IWC Small Cetacean Research Fund
Call for Proposals 2024
GUIDELINES

Closing date for applications: midnight UTC, Thursday, 29 February 2024.

Proposals will be assessed at SC69B (April 2024), submitted for approval at IWC 69 (September 2024) and, if approved, projects can only commence in January 2025, at the earliest.

Part 1 General Information

1. Background

The Small Cetaceans Sub-Committee (SM) of the IWC Scientific Committee (SC) was established in 1979. The SM mandate was most recently consolidated at IWC 65, under Resolution 2014-04. The current SM Terms of Reference are to:

- *Review the distribution and stock structure of small cetaceans.*
- *Review information on the status of stocks of small cetaceans and provide an assessment of the threats to the stocks concerned.*
- *Advice on ways in which those threats can be eliminated or mitigated.*
- *Review developments on topics and recommendations that were subject to previous reports.*
- *Coordinate with other Scientific Committee sub-committees and working groups, where appropriate, to further address topics related to environmental concerns, whale watching, RMP, AWMP, human induced mortality, among others.*

In 1994, the Commission established an IWC voluntary fund to allow for the participation of developing country scientists in the work of the SM. In 2009, the purpose of this fund was extended to support high priority research focused on small cetaceans. Today, the purpose of the **Voluntary Fund for Small Cetacean Conservation Research** is for:

(a) Provision of support for attendance of Invited Participants at meetings of the Scientific Committee;

(b) Provision of support for research in areas, species or populations or research methodology in small cetacean work identified as of direct interest or priority in the advice provided by the Scientific Committee to the Commission; to support high priority research that improves conservation outcomes for populations of small cetaceans, particularly those that are threatened or especially vulnerable to human activities;

(c) Other small cetacean work in developing countries that may be identified from time to time by the Commission and in consultation with intergovernmental agencies as requiring, or likely to benefit from, support through the Fund.

This document outlines the application process for the 2024 Call for Proposals for the "provision of support for small cetacean research", as outlined in the IWC 67 Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations.

2. Priorities and Recommendations Relevant to the Call for Proposals, 2024

Proposals are invited that address previously established priority topics and recommendations of the Small Cetaceans Sub-Committee (SM).

Proposals must address high priority research that demonstrably links to improving conservation outcomes for small cetaceans globally, particularly those species and populations that are threatened or particularly vulnerable to human activities;

(a) Funding will be based on a determination of need, the quality of the research application and demonstration of links between research and conservation outcomes;

(b) Capacity building legacy will be viewed favourably;

(c) Preference will be given to projects that address SM priority topics or recommendations.

The Database of Recommendations[1] lists all recommendations made by the Scientific Committee. An extract of recent, relevant recommendations made by the SM sub-committee is appended to this document (Annex I).

Previous reports and workshops of the SC can be found here[2].

The SM has ongoing priority topics and has expressed repeated concerns over several species and/or populations for many years. Projects are especially welcomed that address the following priority topics:

- Priority Topic 2024-26: Small Cetaceans of the South Pacific: focusing on melon headed whales (*Peponocephala electra*), short-finned pilot whales (*Globicephala macrorhynchus*), false (*Pseudorca crassidens*) and pygmy (*Feresa attenuata*) killer whales and rough-toothed dolphins (*Steno bredanensis*).
- Directed Take of Small Cetaceans (particularly for wildmeat purposes).
- The Task Team Initiative

It is noted that small cetaceans are often included in the work of several sub-committees of the IWC SC, therefore proposals that address any relevant small cetacean recommendation made by any IWC committee group or workshop will be considered.

The application must clearly state the priority topic or recommendation being addressed, what year the recommendation was made and include a reference to the relevant report, workshop or the entry ID of the recommendation in the Database of Recommendations.

Previously funded Small Cetacean Research Fund projects can be found here[3].

[1] https://iwc.int/commission/database-of-recommendations
[2] https://archive.iwc.int/pages/search.php?search=%21collection73&k=
[3] https://iwc.int/scientific-research/guidelines-for-funding-research/sm_fund

3. Eligibility

This Call for Proposals is an open call with applications welcomed from people and institutes from any region.

- All proposals should address **priority topics** or **recommendations** made by the SM (or other relevant sub-committees of the SC).
- All applicants **must** incorporate research or actions that improve conservation outcomes for populations of small cetaceans, particularly those that are threatened or especially vulnerable to human activities.
- All applicants are **strongly encouraged** to incorporate capacity building within the proposal.
- Research permits and/or ethics approval **must be** in place or in process when the application is being assessed.
- Recipients of funding from previous calls are eligible to apply for funding.
- The same Principal Investigator (PI), Co-Investigator (CoI) and/or Stakeholder may be included on more than one application.
- Multiple-year projects will be considered, noting the maximum award amount is per project (not per year).
- Proposals that include joint/matching funds will only be considered if the additional source(s) of funding are already in place.
- Applicants will be bound by IWC data availability and sharing protocols.
- Applicants will be bound by Scientific Committee conflict of interest procedures (see Part 1: Section 4)

4. Conflict of Interest

Potential or perceived 'conflict of interest' within the IWC SC will be avoided, especially with regards to membership of evaluation groups (e.g., IWC-SORP and SMRF funding). These rules apply to both applicant and members of the fund review panel.

As part of their application, applicants are required to declare to the best of their knowledge any conflict of interest that would impact on, or prevent, the applicant from proceeding with the project or any contract they may enter into with the IWC.

Where an applicant identifies that an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest exists or might arise in relation to this application for funding, the applicant must inform the IWC Secretariat in writing immediately. A conflict of interest may exist, for example, if the applicant or any of its personnel:

- *Has a relationship (whether professional, commercial or personal) with a party who is able to influence the application assessment process, such as an Assessment Panel member;*
- *Has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation, which is likely to interfere with or restrict the applicant in carrying out the proposed activities fairly and independently; or*
- *Has a relationship with, or interest in, an organisation from which they will receive personal gain as a result of the allocation of funding from the IWC-SM Research Fund.*

Assessment Panel members are also required to divulge any conflict of interest to the IWC Secretariat, Convenor(s) of the IWC-SM and the Chair of the IWC/SC prior to assessment of

applications. The Chair of the IWC/SC will decide on a case-by-case basis if the member(s) should be excluded from the assessment of individual project(s). A conflict of interest includes:

- *Any financial interest in the applicant(s) or application(s);*
- *Any relatives or friends with a financial interest in the applicant(s) or application(s);*
- *Any personal bias or inclination which would affect a decision in relation to applicant(s) or application(s);*
- *Any personal obligation, allegiance or loyalty which would in any way affect a decision in relation to the allocation of funding from the IWC-SORP Research Fund; and*
- *Any close, long-standing personal or professional relationship with the applicant(s).*

5. Closing Date

Applications are to be submitted electronically by **midnight UTC, Thursday 29 February 2024**. Applications submitted after this deadline will not be accepted.

6. Procedure and Timeline

The PI of the proposal will be informed once the application has been received. There may be a requirement to submit additional information. Any such requests will be made via email from either the Secretariat or the fund manager. Proposals will be assessed by members of the review panel and final assessment will take place at SC69B (April 2024). All submissions will be assessed and ranked according to the detailed procedures in Part 2. Projects shall be recommended for funding as per rank and available funding. The Principal Investigators of all projects will be informed of the decision made by the SC in early May 2024. Recommended projects will be submitted to IWC 69 (September 2024) for approval. If approved, the Secretariat will prepare contracts in November-December 2024, to commence **no earlier than January 2025** (Figure 1).

