

CIRCULAR COMMUNICATION TO MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
IWC.SC.137

Researchers for the 2008/09 IWC/SOWER Cruise

The International Whaling Commission is seeking up to three researchers to participate in the 2008/09 SOWER cruise.

The Japanese Government will generously provide one vessel (*Shonan Maru* No. 2). Details of the cruise are given in IWC/60/Rep1, Annex G, Appendix 2 (attached as a pdf file). The cruise objectives for the 2008/09 season are:

- 1) sighting survey to examine changes in Antarctic minke whale density with respect to changes in the position of the ice-edge;
- 2) collection of further data related to distance and angle measurement;
- 3) collection of data necessary to understand stock structure (biopsy sampling);
- 4) photo-identification studies;
- 5) telemetry studies;
- 6) acoustic studies; and
- 7) A possible collaboration with the Australian pilot aerial study to determine the proportion (and density estimate) of whales in the ice.

The total length of the cruise (southern home port to southern home port) will be 53 days. The cruise will take place during the same time period as last year, i.e. mid-December to late February. The home and end port for the cruise will probably be Fremantle, Western Australia. Final decisions on survey modes, design and experimental procedures will be taken at the Planning Meeting to be held in Tokyo at the end of September; the research area will span 105°E - 110 °E (near the Casey Station of the Australian Antarctic Division).

Applications are now invited for the positions of researchers on board the vessel. Members of the Scientific Committee are asked to pass on the enclosed information to anyone who may be interested. Applications giving a brief summary of relevant background and experience (**on the form attached**) should be submitted to the IWC Secretariat (secretariat@iwcoffice.org) no later than **Monday 22 September 2008**, preferably in electronic format. Researchers will be selected at the Planning Meeting.

Copies of the application form as a Rich Text Format document (Appform.rtf) and in htm format (Appform.htm) are attached. To view the latter use your web browser software (e.g. Internet Explorer - you do not need to log onto the web of course, just double click on the file icon/name).

Dr. Nicky Grandy
Secretary to the Commission