

COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The reports of observers representing the Commission at the following meetings are attached as the Appendices indicated:

Appendix	Meeting	IWC Observer
A	Report from the 2011 activities in ICES	Tore Haug (Norway)
B	20th Annual Meeting of the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO), 13-15 September 2011, Oslo, Norway.	Kiyoshi Katsuyama (Japan)
C	24 th Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP), La Jolla, CA, USA, 21 October 2011 and 82 nd Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC), La Jolla, CA, USA, 4-8 July 2011	Jeremy Rusin (United States)
D	Observer's Report on the work of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean (SPAW). June 2012	Carole Carlson (United States)
E	Report on CMS Meetings	William Perrin (United States)
F	19 th Meeting of the Advisory Committee to the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS)	Meike Scheidat (The Netherlands)
G	Co-operation with International Maritime Organization (IMO)	Russell Leaper (UK)
H	2011 PICES Annual Meeting, October 14–23, 2011, Khabarovsk, Russia	Hidehiro Kato (Japan)
I	18th Meeting of the NAMMCO Scientific Committee (SC) Gjógv, Faroe Islands, 2-5 May 2011	Lars Walløe (Norway)
J	30 th Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR), Hobart, Australia, 23 - 27 October 2011	Karl-Hermann Kock (Germany)
K	Report from IUCN 2011-2012	Justin Cooke and Randall Reeves

REPORT FROM THE 2011 ACTIVITIES IN ICES

Observer: Tore Haug (Norway)

ICES WGMME

The ICES Working Group on Marine Mammal Ecology (WGMME) met at the Federal Environment Agency in Berlin, Germany from 21 February to 24 February 2011. The WG considered a wide range of issues, including reviewing the effects of tidal turbines on marine mammals and providing recommendations on research needs, monitoring and mitigation schemes. In addition, the WG outlined marine planning practices that could take account of the presence of cetaceans, as well as cataloguing the Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) for marine mammals in the ICES area and evaluating the efficacy of MPAs for cetaceans. Other topics included reviewing outputs from T-NASS and assessing the current population structure of bottlenose dolphins in the Northeast Atlantic.

The WG concluded that the wet renewables sector is at a very early stage of development. Most designs of tidal turbines are at early test stages of scale models while a few are at the levels of full-scale test rigs and there are currently no full-scale commercial developments of multiple devices (arrays). Accordingly, current knowledge of the potential interactions of marine mammals with these devices are predominantly speculative based on the first investigations and best knowledge derived from parallels from other industries such as fisheries, oil and gas developments and the offshore wind sector. In light of this, the WG focused on highlighting current research needs and important issues of regulation and management to be addressed in the coming years. Most importantly, the WG recommended that a strategic approach be taken to identify sites of low marine mammal risk for early stage deployments, before consenting to tidal device or array developments in more sensitive sites. Animal-tidal turbine interactions are likely to be both species and device (or device-type) specific and the WG recommended that extreme care be taken when extrapolating environmental impacts between species and device types. In addition, the WG recommended that extreme care be taken when scaling up environmental lessons learned from studies of single tidal turbine devices up to arrays, as the nature of any impact relationships (linear or otherwise) between one and many devices is currently unknown. In light of this, a stepwise approach should be taken for array development.

The WG summarized activities typically considered within marine spatial planning practices that should take into account the presence and occurrence of cetaceans. The WG reviewed the main concerns regarding cetaceans and, in some activities, how these are taken into consideration, e.g. following best practice, mitigation measures, spatial considerations. The WG recommended that data on cetacean presence and occurrence should be incorporated at a very early stage of marine spatial planning – and it is very important to include any information on seasonal changes in distribution. As a result of the wide ranging nature of cetaceans, the relevance of ‘important areas’ outside MPAs should be assessed within marine spatial plans.

The WG collated information on MPAs within the ICES area, and noted that many of the MPAs are small relative to marine mammal movements and habitat used for essential life-history requirements (i.e. foraging, breeding, nursing). However, some countries worked jointly together to establish equivalent and/or interconnected MPAs to enhance conservation of marine mammals. The efficiency of MPAs is compounded by the scientific basis on which designations were made. The quality and quantity of data used to designate sites varied considerably, with many utilizing very little scientific data. Consequently, the WG recommended that the boundaries of MPAs should only be decided on the basis of a significant long-term dataseries (of at least five years). If protected areas are created in response to public opinion without the scientific evidence to support their selection, there is a risk that such sites could provide false assurance that space and resources have been set aside for marine mammals, thereby reducing the pressure for targeted action on the most significant threats. The WG therefore recommended that the appropriateness of MPAs as a mechanism to controlling or eliminating threats is given significant consideration prior to site designation.

ICES WGBYC

The Working Group on Bycatch of Protected Species (WGBYC) met in Copenhagen at ICES headquarters between 1 and 4 February 2011 with a broad aim to collate and review recent information on the by-catch of protected species, especially under the requirements of EC Regulation 812/2004, to coordinate bycatch monitoring and bycatch mitigation trials and to disseminate and review information on methodologies associated with these topics.

The WG was no longer formally requested to review and comment on EU Member States' reports under council regulation 812/2004, nevertheless in order to review the status of information on recent bycatch estimates and to assess the extent of the implementation of bycatch mitigation measures the reports were reviewed. The WG agreed that in future it would ensure a broader focus on all protected species covered by all discard and bycatch monitoring schemes, and that it would endeavour to evaluate the population level impacts of protected species bycatch by comparing known levels of abundance with known or assumed levels of bycatch based on proximal estimates. Reports from 15 member states indicated extrapolated estimates of bycatch for 2009 of about 879 striped dolphins, about 1500 common dolphins, about 1100 harbour porpoises and at least ten bottlenose dolphins in a variety of fisheries. Estimates are still very patchy, and several member states have not fulfilled their monitoring obligations. Bycatch monitoring was judged to be less than optimally directed in many cases. Implementation of bycatch mitigation measures was also found to be patchy, with few countries able to provide unequivocal confirmation that the obligations under regulation 812/2004 for pinger deployment are being met.