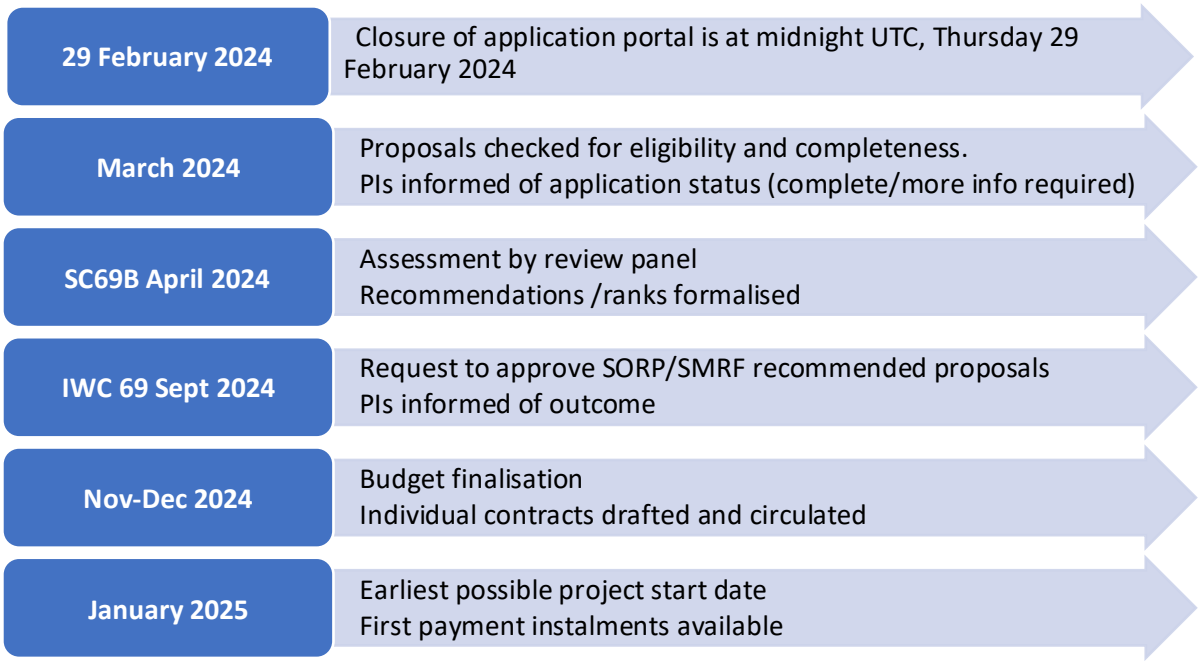


Figure 1. Funding procedure timeline and key dates

7. Appeals

Appeals will be considered only against process issues relating to the application. They will not be considered against Assessment Panel decisions. Appeals must be lodged through the administering organisation's research office and be received within 28 days of the date of notification of the outcome of applications (IWC 69 September 2024). The appeal should state the grounds for appeal and be signed by the appellant. The signed appeal should be sent to the IWC Secretariat at projectproposals@iwc.int

8. Contract

The Principal Investigators (PI) of successful proposals will be required to sign a contract with the International Whaling Commission (IWC).

- The contract will cover the project budget, financial and performance acquittal, milestone activities, reporting, intellectual property, assets and data requirements.
- Milestone activities will include interim and final reports to the IWC Scientific Committee detailing performance to the date of the milestone. The milestone dates will be linked to the IWC Scientific Committee meeting schedule.
- Payments will be linked to milestone activities, which must be successfully completed before funds are released.
- By signing the contract, the PI and their institution (when applicable) will be agreeing to the clauses set out within the contract.
- An alternate or replacement person must be named in the contract, who has the authority to assume the PI role in the event the PI leaves the proposal institution or is no longer able to act as PI.

9. Reporting

All SM Research Fund projects are required to submit interim and final reports annually to the IWC Scientific Committee via the convenors of the SM sub-committee.

- The interim and final reports will outline to what degree the funding received from SM has achieved the objectives, outputs and outcomes identified in the approved project application.
- Interim and final reports will be submitted as per the dates/milestones agreed in the Contract (Part 1: Section 8 above). These milestone dates will be linked to the IWC Scientific Committee meeting schedule.
- The final report will be assessed by the SM convenors to ensure the project has achieved the objectives, outputs and outcomes as stated in the original project proposal. A satisfactory assessment of the final report is required to release the final payment[4].
- The final report will be submitted to the next meeting of the SC for discussion and inclusion in the meeting report.
- The final report will be made publicly available on the IWC website.
- Successful applicants are encouraged to submit manuscripts derived from the SM funded research for publication in the Journal of Cetacean Research and Management, or other appropriate, peer-reviewed scientific journals.

[4] *The outcome of previous assessments of the PIs and/or institutes reporting to IWC SM will be considered during the application process.*

10. Disclosure

The Principal Investigator's name and institute, a synopsis of all proposals and the funding amount for all projects considered for funding will be publicly available in the Scientific Report published in the year the application was made. All applicants' names, project details, funding amounts and the purpose for which the funds were granted will be publicly announced only for approved and funded proposals. This will include naming all parties to the successful application. These details will be published on the IWC website immediately after the contract takes effect.

11. Enquiry Contact Details

All applications must be submitted via the online portal. If there are any technical issues or questions relating to the portal, please contact projectproposals@iwc.int

If there are any questions relating to proposal theme or eligibility, please contact the relevant chair of each fund:

SORP Secretariat, Elanor Bell elanor.bell@aad.gov.au

Small Cetacean Fund Coordinator Lindsay Porter lindsay.jp@gmail.com

Part 2 - Detailed Guidelines for Online Submission, Budget and Assessment

Previously, submissions to the SM Research Fund were made via downloadable documents. An online form is now available for all fund application and is in the same format as the previous application document. The online system is aimed to standardise application submission across all funds, ease the submission process for the applicant and assist the Secretariat and fund managers to process the growing number of applications received in a more timely and efficient manner. If there are any technical issues with the online submission process, or an online submission is not practical if you are in a remote area with poor connectivity, please contact projectproposals@iwc.int for assistance.

1. Application Form

The Small Cetacean Research Fund Proposal Application electronic form can be accessed at Fund Application Form[5] (Figure 1).

Figure 1. First page of the form. Note the dropdown menu to select relevant fund.

[5] https://forms.office.com/e/z7RkSfY9ke

1.1. *Named Personnel*

The second page of the form is for the Principal Investigator (PI) details. There can only be one PI.

The role of the Principal Investigator is to:

- Take primary personal responsibility for designing, writing, conducting and completing the project.
- Take responsibility for the day-to-day running of their project, provide the required reports, data, samples and publications to the IWC-SM convenors.
- Supervise Co-Investigators (Co-I) and stakeholders and to inform them of their obligations under the funded project.

The Principal Investigator must also name an alternate or second investigator within the project team/institute who can take over if the Principal Investigator becomes unavailable or leaves the institute. This is not on the application form but should be considered as it will be part of the contract with IWC.

At the end of the second page, there is a check box for additional named investigators (Figure2).

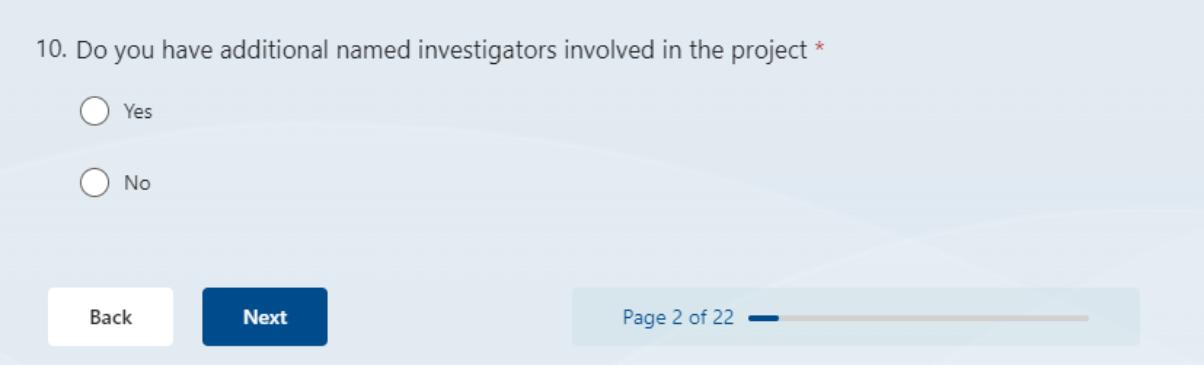


Figure 2. Checkbox that autogenerates new pages for CoI and Stakeholders. A maximum of three (3) CoI detail pages and ten (10) Stakeholder pages can be generated.

If "yes" is clicked, you will be taken to the Co-Investigators page. If there is more than one Co-I, keep clicking "Yes" when prompted and you can add up to three (3) Co-Investigators.

If "No" is clicked (either from PI or CoI details pages), you will be taken to the "Stakeholders" details page. As for CoI details, if you have more than one Stakeholder, keep clicking "Yes" at the end of each page. A maximum of ten (10) stakeholders can be added.

Differences between Co-Investigator and Stakeholder

Co-Is are senior or key investigators who do not have the overall responsibility and authority of the PI. Co-Is have responsibilities similar to that of a PI and are obligated to ensure the project is conducted in compliance with the proposal aims (including research and ethic permit compliance) and the contract with IWC.

Stakeholders are the relevant and interested authorities/experts/NGOs at a local, regional or international level (as appropriate), who are key in assisting the project in **delivering practical conservation research**, either morally or financially. Stakeholders are not meant to be simply theoretically interested parties, but should benefit from and/or **assist in delivering project** outputs and/or will be able to **continue relevant work** in the future.

