



International
Whaling
Commission

The Red House
135 Station Road
Impington, Cambridge
CB24 9NP, UK

tel: +44 (0) 1223 233971 | fax: +44 (0) 1223 232876
email: secretariat@iwcoffice.org | web: iwcoffice.org

SB/JAC/31585
22 August 2012

CIRCULAR COMMUNICATION TO MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
IWC.SC.168

Outcome and follow-up to SC/64 in Panama City, Panama

Debra Palka, Chair of the Scientific Committee, has requested that the attached information be circulated to the Scientific Committee.

Simon Brockington
Executive Secretary

c.c. Intergovernmental Organisation observers to the IWC

Outcome and Follow-up to IWC/64

DEBRA PALKA

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE REPORT

The complete Report and Annexes can be found on the IWC website:

<http://www.iwcoffice.org/screport.htm>

Items 21-23 of our report (IWC/64/Rep 1, pp. 94-102) describe Committee priorities and initial agenda for the 2013 meeting, data processing, computing needs and funding requirements for 2012/13 intersessional time period.

E-mail correspondence groups

Annex Q gives e-mail correspondence groups and their terms of reference. **Please check it** to make sure that your name is included under those Working Groups that you wish to participate in. If you wish to join any of the Working Groups, contact the Secretariat directly (secretariat@iwcoffice.org).

Remember, if your e-mail address changes then let the Secretariat know. Convenors of all groups will be notified of their members and the e-mail addresses you used when you registered. The Secretariat will be creating e-mail lists for each of the groups to facilitate communication. In addition, each group will be allocated its own web page.

INTERSESSIONAL WORK

Budget

We are pleased to note that despite the financial climate, the Commission accepted our reduced budget request (Table 13 under Item 23 of the Report, p. 97) for the 2012/13 intersessional activities (as well as for Invited Participants to the 2013 Annual Meeting, SC/65). We owe special thanks to Simon Brockington and Greg Donovan for their help in supporting our request.

Task table for the intersessional period

The Secretariat has pulled out all of the tasks identified in the Committee's report and who should complete them. This is on the Scientific Committee website. **Please check** <http://www.iwcoffice.org/sctasks>.

Intersessional workshops

The latest information on dates and venues is given in Table 1. As more information becomes available it will be sent to you and put on the website. Terms of reference, actual or likely dates, venues and steering groups can be found on the website (<http://www.iwcoffice.org/workshops.htm>). Each workshop will be eventually given a dedicated web page (check the website periodically).

NEXT YEAR'S ANNUAL MEETING: VENUE AND DATES

The 2013 Annual Meeting of the Scientific Committee (IWC/SC/65) will be in the Republic of Korea. The Commission agreed to move to biennial meetings and so there will not be a Commission meeting during 2013. The dates and city of the Scientific Committee meeting will be finalised as soon as possible but the intention is for it to be close to the usual time frame of May/June. The dates and venue for the 2014 Meetings of the Scientific Committee and Commission have not yet been decided upon (the Scientific Committee meeting will probably be in the May/June period and the Commission meeting at least 100 days later). We will send out direct notification to you as soon as it more details becomes available.

There may be several pre-meetings to SC/65: Workshop on assessing the impacts of marine debris and Workshop on "Marine bushmeat" and the start of the *Implementation Review* of North Atlantic fin whales. The marine debris workshop may become an intersessional meeting; it will become a joint meeting with the Conservation Committee. Again more information will be placed on the webpage as soon as possible and a direct notification will also be sent out. The *Implementation Review* of North Atlantic fin whales will start during the pre-meeting time period and then continue during the sub-committee meetings of the regular meeting.

During the Commission meeting, the Government of Korea announced they were considering submitting a Special Permit proposal using the Annex P procedures. If that occurs then the Annex P process will need to be followed and the financial implications investigated.

Table 1

Information on dates and venues for intersessional Scientific Committee meetings

Subject	Agenda Item	Venue	Dates
Review of MSYR workshop and WNP common minke whale's Second Intersessional Workshop	5.1; 6.6	To be decided	late Feb-Apr 2013
AWMP Greenland hunt SLA development	8.3	Copenhagen, Denmark	3 days within 12-18 Dec 2012
Planning for the 2013 IWC-POWER cruise	10.8.1.3	Toyko, Japan	25-27 Oct 2012
Workshop on Arctic anthropogenic impacts on cetaceans	12.5.3	Anchorage, Alaska	late Feb - Mar 2013
Workshop on assessing the impacts of marine debris	12.7	To be decided	4 days, dates to be decided
"Marine bushmeat" workshop	14.6	location of SC meeting	2 day pre-meeting;
Icelandic Special Permit expert panel review workshop	17.1.3	Reykjavik, Iceland	Feb-Mar 2013
Possible Korean Special Permit expert panel review workshop	n/a	If occurs, Korea	In accord with Annex P

ANNUAL MEETING TIMETABLE AND SUB-GROUP STRUCTURE

At this year's Scientific Committee meeting, 14 sub-committees (including Standing Working Groups and ad hoc Working Groups) were established. Seven days were available for sub-committees, and up to 105 sessions for sub-committees were scheduled (three concurrent meetings during each of five work sessions per day, starting at approximately 08:30 and ending typically at 18:00). The time after 18:00 was generally used for ad hoc working groups, report drafting and computer analyses; though some evening sessions were also used for sub-committees that were unable to complete their agenda during day sessions. We will follow this approach again at SC/65.