ICES WGHARP

The ICES/NAFO Working Group on Harp and Hooded Seals (WGHARP) met during 15-19 August 2011 at the British Sea Mammal Research Unit (SMRU) at the Scottish Oceanographic Institute, University of St. Andrews, Scotland, to consider recent research and to assess the status and harvest potential of harp seal stocks in the Greenland Sea and White Sea/Barents Sea and of the hooded seal stocks in the Greenland Sea. The basis for the advice was a request from Norway in September 2010. The WG received presentations related to catch (mortality) estimates, abundance estimates, and biological parameters of all the stocks in question. Additionally, the WG received and reviewed information on the Northwest Atlantic harp seal stock.

ICES ASC

The 2011 ICES Annual Science Conference (ASC) was held in Gdansk, Poland, 19-23 September 2011. The conference included no particular theme session devoted entirely to marine mammals. Nevertheless, some sessions were designed with marine mammals included as an integral part. Relevant sessions at the 2011 ASC were:

- Theme session A: "Atlantic redfish and Pacific rockfish: Comparing biology, ecology, assessment and management strategies for *Sebastes* spp (Joint ICES/PICES theme session)"
- Theme session I: "Integrating top predators into ecosystem management"
- Theme session R: "Integration of multidisciplinary knowledge in the Baltic Sea to support science-based management."
- Theme session S: "Extracting energy from waves and tides – what are the consequences for ecosystems, physical processes and other sea users."

Upcoming theme sessions, relevant to marine mammal issues, intended for the ASC, 17-21 September 2012 in Bergen, Norway, include titles such as "Bycatch and discards: from improved knowledge to mitigation programmes", "Consequences of improved survey performance on assessments and management advice? Do innovations in survey and sampling design, and technology make any difference?" and "How does renewable energy production affect aquatic life?" More information is available at the ICES web site www.ices.dk.

Appendix B

**Observer Report of the 20th Annual Meeting of the
North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO)**

Observer: Kiyoshi Katsuyama (Japan)

The North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission held its 20th Annual Meeting from 13 September to 15 September 2011, in Oslo, Norway. The member countries of NAMMCO are the Faroe Islands, Greenland, Iceland and Norway. The Governments of Canada, Denmark, Japan and the Russian Federation are represented as observers at the meeting.

Major items discussed are as follows.

Status of whale stocks

All requested stock assessments for large whale species in the North Atlantic have now been finalized based on sightings data from the Trans North Atlantic Cetacean Sightings Surveys (T-NASS) in 2007, and additionally in 2009. Management procedures applied have been derived from those already developed by the Scientific Committee of the IWC using the Revised Management Procedure (RMP) approach. An RMP-like approach has been recommended by the Scientific Committee of NAMMCO for some large whale stocks in their discussions on general models to be adopted by NAMMCO. These stock assessments by the Scientific Committee of NAMMCO constitute the main basis for catch limits set for some baleen whale stocks (fin and minke whales) in the North Atlantic.

Additionally, based on T-NASS data, an updated abundance estimate for pilot whales has been made in the areas surveyed in 2007. Although the combined area represented is small and not directly comparable with previous surveys, the available information gives no reason to amend previous conclusions on the sustainability of the Faroese catch.

The next regular NASS, North Atlantic Sighting Survey, is being scheduled to take place between 2013 and 2015, and planning is already under way.

Status of seal stocks

A new Management Plan for grey and harbour seals in Norway, reviewed by the NAMMCO Scientific Committee, and implemented in Norway since 2011, is aimed at ensuring sustainable and viable populations of these species within their natural distribution. The Norwegian Ministry of Fisheries and Coastal Affairs has decided to stabilize the grey seal population at a target level (TL) equal to 1,200 pups born annually, and to stabilize the harbour seal population at a TL of around 7,000 counted animals during the moult. Hunting quotas are used to stabilize the populations at the TL, and measures should be designed to ensure the greatest impact in areas where there is documented significant damage to the fishing industry from seals.

Ecosystem Management and Modelling

The Scientific Committee Working group on Marine Mammal – Fisheries Interactions continued its work on development of a large international ecosystem modelling project. A network has been established between several leading scientists in this field aimed at securing funding for the project which includes applying four different modelling approaches to two data rich areas, the Barents Sea and Icelandic coastal waters.

Inspection and observation of hunting

A training course for observers appointed under the NAMMCO Joint Control Scheme for the Hunting of Marine Mammals was reported to be organised in the following year, with the purpose of ensuring that NAMMCO observers have an updated understanding of their responsibilities and access to the latest relevant information on the regulation of whaling and sealing in member countries. The purpose NAMMCO's international observation scheme is to provide a mechanism to monitor the conduct and regulation of marine mammal hunting activities in the member countries, thus ensuring international transparency in whaling and sealing operations in the region.. NAMMCO appoints observers who oversee hunting and inspection activities in NAMMCO member countries and report their observations to NAMMCO.

Appendix C

**24th Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP),
La Jolla, CA, USA, 21 October 2011 and 82nd Meeting of the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission
(IATTC), La Jolla, CA, USA, 4-8 July 2011**

Observer: Jeremy Rusin (United States)

AIDCP

The objectives of the AIDCP are:

1. To progressively reduce incidental dolphin mortalities in the tuna purse-seine fishery in the Agreement Area to levels approaching zero, through the setting of annual limits;
2. With the goal of eliminating dolphin mortality in this fishery, to seek ecologically sound means of capturing large yellowfin tunas not in association with dolphins; and
3. To ensure the long-term sustainability of the tuna stocks in the Agreement Area, as well as that of the marine resources related to this fishery, taking into consideration the interrelationship among species in the ecosystem, with special emphasis on, inter alia, avoiding, reducing and minimizing bycatch and discards of juvenile tunas and non-target species.

As of 2011, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, the European Union, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, United States, Vanuatu, and Venezuela have ratified or acceded to the AIDCP, and Bolivia and Colombia are applying the AIDCP provisionally.