1.2 Project Description

At the beginning of "Background to the proposal" section, state the relevant priority topic (i.e., Small Cetaceans of the South Pacific; Directed Take of Small Cetaceans; The Task Team Initiative) or the exact text of the recommendation being addressed (incl. year and cite reference) and/or the entry ID of the recommendation in the "Database of Recommendations". This is the only part that is word limited (2500 words) (Figure 3).

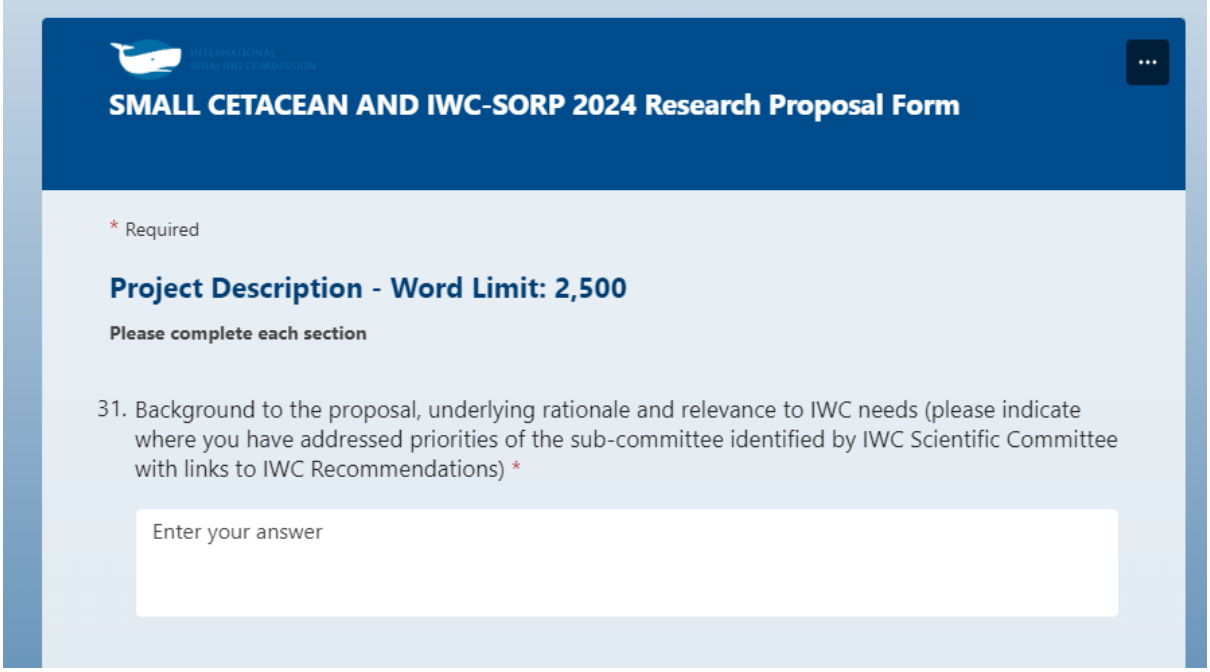


Figure 3. Project Description word limited box.

1.3 Summary of work plan

The workplan page has nine (9) spaces for activities. If you do not have nine activities, input NA into the activity section and a dummy date into the date line (apologies, form won't let us enter a non-date!) (Figure 4).

When the proposal is assessed, all NA/dummy dates shall be removed so the review panel will have a tidy proposal.

If there are more than nine (9) activities, please contact the Small Cetacean Fund Review Panel coordinator, Lindsay Porter lindsay.jp@gmail.com.

1.4 Expected Output

There is space for five (5) expected outputs from the project. If you do not have five expected outputs, input NA into the output section and a dummy date into the date line (apologies, form won't let us enter a non-date!) (Figure 5).

When the proposal is assessed, all NA/dummy dates shall be removed so the review panel will have a tidy proposal.

If there are more than five (5) expected outputs, please contact the Small Cetacean Fund Review Panel coordinator, Lindsay Porter lindsay.jp@gmail.com.

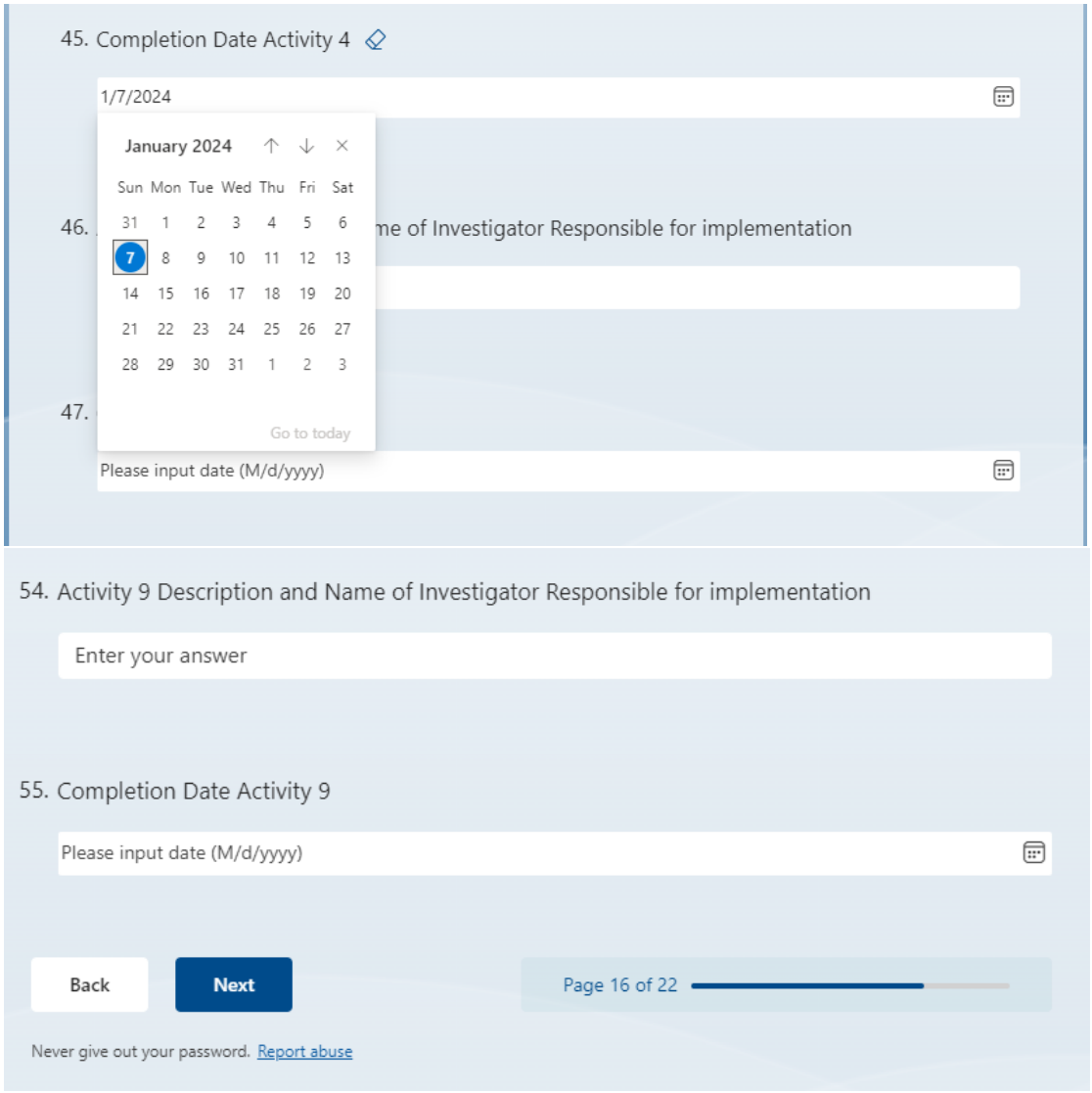


Figure 4. A date must be entered for each proposed activity (even NA activities!)

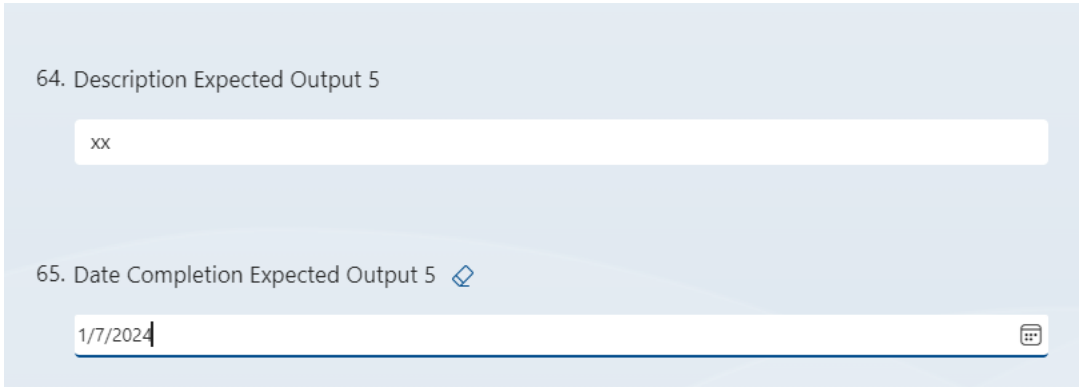


Figure 5. A date must be entered for each expected output (even NA outputs!)