As you will see from our approved work plan (see below and the IWC/64/Rep 1, Item 21, pp 94-96), the sub-committee and working group structure next year is similar to the structure used in Panama. The Sanctuaries working group (SAN) will only be established if there is a new formal proposal for sanctuaries submitted according to the guidelines for review by the Committee. The sub-committees and the respective Convenors are given in Table 2. We would like to welcome a new Convenor, Rowles for Environmental Concerns (E) and three co-convenors: Brandon for AWMP; Hedley for IA; and Parsons for Environmental Concerns (E). In addition, we would like to thank the leaving chairs of these sub-groups, Moore and Kitakado, for their hard work and dedication over the years.

Table 2

Convenors and co-convenors for the sub-groups to meet in 2013

Title	Convenor (co-convenor)
Revised Management Procedure, RMP	Bannister
<i>Pre-Implementation Assessment</i> of western North Pacific common minke whales, NPM	Hammond
Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling Management Procedure, AWMP	Donovan (Brandon)
Bowhead, Right and Gray Whales, BRG	Walløe
In-depth Assessment, IA	Palka (Hedley)
Southern Hemisphere whale stocks other than Antarctic minke and right whales, SH	Robbins
Stock Definition, SD	Jackson
Estimation of bycatch and other human-induced mortality, BC	Leaper
Environmental Concerns, E	Rowles (Parsons)
Ecosystem Modeling, EM	Palacios
Small Cetaceans, SM	Fortuna
Whalewatching, WW	Urban-Ramirez (Carlson)
DNA, DNA	Pastene
Special Permits, SP	Bjørge

COMMITTEE PRIORITIES AND INITIAL AGENDA FOR THE 2013 MEETING IN THE LIGHT OF COMMISSION DISCUSSIONS

As in recent years and with the Committee's agreement, the Convenors met after the close of the Committee meeting and drew up an initial agenda for the 2013 meeting based on the Committee's discussions. The same criteria as in previous years were taken into account (e.g. IWC, 2004b, p.51). Taking account of the Commission's discussion and decisions, the initial agenda for the 2013 meeting is given below.

With the current workload for sub-groups, items of lower priority on sub-committee agendas ('other issues' below) will only be discussed if time allows. When discussing its priorities, it is again stressed that papers considering anything other than priority topics will probably not be addressed at next year's meeting. It agreed that this information should be included on the website when the information about document submission is published next year.

Revised management procedure (RMP)

The following issues are high priority topics:

- (1) Review new information on western North Pacific Bryde's whales ;
- (2) Conduct an *Implementation Review* for North Atlantic fin whales starting during a pre-meeting before the 2013 Annual Meeting and continuing during the Annual Meeting ;
- (3) Prepare for the 2014 *Implementation Review* for the North Atlantic minke whales;
- (4) Review information available for North Atlantic sei whales in the context of a *pre-Implementation Assessment*.

Western North Pacific common minke whales (NPM)

Complete *Implementation Review* (including hold intersessional workshop).

Bycatch group (BC)

The focus of the group will remain in estimating mortality due to bycatch and ship strikes. The work plan will include:

- (1) Review progress of including information in online National Progress Reports;
- (2) Estimate risk and rates of bycatch and entanglement;
- (3) Development of methods to estimate mortality from ship strikes;
- (4) Continue development and use of the international database of ship strikes;
- (5) Review information on other sources of mortality.

Special Permit (SP)

- (1) Review results of the expert workshop in the Icelandic special permit programme;
- (2) Plan for expert workshop on JARPA II;
- (3) [Review results of the expert workshop on the Korean special permit proposal, if received];
- (4) Review new and existing proposals as appropriate.

Bowhead, right and gray whales (BRG)

High priority items will include:

- (1) Perform the annual review of catch information and new scientific information for BCB stock of bowhead whales and eastern gray whales;
- (2) review new information on all stocks of right whales, especially results of assessments for southern right whales;
- (3) Review North Pacific gray whale stock structure and movement;
- (4) Review other new information on western and eastern North Pacific gray whales and other stocks of bowhead whales.