On-board observer program – The AIDCP mandates 100% coverage by observers of fishing trips by purse seiners of carrying capacity greater than 363 metric tons (t) in the Agreement Area. In 2011, 100% of the trips by these vessels in the Agreement Area were sampled by independent observers. In addition to reporting on dolphin deaths in the fishery, the observer program provides other critical data on catch and bycatch of other species, gear configuration and compliance with existing AIDCP and IATTC conservation and management measures. While overall compliance has improved substantially in recent years, making additional progress in this area has been a focus of the AIDCP Parties as part of an overarching effort to strengthen the implementation of the AIDCP. These efforts continued in 2011.

2011 dolphin mortality limits – The overall dolphin mortality limit (DML) for the international fleet in 2011 was 5,000 animals, and the unreserved portion of 4,900 was allocated to 86 qualified vessels that requested DMLs. In 2010, no vessel exceeded its DML; this information has not yet been reported for 2011. The average individual-vessel DML (ADML) in 2010, based on 87 DML requests, was 56. Based on the number of qualified vessels receiving DMLs in 2011, the ADML is 56.97. The number of sets on dolphin-associated schools of tuna made by vessels over 363 t has been increasing in recent years, from 9,246 in 2008 to 10,910 in 2009 to 11,645 in 2010. However, fewer dolphin-associated sets were made in 2011 – 9,604. This type of set accounted for 44% of the total number of purse-seine sets made in the ETP in 2011. While the focus within the AIDCP has been on minimizing the reported dolphin mortalities in the fishery, some Parties continue to express concern over the unobserved impacts of the fishery on affected dolphin stocks, particularly in light of no clear demonstration that these stocks are recovering at a rate consistent with reported mortality and population depletion level. The increasing trend in sets made on tuna in association with dolphins 2008-2010 is cause for some concern at least among the Parties that believe this practice may have indirect negative effects on dolphin populations. While fewer dolphin sets were made in 2011, this remains a frequent practice and the predominant method for catching yellowfin tuna by purse-seine in the ETP. In addition, dolphin and ecosystem assessment surveys that were scheduled for 2009 and 2010 have been delayed due to lack of resources, so it is unclear when abundance estimates for cetaceans in the eastern tropical Pacific will be available to update the most recent survey data collected in 2006.

Reported dolphin deaths for 2011 are presented by species and stock in the table below.

Dolphin species and stock	2011 reported incidental mortality (numbers of animals)
Offshore spotted dolphin (<i>Stenella attenuata</i>)	
Northeastern	172
Western-southern	124
Spinner dolphin (<i>S. longirostris</i>)	
Eastern	467
Whitebelly	139
Common dolphin (<i>Delphinus delphis</i>)	
Northern	35
Central	12
Southern	9
Other dolphins ¹	28
Total	986

¹“Other dolphins” includes the following species and stocks, whose reported mortalities were as follows: Central American spinner dolphins (*Stenella longirostris centroamericana*) 10, striped dolphins (*Stenella coeruleoalba*) 4, bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*) 9, unidentified dolphins 5.

Place and date of the next AIDCP meetings –18-19 June 2012 and 22-23 October 2012, La Jolla, CA, USA

IATTC

The primary focus of the IATTC remains on managing fisheries for tuna and billfish in the Convention area. However, the Antigua Convention also calls for an ecosystem approach to management including monitoring, management and conservation of non-target or associated or dependent species, and it mandates the application of the precautionary principle in managing under uncertainty. With the entry into force of the Antigua Convention in 2010, the IATTC is expected to give greater consideration to these non-target and associated species, including cetaceans, in taking management decisions.

Entry into force of the Antigua Convention – The Antigua Convention (Convention), which was negotiated to strengthen and replace the 1949 Convention establishing the IATTC, entered into force on 27 August 2010. The Convention is open to the following: (a) the Parties to the 1949 Convention; (b) States not Party to the 1949 Convention with a coastline bordering the Convention Area; (c) States whose vessels fish for fish stocks covered by the Convention, following consultation with the Parties; or (d) States that are otherwise invited to join on the basis of a decision by the Parties. In 2010, thirteen governments had ratified the Convention and deposited their instruments of ratification or accession. Four of these – Belize, Canada, China, and the European Union – became new IATTC members as of 27 August. Chinese Taipei, as a Fishing Entity, provided the required written communication to the depositary, pursuant to Article XXVIII of the Convention, and therefore also became a member of the Commission as of 27 August.

Ecosystem impacts of fisheries – during the IATTC SAC meeting the IATTC scientific staff presented a summary of ongoing work describing what is known about the direct impact of the fisheries upon various species and species groups of the ecosystem, and reviewing what is known about the environment and about other species that are not

directly impacted by the fisheries. This effort has been ongoing in some form since 2003; however, it has been reinvigorated since 2008 with the anticipated entry into force of the Antigua Convention and other factors. The results of this and similar work may help inform future directions of AIDCP and IATTC measures designed at managing fisheries and conserving dolphins (e.g., through balancing ecosystem impacts of different fishing practices). This work will be ongoing in 2012.

Place and date of next IATTC meeting – 20-29 June 2012, La Jolla, CA, USA

**Observer's Report on the work of the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas
and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean (SPAW). June 2012**

Observer: Carole Carlson (USA)

**MARINE MAMMAL ACTIVITIES UNDER THE FRAMEWORK OF UNEP'S CARIBBEAN
ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME AND SECRETARIAT TO THE CARTAGENA CONVENTION AND ITS
SPAW PROTOCOL (JUNE 2011-JUNE 2012)**

**Decisions from the 6th Conference of Parties (COP6) on the Protocol Concerning Specially Protected Areas
and Wildlife in the Wider Caribbean (SPAW), October 2010**

1. Request that the Secretariat, in collaboration with the SPAW Regional Activity Centre (RAC) in Guadeloupe, continue to fundraise and develop strategic partnerships for further implementation of the Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Animals (MMAP)
2. Implement key priorities of the Manatee Regional Management Plan
3. Re-establish the Working Group in charge of the Review of the Criteria for the Listing of Species in the Annexes to the SPAW Protocol
4. Request that the Secretariat continue to develop the broad-scale Marine Spatial Planning Life Web Project in the Wider Caribbean, which aims at the identification of marine mammal corridors and promotes their management for the conservation of the species.