1.5 Permits

Research permits and/or ethics approval must be in place or in process when the application is being assessed. This section requires affirming permits/process is in place. Please note: you do NOT have to upload permits at this time (Figure 6).

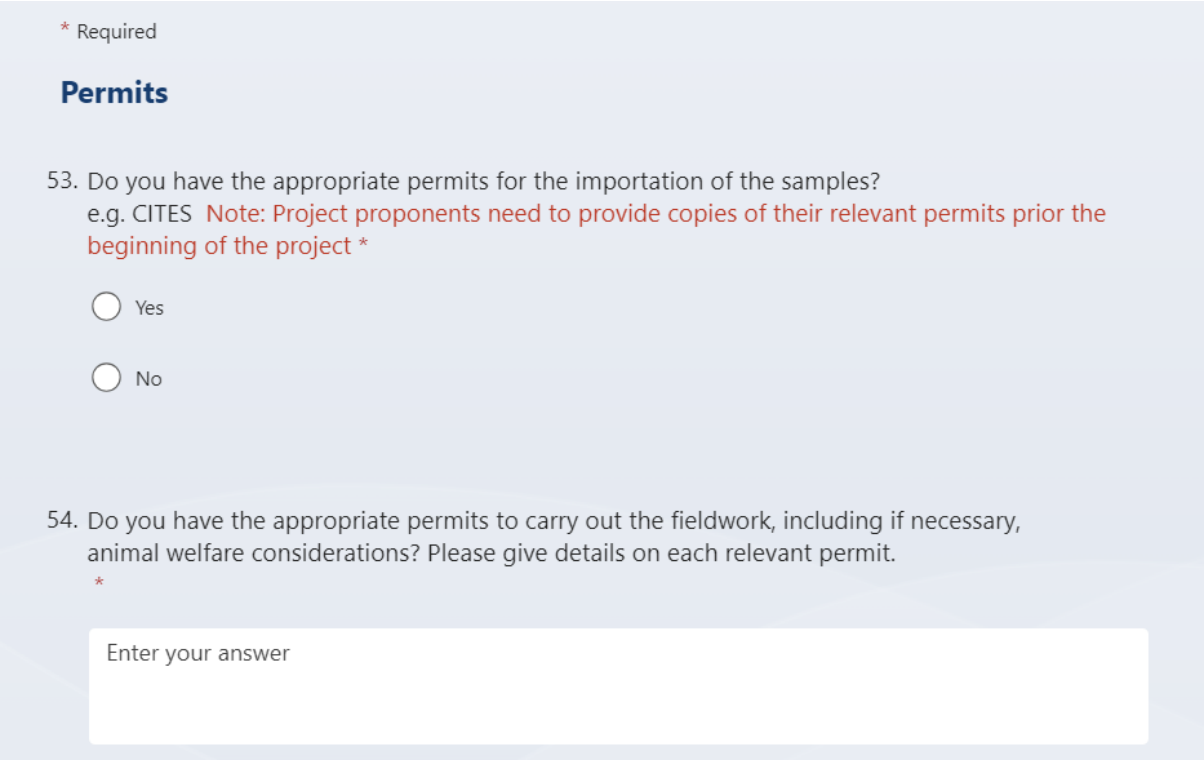


Figure 6. Permit section (permits are not required to be uploaded but will be requested if the project is to be funded)

1.6 Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Applicants must be able to provide evidence of relevant research experience of a high order.

All investigators need to include a short biographical statement within the online form, outlining experience and history relevant to the project. Formal CVs are not required, instead a short biographical statement is required for the PI (250 word limit only).

For CoIs, all can be included in the second box – again **each CoI** bio must only be 250 words (Figure 7). Full CVs, including publications, may be requested at a later date.

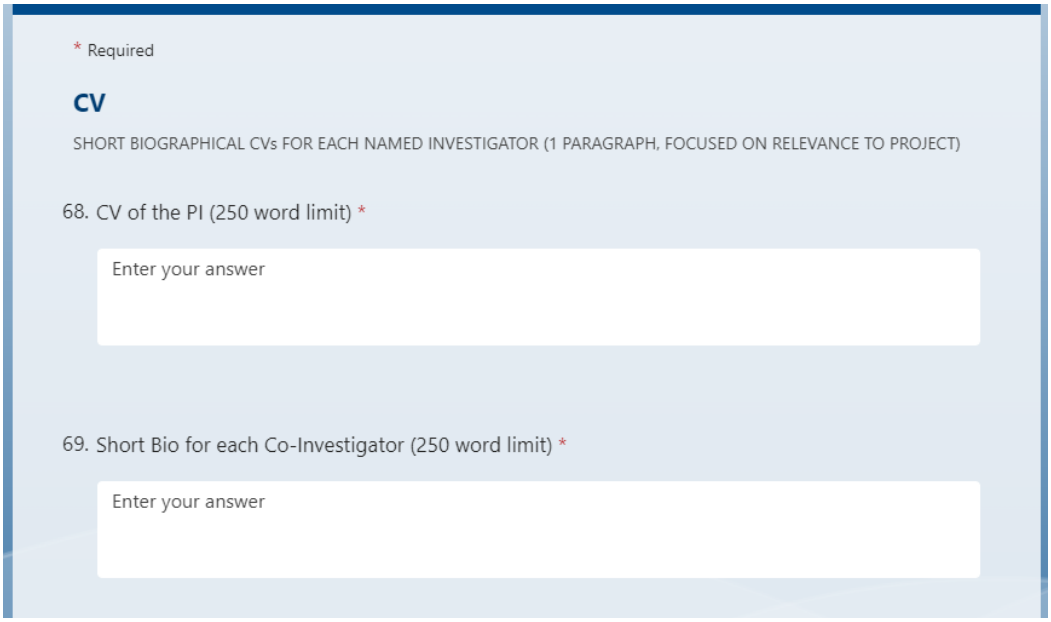
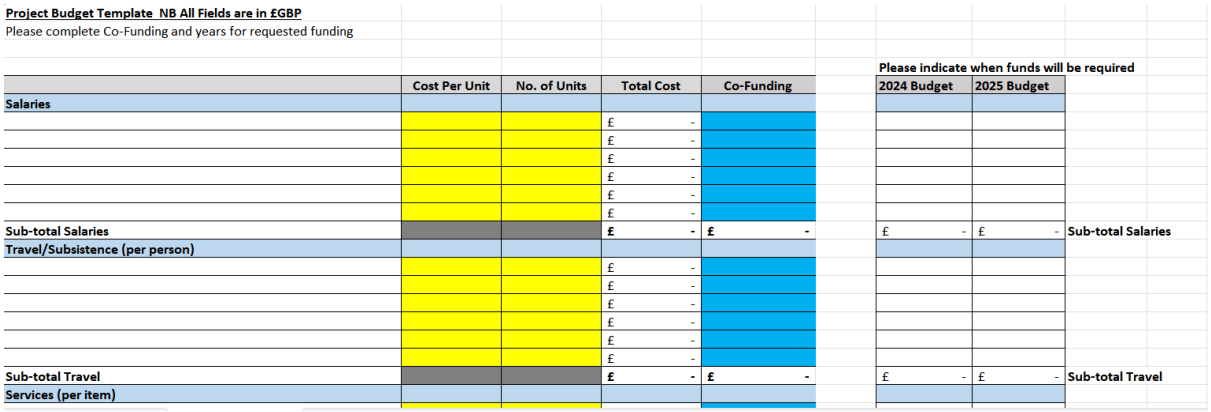


Figure 7. The CV page has two boxes, one solely for the PI (250 word limit) and the other is for all CoI short bios (250 words each). There is no need to provide Stakeholder bio/information.

1.7 Budget

The budget must be submitted as a separate spreadsheet (RS21909_IWC Budget Cost Estimate Final 2024) which can be downloaded here[6] (Figure 8).



Project Budget Template NB All Fields are in £GBP
Please complete Co-Funding and years for requested funding

	Cost Per Unit	No. of Units	Total Cost	Co-Funding	Please indicate when funds will be required: 2024 Budget	2025 Budget	
Salaries							
			£ -				
			£ -				
			£ -				
			£ -				
			£ -				
			£ -				
Sub-total Salaries			£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	Sub-total Salaries
Travel/Subsistence (per person)							
			£ -				
			£ -				
			£ -				
			£ -				
			£ -				
			£ -				
Sub-total Travel			£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	Sub-total Travel
Services (per item)							

Figure 8. The downloadable budget spreadsheet has two pages, both of which must be completed.

