

**International Whaling Commission (IWC)  
CONSERVATION COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2022-2026**

October 2022

Aim	Deliverable/Action	Progress	Responsibility	Timescale	Costs (If applicable)
<b>Strategic Planning and Reporting</b>					
Develop a coherent strategy to aid work planning and raise awareness of the work of the Conservation Committee.	Progress efforts to identify wider sources of funding for the work of the Committee.		Secretariat (Project Manager) in partnership with Chairs and topic leads	Ongoing	
	Develop a coherent workplan with resources identified where possible.		Conservation Committee Chair and Vice-Chair Secretariat (Project Manager)	Ongoing	
Ensure effective implementation of Conservation Committee recommendations and cross-fertilisation with the Scientific Committee.	At IWC66, the Commission endorsed Terms of Reference (see Annex 1) for annual Conservation Committee Planning Group (CCPG) meetings. The CCPG will continue to help set the agenda for the biennial CC meeting and ensure progression of the CC work plan in the intersessional period.		Conservation Committee Chair  Secretariat	Ongoing	Where possible hold Via Zoom with no cost
	Meetings of the Joint Conservation Committee-Scientific Committee Working Group to be held in conjunction with SC meetings. The CC will continue to participate in this WG and to propose items for its agenda.		Conservation Committee Chair Scientific Committee Chair	Ongoing	Depends on OE and budget outcomes, possibly as above
	Undertake ongoing analysis of Conservation Committee recommendations, using outputs from the IWC database of recommendations, including providing a consideration of successes and barriers to effective implementation. Provide relevant reports to Commission.		Conservation Committee Secretariat	Ongoing	
Ensure effective reporting to and from the Conservation Committee	(As endorsed by the Commission at IWC67). Review the current CC country reporting template and progress		Secretariat	Report to IWC69	Secretariat developing inhouse.

	development of a "Conservation Database" to facilitate online reporting by countries		Contracting Governments as pilot countries for database		
	Review means to increase the number of country reports provided to the Conservation Committee.		Secretariat Contracting Governments	Report to IWC69	
<b>Sustainable management of whale and dolphin watching</b>					
<p>Consider and act upon, as appropriate, the advice and recommendations from the SC on the impacts of whale watching operations on cetaceans.</p> <p>Establish linkages between the IWC and other relevant bodies to ensure the dissemination of IWC advice on whale watching.</p>	<p>Consolidation and maintenance of the IWC online whale watching Handbook, seeking input from the Scientific Committee as appropriate.</p> <p>In the coming years this will include-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue to collaborate with CMS</li> <li>- Modest updates to existing content requested by countries/data providers</li> <li>- Research opportunities of new content</li> <li>- Updating the searchable table of literature following the SC meetings</li> </ul>		<p>IWC Secretariat</p> <p>Standing Working Group on Whale Watching (SWG-WW) Chair</p>	Ongoing	<p>Costed proposal to be developed for promotion and maintenance/ translation.</p> <p>SC has allocated £1500 to develop a communications plan</p>
	Promotion of the IWC online Whale Watching Handbook		<p>IWC Secretariat</p> <p>With assistance from Contracting Governments and Observers.</p>	Ongoing	
	Engage with appropriate regional and international bodies addressing whale watching and progress any opportunities for capacity building. This year the SWG will focus on means to strengthen engagement with industry.		<p>Conservation Committee Chair</p> <p>Secretariat SWG-WW Chair</p>	Ongoing	
	Exploring funding opportunities to ensure updates and new content in the WW Handbook are translated		IWC Secretariat	Ongoing	
<b>Conservation Management Plans</b>					
Further the development and implementation of conservation management plans (CMPs)	Maintain CMP guidelines, templates and funding principles on the IWC website for use by members wishing to undertake a CMP. These were reviewed and updated, as part of the mid-term review of the CMP		Secretariat	Biennial	N/A