**Protecting Habitats and Migration Corridors for Marine Mammals in the South and Northeast Pacific and
the Wider Caribbean through Marine Protected Area Networks (MSP LifeWeb Project)**

Background of MSP LifeWeb Project:

Thirty-two species of marine mammals have been documented in the Wider Caribbean region and, for many of these species, the waters of the region serve as primary habitats for critical activities that include feeding, mating and calving, while also serving as key satellite sites directly connected to habitats in distant waters via long-ranging north-south migration routes in both Atlantic and Pacific. Marine mammals, however, are facing a range of severe impacts from human activities and the need is ever greater to address these different stressors via comprehensive and integrated ecosystem-based management that includes marine protected area networks. With funding provided by the Government of Spain and supported by UNEP, UNEP-CEP and the Government of France, the MSP LifeWeb project launched in October 2010 aims to assist with the implementation of decisions from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), as well as those of the Cartagena Convention and its SPAW Protocol.

Objectives:

1. Provide an overview of essential habitats and regional-scale movements for marine mammals in need of improved management in Southeast and Northeast Pacific, Wider Caribbean and adjacent regions through data integration and GIS-mapping of existing data, including socio-economic information (e.g. fisheries, shipping, tourism, etc);
2. Introduce integrated planning approaches, including provision of technical guidance, regional training and learning exchanges on application of marine spatial planning to transboundary governance and management of marine mammals; including transfer of skills, tools and good and equitable sharing of marine resource benefits;
3. Apply integrated marine spatial planning and management approaches in two demonstration projects, including the Marine Mammal Sanctuary of the Dominican Republic (SMMRD), to showcase different stages of planning for the management of critical marine mammal habitats and migration routes across jurisdictional boundaries involving local planners, scientists, decision-makers and stakeholders from relevant governments;

4. Develop strategic communication products including a policy paper on governance recommendations to 'Make the Case' for integrated, transboundary management of marine mammal migration routes and critical habitats;
5. Develop institutional linkages and networks among marine mammal managers, experts, stakeholders and policy makers to promote the implementation of the two regional Marine Mammal Action Plans and related instruments in the Wider Caribbean and Southeast and Northeast Pacific. This will include collaborative initiatives, sub-regional and inter-regional science-policy dialogues, and consultations with relevant stakeholders in design of transboundary governance and management options, along with targeted dissemination of lessons, good practices and strategic information for policy support.

Activities to Date:

1. Marine Mammal Project Design and Planning Consultation (19-20 June 2010)
2. Regional Workshop on Integration, Mapping and GIS Analysis of Marine Mammal Migration Routes, Critical Habitats and Human Threats in the Wider Caribbean Region (9-11 May 2011)
3. Assist in the Coordination of the Second International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (7-11 November 2011)
4. Identifying marine mammal data sources within the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR) and collate the information in an online database (July-December 2011)
5. LifeWeb project: Learning exchange on Marine Mammal Management between Eastern Caribbean countries and the Dominican Republic, Dominican Republic hosted a, "Broad-scale Marine Spatial planning Workshop" on 21-24 March 2012: The goal of the visit to the Sanctuary of Marine Mammals in the Dominican Republic (SMMRD) was to provide participants with an opportunity to benefit from lessons learned with the management of the SMMRD for whales and other marine mammal species with respect to broad-scale marine spatial planning, as well as highlighting the economic opportunities associated with such management, and discussion of possible ways of strengthening large-scale management and planning for marine mammals.
6. Analysis of identified marine mammal data, in collaboration with the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS), GRID-Arendal and other regional and international partners, in order to develop data layers and maps on the critical habitats for marine mammals in the Wider Caribbean, including identification of threats, migration routes and distribution. Distribution and abundance maps for the best documented marine mammal species in the Caribbean have been developed. Predicted occurrence maps for the 24 marine mammals species regularly encountered in the Wider Caribbean have been produced.
7. Inter-regional Workshop on Broad-scale Marine Spatial Planning and Transboundary Marine Mammal Management (Panama, 21-24 May 2012)

Objectives:

- a. Review and discuss the results of this LifeWeb project to date, notably maps of distribution for selected marine mammal species, migration routes, habitat modelling, human activities and impacts
- b. Provide training and technical guidance on integrated marine spatial planning, management and governance
- c. Share lessons learned in methodology and data collection to meet project objectives and the development of demonstration projects
- d. Outline scenarios and recommendations for trans-boundary management and future work needed to manage marine mammal corridors and habitats in Latin America, the Wider Caribbean and the North-East Pacific

- e. Provide opportunities for inter-regional networking and learning-exchanges among marine resource planners and managers.

Improving Capacity in the Wider Caribbean Region

With funding provided by the US Marine Mammal Commission through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, a project focusing on MM watching was implemented during 2011

Objectives:

1. Improve and centralize the level of information and knowledge on the status, distribution and threats of marine mammals in the region
2. Improve understanding of tourists and tourism stakeholders on marine mammal natural history, conservation and best practices for marine mammal viewing. To this end the **Regional Workshop on Marine Mammal Watching in the Wider Caribbean Region(Panama, 19-22 October 2011) was convened and experts recommended that:**
 - a. UNEP-CEP encourages continued regional dialogue on this matter and explores the possibility of developing a sub-group on this topic under the MMAP E-Group coordinated by the SPAW-RAC
 - b. Tour operators who participated in the Workshop identify additional marine mammal tour operators in their countries, and ask them to complete the survey on marine mammal watching activities in the Wider Caribbean Region. The results will be analysed and report on by the Pacific Whale Foundation (PWF), with the results posted at a later date
 - c. The Workshop Steering Committee identify the equipment needed to collect basic marine mammal data during tours and the costs associated with providing each operator participating in this Workshop with this basic equipment
 - d. UNEP-CEP, in collaboration with the SPAW RAC, develops Training of Trainers workshops in each of the three languages of the Wider Caribbean Region so that they can return to their countries to train others. Training of trainers must be differentiated for captains/operators, naturalists, guides and local tour guides.
 - e. Overarching principles and best practice guidelines for marine mammal watching in the WCR developed at the Workshop will be presented by the UNEP-CEP Secretariat to the Seventh Conference of the Parties (COP7) to the SPAW Protocol for consideration and decision on further action

Upcoming Activities

1. Follow-up to the recommendations of the UNEP-Government of Spain LifeWebthe Inter-regional Workshop on Broad-scale Marine Spatial Planning and Transboundary Marine Mammal Management (Panama, 21-24 May 2012) and further refinement of the products and communication strategy.