All Project Budget items must be detailed (spreadsheet) and fully justified (online form).

Costs should be based on current market values, expressed in whole British Pounds Sterling (GBP), and should be **inclusive** of goods and services/ sales taxes (e.g., GST, VAT etc.) where applicable.

- If costs are based on formal quotations, please provide figures. Do not send quotation documents.
- Once a grant is approved it is not possible to provide additional funds, i.e., for salary or equipment cost increases.

[6] https://archive.iwc.int/?r=21909&k=2826dc9f01

- Funds will not be granted for organisation overheads or administration fees (exceptions may apply, please justify in form).
- Funds will not be granted for the hire of equipment/computer/facility time within the applicant's/applicants' own organisation(s).
- Funds will not be granted for acquisition of assets unless a strong justification is provided.

All sections must be filled in and after submitting the online form, the excel file must be named <PI-Surname.xlxs> and emailed to projectproposals@iwc.int

The online form section regarding budget must also be completed (Figure 9). Within the online form, applicants must provide a detailed justification for all items requested together with accurate costs. Applicants must not simply provide a list of itemised costs.

- The justification should demonstrate the relevance of all requested items to the scientific and operational scope of the project, including, how the item, equipment or consumables will be used.
- For travel, the justification should include why travel is necessary and provide the type or class of travel, number of nights of accommodation, and associated living costs.
- Funds for personnel must be fully justified in terms of the nominated person's expertise and experience and the role they will play in creating successful project outcomes.

1.8 Schedule

This section is to detail the anticipated completion date (expected date of submission of the final report – not project fieldwork or activities completion) and proposed publication plans (Figure 10).

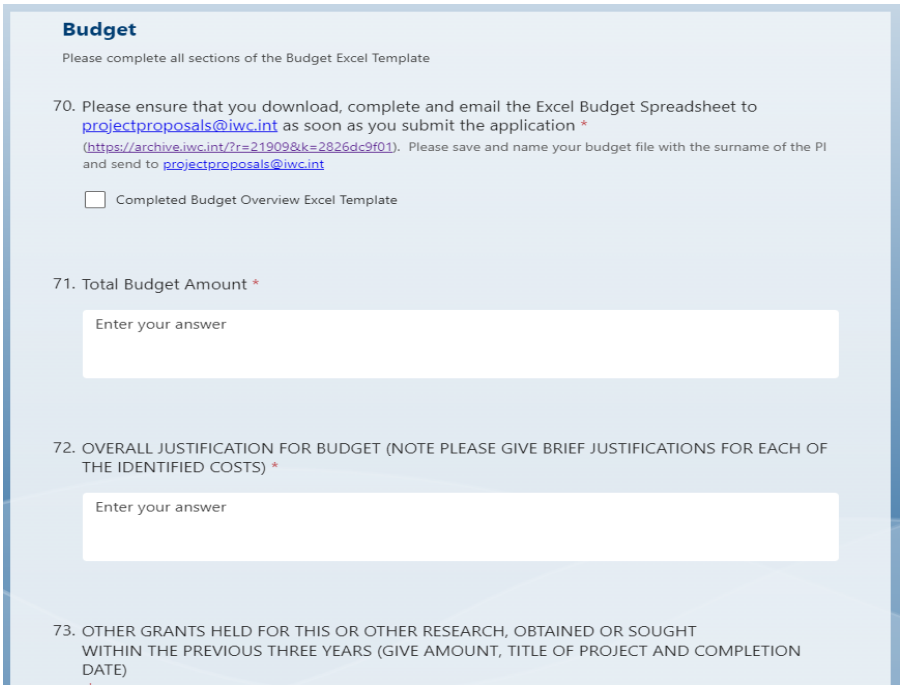


Figure 9. Online form budget details requirements

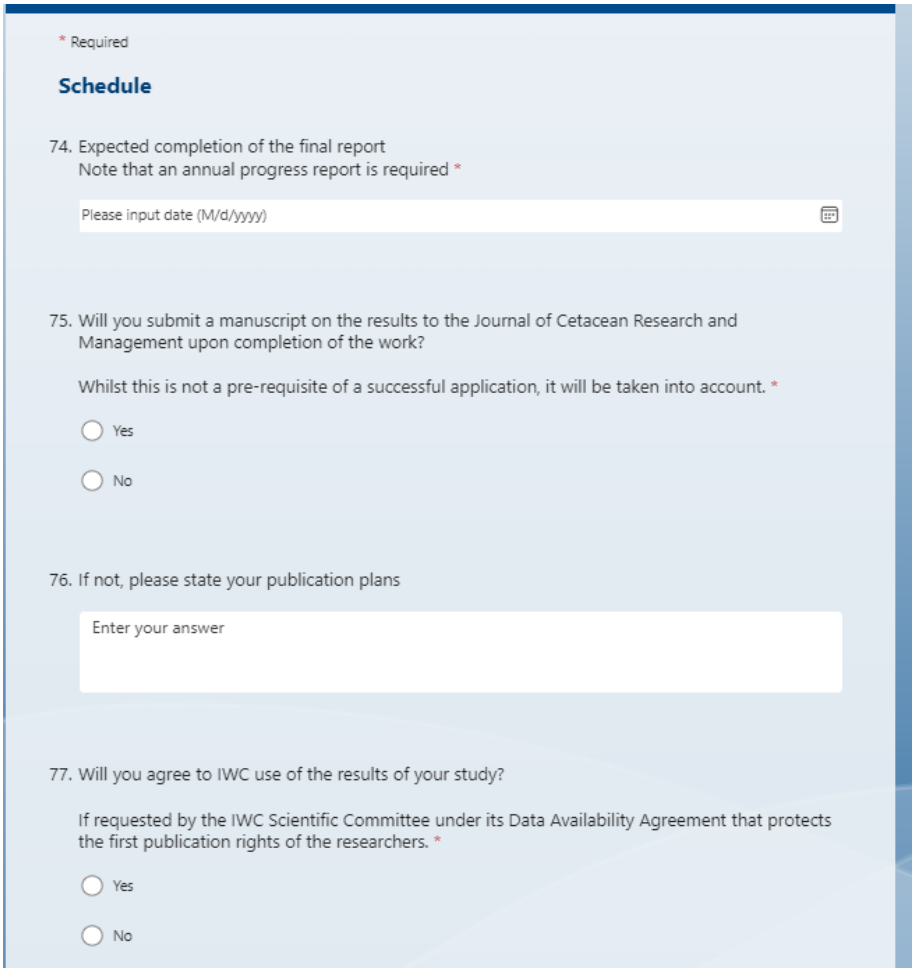


Figure 10. Schedule section, including publication plans.

1.9 Referees

This section is to detail two project referees. Full name, affiliation and email contact must be provided. Please seek approval of referees before submitting the proposal. Please note conflict of interest guidance (Part 1, Section 4) (Figure 11).

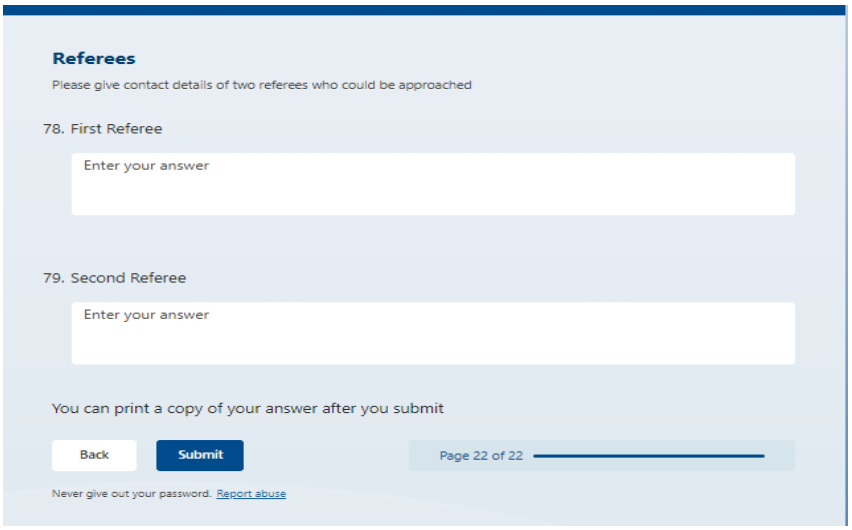


Figure 11. Referee section. Space is provided for two referees who have agreed to and are aware of the project content.

This is the final step for the online form. The form can be scrolled through and checked before final submission.

The Principal Investigator will be notified once the application is received and checked.

