



**CONTENT EMBARGOED UNTIL 0001 BST (UK) on 01/08/23**

Circular Communication to Members of the Scientific Committee  
**IWC.SC.244**

*c.c. Accredited observers to the IWC*

**Publication of first Scientific Committee Extinction Alert:  
Statement of Concern for the vaquita**

The first Scientific Committee Extinction Alert will be published on 1 August. As discussed at SC69A, we are asking all SC members to support this initiative and help make the SC's voice heard amidst the vast amount of science and conservation news appearing daily all over the world.

Below are some key messages, a suggested tweet and hashtags as well as links to the SC Statement, and press release including photographs and footage.

Please use any/all of this material to share information about the SC Extinction Alert with your colleagues, professional networks, the media teams of your organisations, and on any social media platforms you use. Spanish and German translations are attached and additional translations of the key messages into other languages would also be much appreciated. Please share your translations with the Secretariat as well as any other relevant audiences. If you have any questions, please contact [kate.wilson@iwc.int](mailto:kate.wilson@iwc.int).

**Key Messages (also in Spanish and German below)**

- The purpose of the IWC Scientific Committee Extinction Alert Statement is to encourage wider recognition of the warning signs of impending extinctions, and this statement aims to generate support and encouragement at every level for the actions needed now to save the vaquita.
- There are only around 10 vaquita left. But this small group of animals is proving resilient. They have managed to maintain this kind of number for about five years. This gives us reason to believe that it's not too late - yet.

- If 100% of gillnets are removed from its core habitat now, the vaquita stands a chance. If this doesn't happen now, it will be too late. These are hard facts and people should be aware of them.
- The IWC Scientific Committee has provided advice on all aspects of cetacean science since the Commission was established in 1946. The Committee is made up of around 200 world-leading scientists who have come to the stark conclusion that a new mechanism is needed to raise extinction concerns more clearly and more publicly.

#### Suggested Tweet (or re-tweet from @iwc\_int)

Act now or it will be too late for the [#vaquita](#). After 30 yrs of warnings, [@iwc\\_int](#) Scientific Committee issues first ever [#ExtinctionAlert](#), a new mechanism to voice extinction concerns more clearly and publicly <https://archive.iwc.int/?r=20358>

*This will be tweeted at 0001 on 07 August. Please do not tweet before then.*

#### Hashtags

[#vaquita](#)      [#ExtinctionAlert](#)      [#cetaceanscience](#)      [#cetaceanconservation](#)

#### Links

[Scientific Committee of the IWC, Statement of Concern for the Survival of the Vaquita Porpoise](#)  
*This link will go live on Monday 31 July.*

#### [Press Release](#)

*This link is live now, embargoed as above.*

Please note that the statement and press release are also available in Chinese. Contact the [Secretariat](#) if you would also like these versions.

Please note there is an embargo at the top of this Circular which applies to all this material. We are circulating it now to allow plenty of notice and time to prepare but please use the material on or shortly **after** this date.

If we all speak at the same time we are more likely to be heard.

Sincere thanks to everyone for your support.



Dr Alex Zerbini  
SC Chair



Dr Lindsay Porter  
SC Vice-Chair

## Key Messages

### Espanöl

#### **Declaración de preocupación del Comité Científico de la Comisión Ballenera Internacional (CBI) por la vaquita**

##### **Mensajes clave:**

- El propósito de la Declaración de Alerta de Extinción del Comité Científico de la CBI es fomentar un reconocimiento más amplio de las señales de advertencia de extinciones inminentes, y esta declaración tiene como objetivo generar apoyo y estímulo en todos los niveles para las acciones necesarias ahora para salvar a la vaquita.
- Solo quedan alrededor de 10 vaquitas. Pero este pequeño grupo de animales está demostrando ser resistente. Han logrado mantener este número durante aproximadamente cinco años. Esto nos da razones para creer que aún no es demasiado tarde.
- Si se eliminan el 100% de las redes de enmalle de su hábitat central ahora, la vaquita tiene una oportunidad. Si esto no sucede ahora, será demasiado tarde. Estos son hechos irrefutables y las personas deberían ser conscientes de ellos.
- Esta es la primera declaración de Alerta de Extinción emitida por el Comité Científico. Es un nuevo mecanismo que deseáramos no requerir, pero necesitamos una voz más fuerte y pública para plantear preocupaciones de extinción para una creciente variedad de especies y poblaciones de cetáceos.

### Deutsch

#### **Wissenschaftsausschuss der Internationalen Walfangkommission: Alarmruf zur Lage des Vaquita**

##### **Kernbotschaften**

- Die „Extinction Alerts“ des IWC Wissenschaftsausschusses haben zum Ziel, die Warnsignale einer drohenden Ausrottung ins allgemeine Bewusstsein zu rücken. Das gegenständliche Statement soll Unterstützung und Ermutigung auf allen Ebenen für die jetzt dringend notwendigen Aktionen zur Rettung des Vaquita generieren.
- Es leben nur mehr etwa 10 Vaquita-Individuen. Aber diese kleine Population zeigt eine gewisse Resilienz – diese Zahl konnte in den letzten 5 Jahren in etwa gehalten werden. Das gibt Anlass zur Hoffnung. Noch ist es nicht zu spät.
- Wenn sofort 100% der Kiemennetze der Fischer vom Kernlebensraum dieser Tiere entfernt werden, gibt es für den Vaquita eine Überlebenschance. Wenn dies jedoch nicht geschieht, wird die Art aussterben. Diese harten Fakten müssen uns allen bewusst werden.
- Dies ist der erste vom Wissenschaftsausschuss herausgegebene „Extinction Alert“. Es handelt sich um ein neues Instrument, eines das aus der Not entwickelt wurde – wir brauchen eine starke und öffentlichkeitswirksame Stimme, um die Gefahr des Aussterbens einer steigenden Anzahl von Wal- und Delfin-Arten und -Populationen aufzuzeigen und um wirksame Gegenmaßnahmen zu forcieren.