OBSERVER'S REPORT ON CMS MEETINGS

Observer: W. F. Perrin (USA)

SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

The Scientific Council met in Bergen, Norway, 17-18 November 2011. With relation to cetaceans, the agenda included items on critical sites and ecological networks for migratory species, impacts of marine debris on migratory species, and presentation of the report of the Working Group on Aquatic Mammals. It was agreed that the narwhal and the North Pacific killer whale populations be considered for cooperative action. A draft resolution on a programme of work for cetaceans (to implement the previous CoP resolution "Adverse human-induced impacts on cetaceans" was endorsed. Note was taken of the recent split of the finless porpoise into two species, *Neophocaena brevirostris* and *N. asiaeorientalis*, and both were recommended for inclusion in Appendix II of the Convention.

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

The 10th CoP met in Bergen 20-25 November. The Convention now has 117 Parties. Three Resolutions related primarily to cetaceans:

Resolution 10.14 *Bycatch of CMS-listed species in gillnet fisheries* called on Parties to *inter alia* assess the risk of bycatch arising from their gillnet fisheries and conduct research to identify and improve mitigation measures (including use of alternative fishing gear and methods) and instructed the Scientific Council to develop terms of reference for studies identifying the degree of interaction between gillnet fisheries and CMS-listed species.

Resolution 10.15 *Global programme of work for cetaceans* laid out tasks for the Scientific Council, Secretariat and Parties to advance the conservation of CMS-listed cetaceans, organized primarily on a regional basis.

Resolution 10.24 *Further steps to abate underwater noise pollution for the protection of cetaceans and other migratory species* among other recommendations strongly urged the Parties to prevent adverse effects on cetaceans and other marine species by restricting the emission of underwater noise, understood as keeping it to the lowest necessary level with particular priority given to situations where the impacts on cetaceans are known to be heavy.

The above referenced documents can be seen in full on the CMS website www.cms.int.

Appendix F

OBSERVERS' REPORT ON THE 19TH MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF SMALL CETACEANS OF THE BALTIC, NORTH EAST ATLANTIC, IRISH AND NORTH SEAS (ASCOBANS)

Observer: Meike Scheidat (The Netherlands)

The 19th meeting of the Advisory Committee (AC) to the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS), was held in Galway, Ireland from 20th to 22nd March 2012. The scientific session was chaired by Sami Hassani (France), the administrative session was chaired by Penina Blankett (Finland). Main topics at the AC meeting:

1. **Baltic Sea harbor porpoises, the “gap” area:**
 - The harbor porpoises in the Western Baltic, the Belt Seas and the Kattegat form a different population to the Baltic proper and the North Sea. It is likely that the population in this area has dropped from 28000 (1994) to 11000 animals (2005) (60% decline). By-catch is an issue, but the magnitude of the problem is uncertain.
 - ASCOBANS agreed that it is important to have a separate conservation plan for this area.
2. The coordinator (Geneviève Desportes) and the Working Group of the ASCOBANS **Conservation Plan for Harbour Porpoises in the North Sea** recommend: a follow-up SCANS II survey, improve international cooperation and bring smaller fisheries and recreational fisheries under the reformed Common Fisheries Policy.
3. The ASCOBANS **Bycatch working group** recommended: close collaboration with ICES, reviewing of the 1.7% removal rate, consideration of the new results from a Norwegian study on bycatch in small boat fisheries.
4. The **Noise Working Groups** of ACCOBAMS and ASCOBANS have joined into one.
5. Two surveys were conducted on the **Dogger Bank** independently, using (1) a vessel with towed hydrophone and (2) dedicated aerial surveys. Harbour porpoise was the most common cetacean (estimated density from aerial surveys: 1.82 animals / km²; CV 0.31), with most of the records on the slopes of the bank.
6. **Small cetacean hunt** outside ASCOBANS agreement area
 - Tagging data indicates that the pilot whale population that inhabits the Faroese waters also occurs in the ASCOBANS agreement area. NAMMCO considers the Faroese hunt sustainable; however, uncertainties relating to abundance, population structure, distribution and trends remain and ASCOBANS welcomes future studies (e.g. T-NASS, CODA & SCANS surveys) to improve the current knowledge. The Advisory Committee welcomed the detailed information the Faroese authorities have provided regarding the small cetacean hunts.
7. An Intersessional Working Group on **Marine Debris**, to be chaired by the North Sea Foundation, was established.
8. In collaboration with ACCOBAMS, the ASCOBANS Secretariat is working to acquire **satellite-based data on shipping density** in order to facilitate further analysis to identify high risk areas and trends.
9. There will be an ECS/ASCOBANS/ACCOBAMS **Workshop on Management of Marine Protected Areas for Cetaceans** at the 2013 ECS Conference in Portugal.
10. The **ASCOBANS Outreach and Education Award** 2012 will be given to Mats Amundin of Kolmården Djurpark in Sweden.

The full reports as well as all related working documents are available via <http://www.ascobans.org/>.

CO-OPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO)

Russell Leaper (UK)

The IWC has contributed to IMO discussions on addressing ship strikes and the impacts of underwater noise from shipping. The IMO has established a correspondence group to develop non-mandatory draft guidelines for reducing underwater noise from commercial ships. This group will report to the IMO's 57th session of the sub-committee on Ship Design and Equipment in early 2013.