2. Period and level of funding

Approximately **£115,000 GBP** is available for allocation from the SMRF in 2025. There are two funding tiers: small grants of up to **£5,000** and larger grants to a maximum of **£20,000**.

In addition, donors to this fund have earmarked **£3000** for projects that contribute to Small Cetacean Task Team work. Proposals that are focusing on any current or potential Team topic must be approved by the Task Team Steering Group before an application is submitted. The Task Team can be contacted via smallcetaceantaskteam@groups.iwc.int. The Convenor of the Task Team Steering Group is Mr Mark Simmonds

There is no set project period, however, given the amount of Funding for this Call is intended to facilitate work that will be undertaken within a **maximum two -year** project period.

5. Assessment Process and Criteria

The Research Fund proposals shall be reviewed by an Assessment Panel that has been established by the SC Chair and Vice-Chair, in consultation with the Head of Science, Conservation and Management. The process and assessment criteria are detailed in the IWC 67 Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations

5.1 Assessment Process

The Assessment Panel shall consist of the SC Chair and Vice-Chair, the Convenor of the Sub-committee on Small Cetaceans, the Head of Science, Conservation and Management and a number of competent members of the Scientific Committee who provide a wide geographical scope and relevant expertise.

Proposals will be ranked based on the urgency and need of the research or action to be conducted, the quality of the proposed research and a clear demonstration of links between the research/action and conservation outcomes. Proposals that demonstrate a capacity building legacy will be viewed favourably.

On receiving any proposal, the IWC Secretariat and the convenors of the SM sub-committee will assess the eligibility of the applicants and applications. At this time, requests for further information may be made to the PI.

Eligible applications will then be assessed using the detailed criteria below.

The proposals recommended by the Assessment Panel will be presented at the annual meeting of the IWC Scientific Committee in April/May 2024 and the biennial Commission meeting in September 2024 for consideration and endorsement.

Following IWC consideration and endorsement, applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application and, if successful, the funding allocation.

Contracts will be established between successful applicants and the IWC in liaison with the convenors of the SM sub-committee.

5.2 Assessment criteria

Applications will be assessed and scored on scientific merit and relevance for SM and SC priorities (a maximum of 35 points). Proposals will be ranked based on these scores and a threshold score for funding will be identified based on quality and available funds.

Generally, only projects that score 3 or above for Criterion 2, will be considered for funding.

The applications are assessed for scientific merit against six criteria, each of which is scored between 0 - 5 as follows:

Criteria		Weighting
1	Is the intrinsic scientific value of the project of a high standard?	0 Not demonstrated 1 Low scientific value 2 Useful/basic scientific value 3 Good scientific value 4 Very good scientific value 5 Excellent/innovative scientific value
2	How well will the scientific outcomes of the project address the SM priority areas?	0 Not addressed 1 Poorly addressed 2 Reasonably addressed 3 Well addressed 4 Very well addressed 5 Excellently addressed
3	Does the methodology outlined effectively and efficiently address the research questions in the proposal?	0 Not demonstrated 1 Poor methodology 2 Reasonable methodology 3 Good methodology 4 Very good methodology 5 Excellent methodology *Yes after incorporation of reviewers' suggestions
4	Does the project involve good participation and engagement of regional participants?	0 Not demonstrated 1 Poor engagement proposed 2 Reasonable engagement proposed 3 Good engagement proposed 4 Very good engagement proposed 5 Excellent engagement proposed
5	Is the research proposed feasible, well organised and timeline achievable?	0 Not demonstrated 1 Feasibility, organisation and timeline unrealistic 2 Feasibility, organisation and timeline not properly addressed 3 Feasibility, organisation and timeline sound 4 Feasibility, organisation and timeline demonstrated well 5 Feasibility, organisation and timeline very well demonstrated *Yes after incorporation of reviewers' suggestions
6	Do you consider the principal investigator and research team have demonstrated that they are capable of conducting the research and publishing the results?	0 Not demonstrated 1 Poor record 2 Reasonable record 3 Good record 4 Very good record 5 The Principal Investigator and research team have an excellent research and publication record relevant to the proposed work
Overall Total out of 30		

Only projects that score 3 or above for Criterion 2, will be considered for funding.

Annex I.

List of Small Cetaceans Sub-Committee Recommendations (Extract: Research or Priority Species and/or Topic), 2018-2023

Number	Year	Text
SC1897	2018	Inia Given the incomplete resolution of Inia taxonomy, the importance of clarifying and solidifying recognition (or elevation to species) of the Inia subspecies found in different river basins, the possibility that in such complex habitats localised specialisation is likely, and the need to focus attention on the conservation of demographically independent populations, the Committee encourages support for efforts to resolve Inia spp. taxonomy in light of the significant and diverse threats affecting the populations inhabiting the Amazon-Orinoco-Tocantins/Araguaia drainages.
SC18185	2018	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee therefore encourages collection of additional data, including morphometrics, and high-resolution genetic analyses (e.g. ddRAD which may also be useful in other areas where there are similar questions requiring high-resolution analysis), to better characterise divergence between coastal and offshore forms in the western South Atlantic Ocean, to help confirm whether subspecies or species classification is more appropriate for T. t. gephyreus;
SC18186	2018	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee therefore encourages further investigation of T. aduncus lineages in the Indian Ocean and western South Pacific to assess potential subspecies recognition, extending the geographic coverage to include eastern Africa, the region between Pakistan and Indonesia, and the region between Australia and China.
SC18187	2018	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee therefore encourages continued study of the genetics and morphology of southern Australia bottlenose dolphins with the "T. australis" mtDNA lineage, in the context of both T. truncatus and T. aduncus.
SC18188	2018	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee therefore encourages examination of the level of male-mediated gene flow between the coastal and offshore forms in the western North Atlantic to determine whether the coastal form should be elevated to species or subspecies status.

SC18189	2018	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee therefore encourages more comprehensive morphometric analyses comparing T. truncatus in the Mediterranean, Black Sea, and eastern Atlantic to integrate with genetic data and evaluate whether any regions in addition to the Black Sea (T. t. ponticus) harbour a taxonomic unit above the level of population.
SC18190	2018	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee therefore encourages comprehensive morphometric analyses of coastal and offshore T. truncatus in the eastern North Atlantic and comparison to those from the western North Atlantic to better evaluate potential regional differences.
SC18191	2018	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee therefore encourages morphometric analyses of Gulf of California coastal and offshore dolphins relative to those from California and the eastern tropical Pacific, with a particular focus on the level of divergence of coastal dolphins in the upper Gulf of California to other areas.
SC18192	2018	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee therefore encourages the collection of additional genetic and morphological data throughout the eastern South Pacific and further studies to investigate coastal versus offshore forms throughout the region, including coastal and offshore waters from Central America to Mexico, and if possible around the southern tip of South America to Argentina.
SC18193	2018	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee also agrees to continue compilation of specimen, study, and researcher details, and concentrated effort to improve our understanding of Tursiops in data-deficient areas. After reviewing the 2018 Tursiops Taxonomy Workshop's evaluation of the support provided for taxonomic (subspecies, species) and population-level distinctions proposed in the publications reviewed, the subcommittee concludes that the current taxonomy provided for Tursiops by the Society for Marine Mammalogy's Committee on Taxonomy is well supported by morphological and molecular genetic data, as well as ecological and distributional data.
SC18194	2018	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee also agrees to continue compilation of specimen, study, and researcher details, and concentrated effort to improve our understanding of Tursiops in data-deficient areas. After reviewing the 2018 Tursiops Taxonomy Workshop's evaluation of the support provided for taxonomic (subspecies, species) and population-level distinctions proposed in the publications reviewed, the subcommittee concludes that discordance in currently available results from morphometric analyses and across different genetic markers of the recently described ‘T. australis’ from southern Australia calls into question its validity at this time.

