

NJG/JAC/30729

21 April 2008

CIRCULAR COMMUNICATION TO MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE  
AND INVITED PARTICIPANTS  
IWC.SC.134

**Workshop on the study of right whale populations in Chile and Peru**

As notified to you in my email of 28 February, the Government of Chile will be hosting an independent workshop on the status of right whales in the southeast Pacific in the Chilean Diplomatic Academy “*Andrés Bello*” on 27 and 28 May 2008, i.e. just prior to the beginning of the Scientific Committee meeting at IWC/60. The workshop starts at 09.00 on Tuesday 27 May.

The Diplomat Academy is situated on Catedral street N° 1183, Santiago. Those wishing to attend must pre-register (see below) and bring with them valid identification (passport or ID card) for their registration on the first day. More detailed information will be provided to registered participants.

This workshop is a result of the proposal made by Chile during the Conservation Committee meeting last year to include discussions on the southern right whale population of Chile-Peru in the agenda of the Conservation Committee (see Annex 1). The outcomes of this workshop will be presented by Chile to the Scientific and Conservation Committees as appropriate at IWC/60.

The draft Agenda and workshop schedule are also provided below (Annexes 2 and 3).

**If you would like to register for the workshop or if you would like further information, please contact Ximena Alcayaga ([xalcavaga@minrel.gov.cl](mailto:xalcavaga@minrel.gov.cl)) directly.**

Nicky Grandy  
Secretary to the Commission

## **Annex 1**

### **Extract from the Report of the Conservation Committee, IWC/59**

#### **Appendix 5**

#### **Proposal to include Southern Right Whale Population of Chile-Peru in the Conservation Committee Agenda**

**(Submitted by Chile)**

This year, the Scientific Committee received information that briefly summarizes the status of southern right whales off Chile and Peru. It was noted that the last major review of the species was conducted in 1998 by IWC (2001), but little information was available for the Eastern South Pacific although thousands of animals were taken in 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was also noted that in recent years, southern right whale stocks have grown in three major regions in the Southern Hemisphere (South Africa, Argentina and Australia). By contrast, no increase has been observed in the Chile and Peru population. It was pointed out that although no abundance estimates exist, the scarcity of sightings makes it very probable that the mature population size is below 50 individuals, where it was once numerous.

It was agreed by the Scientific Committee that southern right whale population of Chile-Peru will be considered at the next meeting of IWC that will be held in Santiago, Chile next year.

The current situation of the southern right whale population of Chile-Peru is of concern and there is an urgent need to understand conservation problems and effectively work on any identified conservation measures. Overall we need to improve our understanding of this critically endangered population.

Chile would like to propose to the Conservation Committee that it consider the southern right whale population of Chile-Peru as a species to be addressed by the Conservation Committee during the next few years and include it in its agenda for the 2008 IWC meeting.

With a view to presenting an initial working document to the Conservation Committee in the 2008 meeting and taking into account the findings of the Scientific Committee, Chile will be conducting a historical catch data review for Chilean waters and an analysis of sightings of the species through existing sighting networks. There will also be a strengthening of cetacean data collection to increase sighting effort.

Chile will be organizing an independent workshop on the status of the Chile-Peru southern right whale population. This workshop may be organized before the beginning of the IWC Scientific Committee meeting in 2008, so as to facilitate participation of interested researchers and parties. The outcome of this workshop will be presented by Chile to the Conservation Committee.

## Annex 2

### **Workshop on the study of Right whale populations in Chile and Peru** **Preliminary Agenda**

1. Revision of Right Whale historic captures in the Southern Hemisphere
2. Regional historic captures: Chile, Perú, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay
3. Current state of knowledge on South American right whales Chile, Perú and Argentina

It is suggested that within the parameters of these expositions the following subjects be considered; they can be represented by different investigators for each country:

- Habitat
  - Reproductive and feeding areas
  - Reproductive parameters
  - Size of populations
  - National sighting registers
  - Human activity impacts (fishing, whale-watching, pollution)
4. Conservation and whale population recovery proposals
  5. Other issues

## Annex 3

### Workshop on the study of Right whale populations in Chile and Peru

#### Workshop schedule

**Date:** May 27-28, 2008

**Place:** Chilean Diplomatic Academy “*Andrés Bello*”, Enrique Bernstein conference room, second floor.  
Address: Catedral 1183, Santiago, Chile

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#### Day 1

- 09:00 Inscriptions/registration
- 09:30 Workshop opening (Ambassador Cristián Maquieira, Chilean IWC Commissioner)
- 09:45 Historic Right Whale captures in the Southern hemisphere
- 10:45 Coffee break
- 11:00 Regional historic captures in Perú, Chile, Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay
- 13:00 General discussion about historic capture results
- 13:30 Lunch
- 15:00 Current state of knowledge on South American right whales
- Presentations by Perú, Chile and Argentina (1 hour per country)
- 18:00 End

#### Day 2

- 09:00 Current state of knowledge on South American right whales
- Presentations by Uruguay and Brazil (1 hour per country)
- 11:00 Coffee break
- 13:00 General discussion about the current state of knowledge on the subject
- 13:30 Lunch
- 15:00 Conservation and whale population recovery proposals
- 16:30 Coffee break
- 16:45 Workshop conclusions
- 18:00 Workshop closure (Ambassador Maquieira)