



Circular Communication to Commissioners, Contracting Governments and
Members of the Scientific Committee
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IWC Budget and the Scientific Committee

As noted in the minutes of the Bureau meeting held on 6 June, the IWC Scientific Committee is facing a significant shortfall (estimated £43,000) for the SC meeting in April/May 2024 (SC69B). The shortfall is a combination of budget cuts agreed at IWC68 as well as rising costs for the meeting of the SC. This SC meeting will be critical to the Commission given that IWC69 will address Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (ASW) quotas for the following six years.

The 2024 meeting (April 22nd onwards) of the SC will again be held in Bled, Slovenia, as this is the most cost-effective location to organize a meeting of the Committee when there is no member country in position to host. This lack of host country means that budget overspend will not be covered, so the meeting must be within the budget approved by the Commission.

In the deliberations by the Bureau, several suggestions were raised as options for addressing the shortage in the SC meeting budget by reaching out to the IWC to request the following of the Commissioners as well as other stakeholders:

- 1) Provide one-time financial support for the SC, to help cover SC69B meeting costs as well as the Research budget, which funds IPs and intersessional workshops.
- 2) Consider adding any relevant Invited Participants (IPs) to your national delegation and covering their travel costs. This was done by several countries at SC69A but more support is needed as the travel funds for IPs come out of the SC Research Budget.
- 3) For future years, ask member countries to consider hosting an in-person SC meeting. The SC meeting in the next biennial (SC70) will be held in 2026, so there is ample time to propose and prepare for being a host country. There is information on [hosting a SC meeting available here](#).

As the Bureau concluded, unless voluntary contributions are forthcoming, there will be impacts on the ability of the SC to provide the necessary science for Commission decisions.

At IWC68 the Scientific Committee leadership explained the need for full in-person SC meetings in 2023 and 2024 including catching up on its agenda after three years of limited virtual meetings. Most importantly, the move to a new budget scenario and meeting schedule requires strategic planning and discussion by the Committee. Having sufficient time for these discussions is key to developing the best possible plan for operating in a biennial meeting schedule starting in 2026. Currently, there are insufficient funds to host a full meeting in 2024 and the Committee requests assistance from member countries to find these funds.

If you have any questions regarding opportunities to support the science that is the foundation of our work at IWC, please contact secretariat@iwc.int.

We thank the delegations and observers who have supported the work of the IWC Scientific Committee.



Dr Rebecca Lent
Executive Secretary



Dr Alex Zerbini
SC Chair



Dr Iain Staniland
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Dr Lindsay Porter
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