SC18195	2018	Tursiops taxonomy After reviewing the development and use of a strategy for objective evaluation of species, subspecies, and population level distinctions by the 2018 Tursiops Taxonomy Workshop, the Committee: (1) agrees with the strategy implemented at the workshop for the evaluation of species, subspecies and population level distinctions; (2) encourages use of the criteria and guidelines in Reeves et al. (2004) for the assessment of species-level taxonomy, in Taylor et al. (2017) for subspecies-level taxonomy, and in Martien et al. (2015) for Demographically Independent Populations; and (3) concludes that future taxonomic questions should be examined within an appropriately wide and inclusive geographic context and that multiple lines of evidence are necessary when positing taxonomic changes.
SC19124	2019	Sousa plumbea The Committee reiterates its previous concerns over the status of the genus Sousa and its recommendations to improve the situation (e.g. IWC, 2017g). The Committee stresses the need to identifying high priority areas and populations of Sousa in Africa to obtain better information on status and mitigation and to assist in this: (1) encourages a wider collaboration among researchers who work on the genus Sousa, which include international collaboration for funding and capacity building, the development of regional and sub-regional research projects and co-ordination of data collection; ~~(2) recommends the establishment of an Africa focused Sousa Task Team; to (a) facilitate and co-ordinate work in response to IWC recommendations, (b) start working towards developing a comprehensive framework of conservation actions and (c) to report back to the SM convenors by September 2019; and~~ (3) recommends that South Africa develops a mitigation strategy to (a) reduce bycatch of Sousa in shark nets; (b) establish multiple-use management areas and (c) design and implement strategies to reduce the impacts of noise.
SC19125	2019	Sousa teuszii The Committee welcomes the new data from six Central African countries and encourages further work to improve information from these data poor areas. The high mortality of Atlantic humpback dolphins in the Conkouati-Douli National Park, Republic of Congo, is of particular concern, given the likely small population size and restricted range of the population. The Committee recommends that the Government [Republic of Congo] initiates high priority research and management actions.

SC19126	2019	Small Cetacean Removals The Committee draws attention to the large-scale (ca 3000 animals in 18 years) hunting of small cetaceans in southwest Madagascar although they are formally protected; the sustainability of these hunts is doubtful. Effective community engagement was shown to be successful in markedly reducing hunting in one community (Anakao) and the Committee encourages similar efforts to be resumed in the community of Befandefa, along with efforts to monitor catches and abundance of the affected populations.
SC19132	2019	Phocoena sinus The Committee yet again expresses its disappointment and frustration that, despite almost three decades of repeated warnings, the vaquita's rapid decline to extinction continues because of ineffective management measures. As such, it re-emphasises the concerns it has raised on the status of the vaquita over many years, reiterates the urgent recommendations of the past three Committee meetings, and endorses and adopts the recommendations in the CIRVA-11 report (SC/68A/SM01). The precipitous decline of the vaquita reported previously has continued in 2018. As monitoring is critical for evaluating the effectiveness of conservation actions, the Committee strongly recommends that: (1) the CIRVA-11 acoustic monitoring programme be continued as in previous years to provide an annual empirical estimate of population trend, and that opportunistic use of smaller CPOD acoustic arrays be continued to assess vaquita presence and to support possible periodic photo-identification and visual monitoring efforts outside the regular summer sampling period.
SC19134	2019	Phocoena sinus The Committee recommends that the CIRVA-11 proposal to use photographic capture-recapture techniques to obtain an estimate of minimum abundance be explored (which is preferable to relying on simple single day counts of different individuals) and that (a) local marine mammal scientists and naturalists with training and experience in photo-identification techniques, organize rapid-response teams to take advantage of weather conditions suitable for such monitoring work and (b) more local personnel be trained and equipped to maximize the number of opportunities to obtain photographs and potentially biopsies.

SC19143	2019	Phocoena phocoena The Committee welcomes and draws attention to the report of the International Workshop on the Status of Harbour Porpoises in the North Atlantic (IMR/NAMMCO, 2018). The Committee endorses its recommendations. In particular, it highlights one of the recommendations regarding the challenges that exist for accessing reliable bycatch data and estimates, and the importance of this information for generating scientifically sound assessments. The Committee recommends that it is imperative to: (1) construct more reliable time series of bycatch data for the different fisheries in the different areas, (2) modify the fishing effort database in such a way that the data is consistent and reliable, (3) include by-catch data from small vessels in reporting, and (4) conduct more reporting of by-catch by different types of gear.
SC20189	2020	Sousa plumbea The Committee recommends: (1) continued collaboration between regional cetacean research consortia and individual researchers in the western Indian Ocean and Arabian Seas to facilitate the development of matching algorithms for Sousa plumbea in Flukebook; (2) continuing collaborative efforts to match catalogues of Sousa plumbea from throughout the range of the species to answer important conservation questions about movements, home range and distribution, and (3) testing of the newly developed Sousa plumbea algorithms on photographs of additional Sousa species for possible inclusion in the Flukebook platform.
SC20194	2020	Asian Freshwater Cetaceans The Committee agrees that: (1) these species [Platanista gangetica, Orcaella brevirostris (freshwater populations) and Neophocaena asiaeorientalis asiaeorientalis] remain on its agenda as priority species; (2) potential mechanisms to coordinate research and management actions should be explored intersessionally and discussed in detail at SC68C; and (4) these species should be discussed as possible candidates for a CMP at SC68C.

SC21165	2021	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee recalls its previous recommendations (SC18184) and, given the lack of progress in clarifying the phylogenetic affinity of the T. australis; mtDNA lineage in the context of both T. truncatus and T. aduncus, encourages researchers working on bottlenose dolphin taxonomy in southern Australia to focus future efforts on ensuring that (1) such efforts include collaborations to allow analysis of samples from around Australia, (2) a consistent genomic approach is applied to all samples, (3) analysis of ancient DNA; from historical (bone) samples also be incorporated, if possible, and (4) the available mitochondrial DNA, nuclear DNA and morphological data are incorporated into the analysis, particularly if there are samples for which both genomic and morphological data are available. The Committee respectfully requests that updates be provided to the Committee as new information becomes available.
SC21166	2021	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee recalls its previous recommendations (SC18184) and welcomes recent progress in characterising divergence between coastal and offshore forms of bottlenose dolphins in the western South Atlantic Ocean. The Committee encourages researchers working on bottlenose dolphins in Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina to adopt a unified approach for understanding the distribution, habitat use and taxonomic and population-level divergence of Southwest Atlantic bottlenose dolphins, including collaborations to merge independent sample sets to (1) identify sampling gaps and (2) allow analysis of nuclear DNA data from across the entire geographic range so that outstanding questions of taxonomic and population-level divergence of the different forms of Tursiops identified in that region can be addressed. The Committee respectfully requests that updates be provided to the Committee as new information becomes available.
SC21168	2021	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee again draws attention to the need for bottlenose dolphin research in areas the 2018 Tursiops Taxonomy Workshop identified as being data deficient (SC18184): the eastern South Atlantic, the African coast of the eastern North Atlantic, the southern and eastern Mediterranean Sea, the eastern South Pacific, and the Mexican mainland and Central American coasts of the eastern North Pacific, eastern Australia and in the western Pacific islands of Micronesia, Melanesia, Polynesia, the Philippines and Vietnam, and the Red Sea. The Committee encourages Tursiops research and collaborative efforts to examine and analyse Tursiops specimens throughout these regions. The Committee requests that updated information be provided to the Committee when available.

SC21169	2021	Tursiops taxonomy The Committee recalls its previous recommendation (SC18184) and agrees that the Committee should continue compilation of specimen, study, and researcher details, and concentrate effort on improving understanding of Tursiops species, subspecies and population-level divergence in data-deficient areas.
SC21170	2021	Sotalia guianensis The Committee recalls its previous concerns and recommendations for Guiana dolphins in the face of multiple threats and stressors (IWC 2021, p102), draws attention to recent efforts to document threats to the species as previously recommended and commends efforts by the Sotalia working group to fill information gaps and develop an effective action plan. The Committee encourages the Sotalia Intersessional Correspondence Group to continue its activities, including, as needed: 1) consultation with relevant sub-committees, e.g., ASI (abundance, surveys, international cruises), HIM (incidental takes), SD-DNA Working Group (stock structure analysis), Environmental Concerns (pollution, disease) and Whale Watching; 2) coordination of science and governance to support mitigation and management actions both in national and international contexts; 3) further development of the action plan and implementation of its components and monitoring of its effectiveness when possible and appropriate; 4~~) consultation with the IWC Conservation Management Plan (CMP) convenors on the prospects for developing a CMP for the Guiana dolphin.~~ ~~5) submission of an updated report of its activities at the next Committee meeting in 2022.~~ CMP process underway
SC21171	2021	Phocoena sinus The Committee yet again expresses its disappointment and frustration that, despite almost three decades of repeated warnings, the vaquita population edges closer to extinction caused by gillnet entanglement and ineffective fisheries management and enforcement measures in the Upper Gulf of California. The Committee recalls its previous strong concerns and urgent recommendations for the vaquita (SC20181) and reiterates the urgent recommendations of the past five Committee meetings, especially regarding the need to remove gillnets from the species range immediately.