	work plan. They will remain under biennial review as needed.				
	Support the development of CMPs for priority species	The Scientific Committee has advised that several species/populations should be considered priorities for CMP development. This means that range states can progress straight to the CMP drafting stage (rather than first preparing a nomination). A list of priority species is included in the CMP work plan. It will be updated annually based on advice from the SC-CMPs group.	Scientific Committee  SWG-CMP	Ongoing	N/A
	Support discussions between scientists and relevant range state governments to continue to further progress development of an Arabian Sea humpback whales CMP	The Arabian Sea humpback whale has been recommended as a priority species for CMP development by the Scientific Committee. The IWC continues to actively engage with Countries and stakeholders in the region regarding the opportunity for a CMP on this species	SWG-CMP	Ongoing	TBC
	Implement the nine high priority actions that were identified in the Southwest Atlantic Southern right whale CMP.	CMP is in place and being implemented. Progress will be reported to the CC at IWC69.	SWG-CMP CMP Coordinator (Brazil)	Ongoing	
	Implement the Southeast Pacific Southern right whale CMP, focusing on the short-term objectives in the early implementation stages.	CMP is in place and being implemented. Progress will be reported to the CC at IWC69.	SWG-CMP CMP Coordinator (Chile)	Ongoing	
	Implement the Northwest Pacific Gray Whale CMP, focusing on CMP review and operationalising the MoU	CMP is in place and is being implemented. Progress will be reported to the CC at IWC69.	SWG-CMP CMP Coordinator (Japan)	Ongoing	
	Implement the Franciscana dolphin CMP, focusing on establishing coordination and monitoring processes	CMP is in place and is being implemented. Progress will be reported to the CC at IWC69.	SWG-CMP CMP Coordinator (Argentina)	Ongoing	
<b>Whale Sanctuaries and protected areas</b>					

Provide conservation and management input into reviews of proposed and existing whale sanctuaries as appropriate.	Work with the Scientific Committee to ensure the Conservation Committee contributes to any review of existing sanctuaries and to the review of any new proposals. - Review of the Southern Ocean Sanctuary - Prepare for review of Indian Ocean Sanctuary		Conservation Committee Chair Scientific Committee	Workshop at SC in 2024 and Report to IWC69	£1985 from SC, CC funding contribution, if any, to be developed
<b>Ship Strikes</b>					
Implement the Ship Strikes Strategic Plan.	Implement 2022-2024 Costed Workplan (Annex 2 in <a href="#">SC68D/HIM/06</a> ) and <a href="#">Ship Strikes Strategic Plan 2022-2032</a> .		Ship Strikes Working Group (SS-WG) Data Manager Secretariat Ship Strikes Expert Panel Scientific Committee	Ongoing	
Consider and act upon, as appropriate, the advice and recommendations from the SC on the impacts of ship strikes on cetaceans at a population and individual level.	Continue work to (i) identify high risk populations and areas and to develop proposals for appropriate mitigation measures; (ii) increase the application of measures that reduce collision probability such as speed reduction and re-routeing limits; (iii) increase development and use of avoidance technologies (Objectives 1, 2 and 4 in work plan)	Ongoing	Conservation Committee SS-WG Scientific Committee SS Expert panel Data Manager IWC Contracting Governments		
Establish linkages between the IWC and other relevant bodies to progress IWC priorities and ensure the dissemination of IWC advice on ship strikes.	Ongoing development and maintenance of the ship strikes database including to improve reporting of incidents into the database through systematic outreach to data providers, review and provision of data, increasing accessibility of database and promoting its use.	Ongoing	Data Manager Secretariat SS Expert Panel Contracting Governments	Reports to SC	Data Manager (Approx £35,000 for 1 year FTE). To be met with SC funding for database, existing earmarked funding for SS in VCF and other vol funds.
	Engage with regional and international bodies addressing ship strikes to further improve collaboration internationally and progress any opportunities for capacity building.	Ongoing	Conservation Committee Chair  Secretariat SS-WG	Ongoing	

	Priorities include ongoing engagement with IMO, IUCN Protected Areas Task Force and work on IMMAs, ACCOBAMS and MarineTraffic- an AIS data provider.				
	Refine and implement plans for further outreach to increase public and industry awareness on the ship strikes issue and measures that can be taken to reduce this threat including consideration of tailored advice to different sectors.		SS-WG  Secretariat  Assistance from Contracting Governments and Observers.		
<b>Marine Debris</b>					
Consider and act upon, as appropriate, the advice and recommendations from the SC on the impacts of marine debris on cetaceans at a population and individual level.	Further consideration of the development of a Marine Debris database in liaison with Strandings Expert Panel and Ad Hoc Group on databases and related issues		Secretariat, with SC intersessional group for marine debris, SC Ad Hoc Group on databases and Strandings Expert Panel		
Establish linkages between the IWC and other relevant bodies to ensure the dissemination of IWC advice on marine debris.	Engage with appropriate regional and international bodies addressing marine debris including (in the coming year) IUCN, UNE, WHO, FAO, and the Global Ghost Gear Initiative (GGGI).		Secretariat	Ongoing	
	Communicate with and begin using the established IWC roster of experts to provide advice and facilitate input to other expert processes		Secretariat in liaison with Conservation Committee and Scientific Committee Experts	Report to next CC at IWC69	
	Exploring potential for pilot projects to address ALDFG, including gear removal in collaboration with the GWERN/BMI and potentially with the Global Ghost Gear Initiative		Secretariat including Entanglement coordinator in liaison with relevant members of the Commission and SC		Costed projects to be developed
	Identify and implement ways to obtain information on ALDFG and its mitigation from contracting governments and other stakeholders including through Voluntary		Secretariat	Ongoing, proposals to be integrated into conservation database	