The IMO is also working to develop a mandatory Polar Code to control the expected increase in ship traffic in polar waters (the Arctic and the Antarctic) that results from climate and other changes. The Polar Code is intended to function alongside existing IMO conventions and to augment existing measures to reduce the environmental impacts of shipping taking into account the greater environmental sensitivity of polar waters. An IMO Workshop on Environmental Aspects of the Polar Code was held in Cambridge in September 2011 where there was considerable discussion of ship strikes and underwater noise impacts on whales. The Polar Code work is also co-ordinated by the Design sub-committee on Ship Design and Equipment.

Observer Report from the 2011 Annual Meeting of PICES

Observer: Hidehiro Kato (Japan)

The PICES (North Pacific Marine Science Organization; Headquarter at Sydney, British Columbia, Canada) is an inter-governmental organization among Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Russia and US. It has four committees, Biological Oceanography Committee (*BIO*), Fisheries Science Committee (*FIS*), Marine Environmental Quality Committee (*MEQ*), Physical Oceanography and Climate Committee (*POC*), one technical committee for data exchange (*TCODE*) and one major research project *FUTURE* (Forecasting and Understanding Trends, Uncertainty and Responses of the North Pacific Ecosystems) which was started in 2008. PICES meets once a year and also has regular business meetings and associated symposium, some with over 500 participants. PICES has had interests on marine birds and mammals since 1997 as ecosystem components from ecosystem and environment view points and has a special working group to assess feeding impact by marine birds and mammals upon ecosystems (WG11 chaired by George Hunt Jr. (USA) and Kato; 1997 - 1999) and MBM (marine birds and mammals) advisory panel (AP-MBM) to understanding coupled climate-ecosystem fluctuations etc. in the North Pacific Ocean in collaboration with other study areas (co-chaired by William Sydeman (USA) and Kato, 2000 – 2011) under the auspices of *BIO* subcommittee.

The 2011 Annual Meeting was held October 14–23, 2011, in Khabarovsk Regional Philharmonic Building, Khabarovsk, Russia. The meeting is hosted by the Russian Federal Agency for Fisheries in cooperation with the Government of the Khabarovsk Region and in coordination with the PICES Secretariat. Kato participated in the meeting and associated working groups and symposia especially in the AP-MBM meeting and its co-sponsored theme session (S2) as an IWC observer. Because Sydeman and Kato had completed their term of the AP-MBM co-chair, Drs Rolf Ream (US, Marine Mammal specialist) and Yutaka Watanuki (Japan, Sea-birds specialist) were newly nominated co-chair. AP-MBM meeting was held from 09:00 – 12:30 on 16 October 2011 at the Parus Hotel, Khabarovsk. Following discussions rose during regular session. The following topics seem to be interesting ones and relevant to IWC/SC:

1. AP-MBM Terms of Reference

In response to the new overall PICES Science Plan *FUTURE*, revised Terms of Reference (TOR) for AP-MBM were presented, discussed, amended, and adopted as below:

- (1) Provide information and scientific expertise to *BIO* and the *FUTURE* Program, and, when necessary, to other scientific and technical committees with regard to the biology and ecological roles of marine mammals and seabirds in the PICES region.
- (2) Identify important problems, scientific questions, and knowledge gaps for understanding the impacts of climate change and anthropogenic factors on MBMs in ecosystems of the PICES region through Workshops, Theme Sessions and Science Reports.
- (3) Assemble information on the status and key demographic parameters of marine mammals and seabirds and contribute to the Status Reports.
- (4) Improve collaborative, interdisciplinary research with marine mammal and seabird researchers and the PICES scientific community.

2. Liaison between PICES and IWC

Kato (Japan) reported on his activities as the PICES liaison to the Scientific Committee of International Whaling Commission (IWC/SC) including researches and their progress on RMP implementation, Comprehensive Assessment, Environmental Concern, Ecosystem Modelling, Western Gray whale stock assessment and *POWER* sighting cruise. The AP thanked Kato for his efforts to integrate PICES science in the IWC science-policy arena, and recommends to *BIO* that Kato remain as the PICES liaison. The AP also recommends to *BIO* that PICES support a request to the IWC/SC to include a seabird observer in the IWC *POWER* cruise (see Endnote 3). This sighting survey in the North Pacific covers a large geographic area, and will help meet the objectives of the new AP-MBM Activity Plan by providing valuable at-sea distribution data for seabirds. Bill Sydeman (USA) and Rob Suryan (USA) will lead efforts to organize activities and obtain support for seabird observer(s) on this cruise should a request be approved by the IWC/SC.

3. AP-MBM Activity Plan

AP-MBM co-chairs presented a newly developed 3 year Activity Plan for discussion with panel members and observers. This plan of action was developed explicitly to support and promote the goals of the new overall PICES Science Plan FUTURE. During a ½ day workshop hosted by the AP-MBM during the PICES/ICES ESSAS meeting (Seattle, May 2011), a number of topics were developed for possible inclusion in the Activity Plan. Potential topics were circulated to members of the AP-MBM for ranking, and SPATIAL ECOLOGY & CONSERVATION was selected as the basis of the new Activity Plan. The primary objectives of the AP-MBM under this topic are to:

- (1) Synthesize distribution data of MBMs and its temporal change in the North Pacific based on boat-based surveys, remote tracking, and terrestrial surveys).
- (2) Examine the physical and biological factors that correspond to the distribution and abundance of MBM and their ecological/economic (fisheries) hot spots.
- (3) Provide information on important ecological areas in the PICES regions to facilitate understanding and sustainable use of marine resources.

Briefly, during 2012-2014, AP-MBM plans to summarize information on the distribution and movement of multiple species of MBMs that would be useful for identifying important (for productivity, biodiversity, fisheries) and vulnerable (because of climate and anthropogenic impact including fisheries and pollution) ecological areas in the PICES region. This will help understand the spatial and temporal dynamics responsible for variable habitat use (i.e., biological hotspots). Knowledge of MBM use of ecological important areas, now and in the future, will contribute to the FUTURE mission of understanding climate change and anthropogenic impacts on marine ecosystems in the PICES region. The AP reiterated its primary mission to provide advice to the PICES community about the role of marine birds and mammals in North Pacific marine ecosystems. Secondly, the AP exists to ensure that seabirds and marine mammals are included in all PICES-related ecosystem research, including forecasting, and outreach and communications. The new Activity Plan was approved by the AP-MBM.

