The SWG-CMP Chair should update documents shared with the Secretariat and SC-CMP on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The SWG-CMP chairs, SC-CMP conveners and Secretariat have visibility of up to date CMP program contacts, work and developments, improving efficiency of outreach and reporting.



		<p>a CMP SharePoint site at least quarterly to keep key CMP contacts and actions up to date and in a centralised location.</p>	
<p>2. Reporting, monitoring and evaluation</p>	<p>Improve and streamline regular reporting on CMP actions and progress to the Conservation Committee and Scientific Committees, with a focus on identifying and measuring conservation outcomes.</p> <p>Improve information sharing between IWC members and range states to assist in development and implementation of CMPs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SWG-CMP and Secretariat will continue to consider how CMP data can be recorded using the Conservation Database. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range states and CMP coordinators can use the database to report on CMP populations. Over time, this will help to show CMP program growth and possibly conservation outcomes for individual populations. • Opportunities for collaboration between CC working groups (for example, where bycatch mitigation initiative programs could be useful for CMP populations) are readily identified.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and formalize a simple process for range states and coordinators to provide progress reports to the SWG-CMP and SC-CMP ahead of CC and SC meetings. ➤ Information from the progress reports is used to routinely update the CMP information on the IWC website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information provided to the CC and SC on CMPs is regular, consistent and comprehensive, without increasing reporting burden for range states and coordinators. • An updated list of CMP program achievements, milestones, and successes (including response to challenges) is publically available.
<p>3. Program design</p>	<p>Given fragmentation of river systems and increasing threats to marine and freshwater cetaceans it is important</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SWG-CMP should collaborate with the SC-CMP to consider – on a case by case basis - how range states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SC-CMP considers – when requested - the utility of CMPs in a range of settings. Populations with a



	<p>for the CMP program to remain dynamic. The SWG-CMP and SC-CMP should be open to considering how CMPs could be used as a collaborative conservation tool in a variety of settings, while maintaining the integrity of the program.</p>	<p>that do not share a population could enter into a CMP for cetacean species based on information sharing and management of threats at a regional level.</p>	<p>limited range are not ruled out as the focus of CMPs if states that share the species (but not populations) are willing to collaborate.</p>
<p>4. Partnerships</p>	<p>The success of CMPs has relied on the involvement of a number of stakeholders – other international forums, NGOs, government, and industry. Strengthening and maintaining these partnerships is critical to achieving outcomes and supporting development of the CMP program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where relevant/applicable, encourage consultation with First Nations (Indigenous) people to incorporate perspectives, knowledge, and cultural considerations in CMP development and implementation. CMP templates will be updated to include a section on this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indigenous knowledge – where available – is actively sought by range state governments, and used to strengthen CMPs.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The SWG-CMP should develop a set of principles to support healthy partnerships and underpin collaboration. These will be available on the IWC website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The principles provide a point of reference for CMP range states to evaluate whether partners are working together effectively, and assist in communicating expectations.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All parties involved in development or implementation of CMPs should be acknowledged in standard reporting to the CC and SC. CMP coordinators should be encouraged to share expertise and experiences in how they engaged partners and stakeholders, particularly from industry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New CMP coordinators or range states can seek information and support from existing CMP leads on how to build these connections.



5. Communications and visibility	Raising the profile and awareness of the CMP program will assist in generating support and funding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Development of an IWC CMP program logo that stakeholders (range states, etc.) can use alongside the official IWC logo on published materials, presentations, and communications products.• The CMP program handbook is completed and published, to provide an easy to understand guide on the CMP program and how to be involved.• The SWG-CMP should produce an (at least) annual newsletter to showcase the efforts and achievements of the CMP program.• The SWG-CMP should regularly update the CMP information on the IWC website.• CMP coordinators, range states and the SWG should regularly inform the Secretariat of social media opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The IWC's CMP program is distinguishable from similar conservation initiatives, and has a visual 'brand' (distinct from but connected to the IWC) linked to its collaborative and proactive reputation.• Up to date information about the CMP program is available and easily accessible for interested parties.
6. Strengthening financing	The financing of CMPs is generally the responsibility of range state governments, with support from the Voluntary Conservation Fund when funds are available (in line with established processes for funding requests). Increasing and supporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The SWG will work with the Secretariat to identify fundraising opportunities, and maintain a list of discrete costed CMP actions/projects that require funding so that targeted requests can be made.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The rate of voluntary contributions/donations to the Voluntary Conservation Fund for CMPs increase.



	fundraising efforts will assist in ensuring consistent progress on CMP implementation and actions.		
--	--	--	--