	Conservation Reports through the new Conservation Database				
	Promote leadership by the IWC in eliminating single use plastics including in its day-to-day operations, COVID response and at IWC meetings.		Secretariat Conservation Committee	Ongoing. Report on progress to future CC meeting	
<b>Bycatch</b>					
Implement the work of the Bycatch Mitigation Initiative.	Implement 2021-2024 costed Workplan <a href="#">see here for full workplan</a> ) and <a href="#">Strategic Plan</a> for the initiative.	Costed Workplan (2021-2024) endorsed by Conservation Committee in 2020	Bycatch coordinator Standing Working Group (SWG-Bycatch) Bycatch Expert Panel Conservation Committee Scientific Committee	Ongoing implementation of workplan and strategic plan	See costed workplan <a href="#">here</a>
	Provide technical advice and capacity building to contracting and non-contracting governments in tackling bycatch, through experience gained in pilot projects, affiliated projects (ABNJ II Project), etc. Provide advice in response to direct requests for assistance and a dedicated capacity/training programme in collaboration with external partners and existing IWC programmes (e.g., CMPs, GWERN, etc).		Bycatch Coordinator Bycatch Expert Panel SWG-Bycatch Conservation Committee  Secretariat including IWC entanglement adviser/ Human Impact Reduction	Ongoing	
	Engagement with relevant IGOs (including FAO, Regional Fisheries Management Organisations & Bodies, CMS and daughter agreements, NAMMCO, SPREP, SPAW etc), international bodies (e.g., World Bank, MSC, ICES), industry groups (ISSF, etc) and research bodies and NGOs to strengthen collaboration and coordination in relation to bycatch work.		Bycatch Coordinator Conservation Committee SWG- Bycatch Expert Panel	Ongoing	
	Report to the Commission on progress in addressing IWC Recommendations on the mitigation and management of bycatch through the Bycatch Mitigation Initiative.		SWG-Bycatch Conservation Committee Secretariat Bycatch Coordinator	IWC69	

	Develop recommendations based on the findings and outputs arising from the BMI, including pilot studies, affiliated projects, and engagement with IGOs and relevant workshops and publications. Monitor progress in implementing recommendations.		Conservation Committee SWG- Bycatch Bycatch Coordinator	Ongoing	
	Support the BMI as appropriate according to national circumstances including: - Through the development of appropriate national legislation and plans to tackle bycatch - Reporting of experiences and plans on bycatch into the BMI and through Conservation Committee Reports - Assistance in identifying potential funding sources to support the BMI (pilot projects/capacity development), and work with the Bycatch Coordinator to develop collaborative joint proposals		Conservation Committee SWG- Bycatch	Ongoing	
<b>Anthropogenic Underwater Noise</b>					
Consider and act upon, as appropriate, the advice and recommendations from the SC on the impacts of anthropogenic noise on cetaceans.	Further identify and engage with appropriate regional and international bodies addressing anthropogenic noise and progress any opportunities for capacity building, in particular with regards to the IMO ( <i>IWC/64/Rep5. IWC/64/Rep1</i> ). With input from SC68C and D update the CC workplan for 2022-2024 on underwater noise.	Meeting held September 2022	Conservation Committee  Secretariat  Intersessional Group on Anthropogenic Underwater Noise	2020-ongoing  For IWC68	
Establish linkages between the IWC and other relevant bodies to ensure the dissemination of IWC advice on anthropogenic noise.	Review management recommendations from other IGOs working on this topic and update the 2020 paper. Review progress of outreach activities and information flow, specifically provide advice on how the IWC could further enhance its outreach and capacity building activities.				