4. The 2012 workshop/session relevant to activities by the AP-MBM.

For the PICES 2012 meeting (Main theme; *Effects of Natural and Anthropogenic Stressors in North Pacific Ecosystems: Scientific Challenges and Possible Solutions*) in Hiroshima, Japan, There were some proposals and two sessions were approved to be held by the senior committee; The Topic Session (S6) on "*Environmental contaminants in marine ecosystems: Seabirds and marine mammals as sentinels of ecosystem health*" convened by Peter Ross (Canada), Hideshige Takada (Japan) and Watanuki, and the workshop (W3) on "*The feasibility of updating prey consumption by marine birds, marine mammals, and large predatory fish in PICES regions*" convened by Hunt (USA), Kato and Michael Seki (USA) might be of special interest. IWC participation would be also important for PICES.

5. Other issue

The next PICES annual meeting (PICES 2012) will be held October 12-21, 2012, at Hiroshima, Japan.

NAMMCO SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

Lars Walløe

The 18th Meeting of the NAMMCO Scientific Committee (SC) was held in Gjógv, Faroe Islands, 2-5 May 2011.

The ICES-NAMMCO workshop on by-catch monitoring had reviewed indirect and direct by-catch monitoring, data collection, and fleet data needed for raising estimates to fleet level. The SC noted that by-catch numbers could be high both in Norway and Iceland. The SC reiterated that accurate estimates of total removals are essential for the assessment of all species and strongly recommended that Norway and Iceland provide estimates of by-catch in a timely manner. The SC strongly encouraged Iceland, Norway and the Faroes to proceed with the implementation of their by-catch monitoring systems. The SC reiterates its recommendation to Greenland to investigate the degree to which by-catch is reported as catch. The SC was informed that PINRO in the Russian Federation had plans to implement by-catch monitoring in the White Sea.

The SC reiterated its previous recommendation that all takes of all species should be reported, and it strongly recommends that reporting systems for all species with an allowed hunt should be in place for all areas. This is currently not the case for small cetaceans in Iceland and harbour porpoise in the Faroes.

Extensive biological sampling was conducted by Iceland from all fin whales landed in 2010. This research included age determination, maturity and fecundity, energetics, feeding ecology, parasitology and genetics. Laboratory analyses of all samples have been completed. A DNA registry was initiated in 2010 to develop a tissue bank and a DNA database for all genetic samples.

The 2007 abundance estimates for humpback whales for all areas have now been provided to, reviewed and endorsed by the SC. The possibility for responsive movement to survey vessels remains a point to be investigated for the Icelandic-Faroese shipboard survey and the SC recommended further analyses.

For the first time since 1986, there was a quota for humpback whales in West Greenland. All nine whales were caught. Catches were spread from Disko Bay to Cape Farewell. Measurements and biological samples were collected from one whale caught close to Nuuk. The SC recommended eye sampling for age determination as well photographic sampling of the tail of caught whales.

Corrected total estimates for minke whales for the 2007 and 2009 Icelandic aerial surveys were endorsed by the SC. The best available estimate of abundance for 2007 was 48% of that for 2001. Abundance in 2009 remains the lowest yet seen in all areas, just 46% of that observed in 2007 and 22% of that estimated in 2001. The SC agreed that the new evidence presented strengthened the conclusion that the observed decline in minke whale abundance was not a result of error in measuring distances or analytical problems.

An aerial survey in West Greenland was scheduled for the spring 2012. The primary targets was planned to be narwhal and beluga, and as secondary target bowhead whale and walrus.

A Conventional Distance Sampling abundance estimate of pilot whales for the Iceland-Faroes shipboard area was presented to and endorsed by the SC. The SC noted the difficulties it faced in providing estimates of abundance of pilot whales appropriate for management purposes given the absence of adequate information on movements and population structure.

Observations of bowhead whales around Svalbard Norway from 1940 to 2009 show an increase during the last decade. This could be due to an increase in the numbers of whales, or due to increased tourism and a dedicated reporting system. An acoustic study that will continue through 2012 had shown that bowheads are present in the Fram Strait (at about 79°N, 5°W) throughout the winter and generally during most of the year.

A satellite tracked bowhead whale from the Spitsbergen stock moved from the so-called northern whaling ground (at about 79-80°N) to the southern whaling ground (72-74°N) during summer and then back north again during winter. This is opposite of the general seasonal movement patterns for other bowhead stocks, but in accordance with reports from whalers in previous centuries.

**OBSERVER'S REPORT FROM THE 30TH MEETING OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE OF
THE COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF ANTARCTIC MARINE LIVING
RESOURCES (CCAMLR), HOBART, AUSTRALIA, 23 – 27 OCTOBER 2011**

Observer Dr. Karl-Hermann Kock (Germany)

The 30th Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) was held under the chairmanship of the Vice - chairman S. Iversen (Norway) at the CCAMLR Headquarters in Hobart, Australia, from 23 to 27 October 2011. All Member countries and a number of observers from international organisations and acceding states attended the meeting.

I provided a brief verbal report on those topics from the 63rd Annual Meeting of the Scientific Committee of the IWC held in Tromsø (Norway) in May/June 2011 which were of interest to CCAMLR.