Environmental concerns (E)

- (1) Receive the SOCER (details of focus and request for information will appear on the website);
- (2) Pollution issues;
- (3) Cetacean Resurgence & Emerging Diseases (CERD);
- (4) Impacts of anthropogenic sound;
- (5) Climate change issues;
- (6) Marine debris and cetaceans (including report from the Marine Debris Workshop);

- (7) Other habitat-related issues;
 - (a) MREDs (marine renewable energy devices)
 - (b) Cumulative impacts
- (8) Unusual mortality events including the Peruvian event.

Ecosystem modelling (EM)

- (1) Model direct relationship between baleen whale populations and the abundance of their prey;
- (2) Coordination with CCAMLR's Ecosystem Monitoring and Management Programme on its efforts to advance krill-predator models.

Aboriginal subsistence whaling management procedure (AWMP)

- (1) Highest priority will be to work towards the development of long-term *SLAs* for the Greenland hunts;
 - (a) Develop trial structures and operating models for the Greenland hunts of bowhead and humpback whales to be presented initially at an intersessional workshop
 - (b) Develop an AWMP/RMP-lite program to assist developers of *SLAs* for the Greenland hunts of fin and common minke whales
 - (c) Review a full scientific paper on the work in Greenland related to the collection of information on conversion factors
- (2) Present *Evaluation* and *Robustness Trial* results to the SWG of an *SLA* variant that corresponds exactly to the management plan proposed by the Makah Tribe to the US Government;
- (3) Review a revised document on the probability of a gray whale that regularly feeds in the western North Pacific being taken in a Makah hunt;
- (4) Review a document that provides advice on the development of *SLAs* and their evaluation.

In-depth assessment (IA)

High priority will be given to:

- (1) The development and application of the SCAA models to the agreed estimates and the most recent aging data ;
- (2) Further work examining reasons for the differences between estimates from CPII and CP III;
- (3) Further development of the IWC simulated datasets, specifically to
 - (a) Provide a testing framework for hazard probability models for internally-estimated cue rates from Antarctic minke whale schools
 - (b) Provide one realistic scenario for testing variance estimation.

Now that minke whale abundance estimates had been agreed, the main remaining issues are listed as follows:

- (4) Modify the Hazard Probability model to cope better with real diving patterns;
- (5) Improve remaining misfits, for example, to the way that the simultaneous/delayed duplicate fit changes with school size (linked to item 4 above);
- (6) Embed refined Hazard Probability models into a spatial framework.

Lower priority items are:

- (7) Data management;
 - (a) Further validation of IDCR/SOWER data
 - (b) Curation of experimental IDCR/SOWER data
 - (c) Production of standard datasets for analyses of species other than Antarctic minke whales
- (8) Review of abundance estimation data collected during CPII and CP III; their utility for estimating abundance of Antarctic minke whales; and review of data insights.

SORP

Work plan items include:

- (1) Establishment of ABWP management structure and Committee;
- (2) Establishment of intersessional technical committees for methodological development;
- (3) Refinement of the ABWP survey plan for the 2013 ABW voyage(s);
- (4) Development of uniform sampling protocols for ABW sampling and voyage(s);
- (5) Continuation of five ongoing SORP research projects;
- (6) Planning and implementation of an intersessional SORP conference prior to the next annual meeting;
- (7) Intersessional development of a paper on data management and legacy.

SUMMARY OF COMMISSION DECISIONS

You can find a summary of the Commission's discussions via the press release on the website:

<http://www.iwcoffice.org/iwc64press>

Some Commission discussions that the Scientific Committee may find of particular interest (in addition to those already mentioned) include:

- Discussions surrounding biannual meetings and their implications.
- Catch limits for aboriginal subsistence of bowhead whales from the Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas stock and gray whales from the Eastern stock in the North Pacific were approved. The catch limits proposed by Greenland for their hunts did not receive a three-quarters majority.
- The Commission elected a new Chair, Jeannine Compton-Antoine from St. Lucia and a new Vice-Chair, Frederic Chemay from Belgium. Donna Petrachenko (Australia) agreed to continue to chair as Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee. USA, Ghana, Panama and Japan were elected on the newly established Bureau, along with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission and the Chair of the Finance and Administration Committee.
- The Commission agreed to hold a workshop on Anthropogenic Impacts on Cetaceans in the Arctic in spring 2013 and agreed to hold joint workshops with UNEP and SPAW-RAC on disentanglement and ship strikes in the wider Caribbean.

You can read about all of the discussions in the above press releases.

One resolution was passed during the 2012 Commission meeting. Resolution 2012-1 is on the importance of continued scientific research with regard to the impact of the degradation of the marine environment on the health of cetaceans and related human effects. This can be found at:

<http://www.iwcoffice.org/index.php?cID=3016&cType=document>