<p>Provide a report to the Commission synthesising progress in addressing IWC Recommendations on the mitigation and management of anthropogenic noise.</p>	<p>SC and CC workshops on underwater noise will be held during this intersessional period to review recommendations arising from previous relevant workshops and publications such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased Marine Activities on Cetaceans in the Arctic (<i>IWC/65/Rep07 Rev1</i>)</li> <li>• Workshop on the evaluation of stress and sound (<i>IWC66 rep1 (2015) 12.4.3</i>).</li> </ul>		<p>Anthropogenic Underwater Noise Working Group SC Sub-committee on Environmental Concerns (Noise) Sub-Committee on Unintended Human Induced Mortality (shipping)</p>	<p>2024. The reports of these workshops will be presented to IWC69.</p>	<p>Depending on format of workshop a funding request may be submitted to the VCF</p>
<p>Describe the extent of seismic exploration activities worldwide, and identify areas where cetacean populations, especially threatened ones, could be exposed</p>	<p>1) Review the existing recommendations from the IWC on seismic activities and provide updates if needed. 2) Compile published and unpublished literature on this issue. 3) Engage with appropriate regional and international bodies addressing seismic exploration (such as CMS) to scope further work on dissemination of guidelines related to Anthropogenic Underwater noise. To describe the extent of seismic activities worldwide the following steps will be taken: 1) distribute the questionnaire through notification from IWC Secretariat to contracting governments, and different bodies such as CMS, CBD, etc. 2) Map the data with a Geographical Information System. 3) Prepare a final document to circulate with the IWC CC, the IWC SC and the Commission.</p>		<p>Conservation Committee  Secretariat Intersessional Group on Anthropogenic Underwater Noise</p>	<p>2021- ongoing  A report will be submitted to the next SC and CC meeting  4-6 months (collect the information) IWC SC 69A (preliminary report)</p>	
<p>Identify other important issues and synergies related to anthropogenic underwater noise (e.g., vessel noise)</p>	<p>Coordinate with other existing initiatives or groups within the IWC (e.g., ship strike, WW, stranding, etc.) to find synergies for common mitigation</p>		<p>Anthropogenic Underwater Noise Working Group Scientific Committee groups Ship Strikes SWG SWG on Whale Watching Strandings initiative</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	



<b>Cetaceans and Ecosystem Functioning</b>					
<p>Consider and act upon, as appropriate, the advice and recommendations from the SC on cetaceans and ecosystem functioning.</p> <p>Establish linkages between the IWC and other relevant bodies to ensure the dissemination of IWC advice on cetaceans and ecosystem functioning</p>	<p>Contact the IMF and UN Framework Convention for Climate Change, as well as the UNEP Finance Initiative to inform them about the work the IWC is conducting and invite these organizations to coordinate actions on this topic</p> <p>Contact other key organizations and initiatives (IPBES, ecological economics associations, etc.), to communicate the advances on this topic and evaluate their interest in collaborating.</p> <p>Develop a workplan based on outcomes from the 2022 workshop recommendations</p> <p>Develop and conduct pilot project</p>		<p>CC Intersessional Group on Cetaceans and Ecosystem Functioning Conservation Committee Chair</p> <p>Secretariat</p>	Report to IWC69	<p>Costs involved in the pilot project are being developed-workshop, possible consultant</p>
<b>Climate Change</b>					
<p>Consider and act upon, as appropriate, the advice and recommendations from the SC on the impacts of <b>climate change</b> on cetaceans.</p> <p>Establish linkages between the IWC and other relevant bodies to ensure the dissemination of IWC advice on cetaceans and climate change</p>	<p>Joint CC/SC Steering committee to develop a workplan for this topic based on recommendations from the 2021 <a href="#">workshop</a></p> <p>i) Monitor the relevant literature and provide updates to the SC and CC as appropriate;</p> <p>ii) Review the outputs from the 2021 virtual IWC climate change workshop and seek ways to take forward its recommendations;</p> <p>iii) Suggest ways in which the Conservation Committee can progress work on climate change and potentially improve the effectiveness of its recommendations for management and conservation actions through consideration of climate-induced impacts or changes; and</p> <p>iv) Further build synergies in these endeavours with other international organisations.</p>		<p>Joint Climate Change Steering group Conservation Committee Scientific Committee</p> <p>Secretariat</p>	IWC69	

Other Threats					
Consider and act upon, as appropriate, the advice and recommendations from the SC on the impacts of <b>chemical pollution</b> on cetaceans.	Recruit representatives to join the CC intersessional group for development of a CC workplan on chemical pollution group, in liaison with the SC		Conservation Committee Scientific Committee	IWC69	