SC21173	2021	Neophocaena asiaeorientalis The Committee recalls its previous recommendations (SC17364 and SC18169) that every possible effort be made to protect Yangtze River finless porpoises in their natural riverine and lacustrine habitat, including the identification of river and lake segments with the highest porpoise concentrations, the enforcement of year-round protection measures (including fishing bans) in those areas, and the vigorous enforcement of a basin-wide prohibition of electro-fishing and other fishing activities known to threaten porpoises. The Committee recognizes the Chinese government for the progress made in implementing IWC recommendations and enacting other policies that benefit Yangtze finless porpoises and their habitat (IWC 2016: 17 p. 60) The Committee commends the People's Republic of China for its implementation, in early 2021, of a 10-year fishing ban in the Yangtze River specifically to protect its biodiversity. This Committee reiterates its previous recommendations that (a) pollution control measures be strengthened and (b) if further modification of the natural flow regime (or other natural features) of the Yangtze ecosystem is allowed to take place, that the potential impacts are considered and mitigated for finless porpoises.
SC21175	2021	Neophocaena spp The Committee has previously expressed concerns (IWC 2006; 2018) that as it is likely that numerous small and vulnerable populations of finless porpoise occur discontinuously along their coastal range, research into population structure in the genus Neophocaena is urgently required. Information presented to this Committee indicates that the number of strandings are increasing in East Asia, providing an opportunity to collate a large, regional depository of genetic material. The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation that analyses of existing specimens, pooling of samples and exchange of expertise between research groups would greatly advance the understanding of finless porpoise population structure.
SC21177	2021	Neophocaena spp. Further, the Committee encourages management authorities and/or strandings programmes to make full use of imaging tools as part of every necropsy procedures (virtopsy), when possible, as these techniques greatly improve our understanding of mortality, disease and health status, when compared to traditional necropsy alone [of finless porpoise].
SC21179	2021	Neophocaena spp. In addition, given the urgency of the situation in Hong Kong SAR, this committee recommends that aerial surveys, using robust line transect methodology, be conducted without delay as a rapid means to establish population density so the impact of the high number of strandings on population status can be assessed.

SC21180	2021	Neophocaena spp. Further, to expand the scope of population size estimation data derived from acoustic studies, the Committee encourages the use of additional parameters, e.g., salinity, time of day, to investigate the relationship between finless porpoise occurrence, behaviour and environmental variables. The committee notes with interest the changes in finless porpoise density and distribution related to the cessation of passenger ferry traffic in Hong Kong and encourages funding bodies to support research in this topic, as it is a unique and, likely, limited opportunity. This Committee notes the extensive body of work on harbour porpoise (Phoecoena phoecoena) and encourages researchers to assess the suitability and application of tools used in these studies for finless porpoise, including the use of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS).
SC21181	2021	Neophocaena phocaenoides Noting the paucity of data for N. phocaenoides from the western part of the range, the Committee recommends that research efforts be increased in this area, including the Arabian/Persian Gulf, the Sea of Oman, Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal, with the primary objective of collecting baseline data on distribution, density and health that can support an improved understanding of the biology and knowledge of the status of N. phocaenoides.
SC21182	2021	Neophocaena spp. The Committee recognises that inadequate information exists on the distribution of Neophocaena throughout much of their range, although there is a growing body of data from East Asia. To assess current population status, collaboration and data sharing between groups currently working on finless porpoises is essential. The Committee recommends that an intersessional correspondence group (ICG) be established, to collate existing information and to progress towards an assessment of both species throughout their range, and respectfully requests that this group reports back to the Committee.
SC21185	2021	South America River Dolphins The Committee welcomes these updates on South American river dolphins and the impact of piracatinga fishing and reiterates its previous recommendation that a regionally co-ordinated fisheries management plan for the Amazon River basin and a regional strategy for the conservation of river dolphins are established urgently.
SC21186	2021	South America River Dolphins Further, the Committee recommends that; (1) alternative sources of income for local communities are developed in areas where the use of dolphins as bait in the piracatinga fishery is prevalent; (2) research efforts are enhanced in areas where threats have been highlighted; (3) regulations to prevent the use of dolphins as bait are actively enforced throughout the piracatinga fishing areas; (4) cross-border controls are promoted among Peru, Colombia and Brazil to prevent illegal trade in piracatinga; and (5) use of alternative sources of bait (e.g. slaughterhouse offal or pirarucu fishery waste products) are promoted and encouraged for the piracatinga fishery if it is allowed to resume.

SC21189	2021	Orcinus orca (Sea of Okhosk) The Committee welcomes the new information presented on killer whale (Orcinus orca) photoidentification in the Sea of Okhotsk, Russia, and reiterates its previous recommendation that these studies be continued and expanded.
SC21190	2021	Tursiops The Committee welcomed this new information [Bottlenose dolphins-Ecuador]. Acknowledging that the results are preliminary, the Committee respectfully requests that updates from this study be provided when available.
SC21191	2021	Small Cetacean Removals The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation to make progress on the analyses of the data in the direct take tables, compiled by the Committee. The Committee agrees to establish a working group (co-convenors: Porter and Allison) to progress on this matter intersessionally and report to Committee in 2022
SC21192	2021	Small Cetacean Removals The Committee recalls its previous recommendations regarding live captures of T. aduncus in Solomon Islands (IWC, 2014; p. 50). It reiterates its concern about the sustainability of removals and its longstanding, overarching recommendation that no small cetacean removals (live capture or directed harvest) should be authorised until a full assessment of status has been made (SC19129). The Committee again recommends that the government of Solomon Islands implement the IWCs 2013 recommendations, verify the number of live-captures and deaths associated with captures since 2013 and the number of dolphins currently being held and clarify the status of the 2013 capture and export ban and the current export quota for T. aduncus.

SC19228	2019	Asian Freshwater Cetaceans The IWC South Asian River Dolphin Task Team recommends: that by 2022, all range states identify key sections of national habitat that should be surveyed every five years, so that population trends can be monitored. Methodology should be replicated in each identified habitat but need not be standardised throughout the range, as different habitats require different methodological adaptations. This recommendation is targeted at the following: Pakistan: WWF Pakistan, Punjab Wildlife Department, Sindh Wildlife Department and KPK Wildlife Department co-ordinated through WWF Pakistan (as they lead the River Dolphin Programme) Nepal: Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Department of Forest and Soil Conservation, WWF Nepal, Institute of Forestry Pokhara and Hetauda Campus, University of Tribhuvan (co-ordinated by Shambhu Paudel and Usha Thakuri). Bangladesh: Forestry Department and WCS India: already a recommendation in India's Conservation Action Plan for Ganges dolphins (Sinha et al.2010b) and should be co-ordinated through State Forest Departments, who will identify teams best suited for river stretch-specific surveys (based on experience and available expertise)
SC19230	2019	Asian Freshwater Cetaceans [The IWC South Asian River Dolphin Task Team recommends: that] starting from 2020, surveys to establish population size be initiated at the earliest in the Padma, Jamuna, Meghna main stems and tributary networks (excluding the Bangladesh Sundarbans), Bangladesh and the Budhi Gandak, Baghmati, Rapti and Mahananda, India.
SC19232	2019	Asian Freshwater Cetaceans [The IWC South Asian River Dolphin Task Team recommends: that], as a priority, studies be conducted to fully understand movements of dolphins across barrages in all countries and quantify the extent of population connectivity and impacts on dolphin populations in fragmented riverine habitats.
SC19236	2019	Small Cetacean Removals [The IWC South Asian River Dolphin Task Team recommends: to] assess the extent of targeted take and the use of dolphins for oil and as wildmeat, particularly in India and Bangladesh by involving social and ecological scientists as part of co-ordinated survey actions listed above.

SC2281	2022	Small Cetacean Removals The Committee draws attention to the unsustainable levels of bycatch from the two small populations of Australian humpback (Sousa sahulensis) and Australian snubfin dolphins (Orcaella heinsohni) in the Kikori Delta, Papua New Guinea, and agrees that there is an urgent need for collaborative action (i.e. research, community/government consultation and by-catch mitigation) to reduce dolphin mortality as a matter of priority and: (1) agrees to offer technical support to the Piku Biodiversity Network (PBN, University of Canberra) for continuation and extension of their monitoring studies and for developing strategies to reduce inshore dolphin by-catch in the Kikori Delta, in coordination with the Bycatch Mitigation Initiative and the Marine Mammal Bycatch Expert Panel; (2) requests that the Secretariat contact the Government of Papua New Guinea to advise them of concerns surrounding the high and increasing bycatch of dolphins in the Kikori Delta, which is driven by high prices for swim bladders exported to China.
SC23154	2023	Priority Species 2024-26 To advance the review of South Pacific Islands Small Cetaceans, the Committee recommends: (1) a proposal be developed for an in-person workshop in collaboration with the Bycatch Mitigation Initiative (BMI) that includes multiple stakeholders from the South Pacific Island region; and (2) funds for the workshop are sought both from within and outside the Committee budget.

* A full list of all IWC recommendations can be searched here < https://iwc.int/commission/database-of-recommendations>