Main topics of the meeting were:

- Fishery status and trends of Antarctic fish stocks, krill (*Euphausia superba*), squid and stone crabs
 - Incidental mortality of seabirds and marine mammals in fisheries in the CCAMLR Convention Area
 - Harvested species (krill, fish, and stone crabs and their assessment)
 - Ecosystem monitoring and management
 - Management under conditions of uncertainty about stock size and sustainable yield
 - Scientific research exemption
 - CCAMLR Scheme of International Scientific Observation
 - New and exploratory fisheries
 - Joint CCAMLR-IWC workshop with respect to ecosystem modelling in the Southern Ocean
 - The CCAMLR performance review
- Reports of the Scientific Committee (SC-CAMLR) and its Working Groups on Ecosystem Monitoring and Management (WG-EMM) and Fish Stock Assessment (WG-FSA) and their various subgroups are available through the CCAMLR secretariat and on the CCAMLR web site.

The joint CCAMLR-IWC Workshop

A detailed account of the outcome of the joint CCAMLR-IWC workshop which was held in Hobart from 11 – 15 August 2008 was presented in Annex 12 of the Report of the Scientific Committee and in document SC-CAMLR-XXVII/14 which are available through the CCAMLR Secretariat. Almost all experts groups have completed their review papers. The review process of the papers which will be published either in CCAMLR Science or the Journal of Cetacean Research will soon start.

Work and Advice from the WG on Ecosystem Monitoring and Management on krill-related aspects

The work and advice dealt with the following topics:

- 2010/11 fishing season
- Krill fishery notifications in 2011/12
- Trends in krill fishery
- Potential trends in the krill fishery
- Escape mortality of krill from nets
- Conversion factors
- Data reporting
- Trigger level above which action by the Commission is required
- Feedback management procedures
- By-catch of larval and juvenile fish in the krill fishery.

The Scientific Committee had an extensive discussion on these matters. The interested reader should consult paragraphs 3.38 – 3.40 and 4.1 - 4.48 of the Report of the Scientific Committee. Of particular interest are the discussions of the Scientific Committee on the (interim) trigger level and its division into CCAMLR Subareas and on feedback management

Krill fishing

(Please note that the separation of the Southern Ocean by CCAMLR into statistical subunits is different from the IWC and its subdivisions into 6 whaling areas. Maps of the CCAMLR Areas, Subareas and Divisions can be found in the CCAMLR Statistical Bulletin).

Six Member States were fishing for krill in the 2010/11 season. Main krill fishing nations were Norway, Korea, and Japan. The krill catch from December 2010 to October 2011 was 179 000 tonnes. Two thirds of the catch originated from the South Orkney Islands.

Vulnerable Marine Ecosystem VMEs

The Scientific Committee again discussed VMEs intensively. This discussion is detailed in paragraphs 4.238 to 4.252 and the advice to the Commission is provided in paragraphs 4.253 – 4.258 of the report of the Scientific Committee (Paragraph numbers may change in the final version of the report).

Marine Protected Areas MPAs

The area of the southern South Orkney Islands and the Seasonal and part of the Fast Ice Zone was the first MPA designated by CCAMLR. The Scientific Committee agreed the following milestones describing tasks which should be completed by the end of each year leading up to 2012.

- by 2010, collate relevant data for as many of the 11 priority regions as possible (and other regions as appropriate), and characterise each region in terms of biodiversity patterns and ecosystem processes, physical environmental features and human activities;
- by early 2011, convene a workshop to review progress, share experience on different approaches to the selection of candidate sites for protection, and determine a work program for the identification of MPAs in as many of the priority regions as possible (and other regions as appropriate);
- by 2011, identify candidate areas for protection in as many of the priority regions as possible (and other regions as appropriate), based on the collated data and regional characterisations, and using appropriate selection methods;
- by 2011, submit proposals for areas for protection to the Scientific Committee;
- by 2012, submit proposals on a representative system of MPAs to the Commission.

Cetacean – fisheries interactions

Two cetaceans were killed in fisheries in the Southern Ocean: A killer whale (*Orcinus orca*) was recorded as hooked on the line and was dead when it came to the surface, and a sperm whale (*Physeter macrocephalus*) was hauled up dead after being caught in discarded fishing gear on the seabed.

REPORT FROM IUCN 2011-12

Justin Cooke and Randall Reeves

Western gray whales

The mandate of the IUCN Western Gray Whale Advisory Panel has been renewed for a further five years (www.iucn.org/wgwap), under the aegis of the IUCN Global Marine and Polar Programme. A report on activities was presented to the Scientific Committee's subcommittee on Bowhead, Right and Gray Whales (see Appendix 6 to Annex F of the Scientific Committee report). The Panel expressed concerns about plans to install a third offshore platform for oil and gas extraction just offshore of the gray whale feeding ground, but this project has now been postponed. Analyses of the data collected during a 2010 seismic survey with respect of the effects on gray whales and the effectiveness of mitigation measures are still in progress. Similar mitigation and data collection arrangements are in place for a smaller seismic survey that is currently underway.

Red List updates

A current list of all cetacean species and populations that have been assessed for the Red List, and their current Red List classification, is maintained on the Cetacean Specialist Group site at www.iucn-csg.org/index.php/status-of-the-worlds-cetaceans with links to the assessments which are held on the Red List site www.redlist.org. Updates since the last Annual Meeting include separate assessments for the two recently recognized species of finless porpoises (*Neophocaena asiaeorientalis* and *Neophocaena phocaenoides*), both listed as Vulnerable. New assessments are underway for the dolphins in the genus *Inia*, which were recently split into two species, *Inia geoffrensis*, the Amazon River dolphin, and *I. boliviensis*, the Bolivian bufeo.

Cetacean Specialist Group

The website of the IUCN Cetacean Specialist Group (<http://www.iucn-csg.org/>), contains regular updates of IUCN's cetacean-related activities and other work in which group members are involved. New items since last year relate to vaquita conservation efforts, Mekong River dolphins in Cambodia, Indus dolphins in Pakistan, new cetacean protected areas in Bangladesh.

World Conservation Congress

The IUCN 4-yearly World Conservation Congress will be held 6-15 September 2012 in Jeju, Korea with the theme "Nature+". The programme includes three cetacean-related events: a workshop on lessons learned from the IUCN western gray whale conservation initiative, a presentation on a local population of Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphins found around Jeju Island, and a workshop on cetacean conservation and whale-watching in Africa. For further information see: www.worldconservationcongress.org.