

## **Overview of the work of the technical adviser assigned to the Secretariat in order to assist with reducing conflicts between cetaceans and marine resource users: October-May, 2012.**

*The Secretariat*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

At the 63<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission in Jersey, UK, a proposal to supply a technical expert to the Secretariat in order to assist with reducing conflicts between cetaceans and marine resource users was endorsed. The appropriate paperwork was signed in early October, and the position is scheduled to last through December, 2012, with an option to extend if parties agree. The Technical Advisor was David Mattila (USA). The brief summary of the objectives for this secondment are as follows:

The short term initiatives include:

- (1) Convene a 2nd workshop on the Welfare Issues Associated with Large Whale Entanglement;
- (2) Begin capacity building in identified countries and regions
- (3) Establish a standing group of experts who are willing to advise member countries upon request.

The long term initiatives include:

- (1) Assist member countries to undertake research in relation to entanglement;
- (2) Promote cooperative research between member countries; and
- (3) Identify experts and sources of further information, in particular for a possible workshop on preventing large whale entanglement

Additional objectives include assisting the Secretariat with aspects ship strike mitigation and represent the IWC in appropriate venues, including:

- (1) Assist with outreach and on the ship strike issue and database
- (2) Work with experts and the data review group to help define criteria for determining ship strikes
- (3) Represent the IWC in appropriate venues

### **2. WORK ACCOMPLISHED**

Mattila did convene the 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop on Welfare Associated with Large Whale Entanglement, which was held in Provincetown (USA), October, 2011. This workshop included all directors of national entanglement response networks, and they were able to reach consensus on: principles and guidelines for entanglement response; and a strategy and a curriculum for capacity building (IWC/64/WKM&AWRep1, Annex E and F). The group, which includes virtually all individuals with experience in safely responding to entangled whales (Table 1), agreed to form a standing group to advise IWC member countries, convened by Mattila.

TABLE 1

#### **NATIONAL ENTANGLEMENT RESPONSE NETWORKS**

Australian Large Whale Disentanglement Networks (DEC, Australia)	(Doug Coughran)
Department of Conservation (DOC, New Zealand)	(Mike Morrissey)
National Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program (NOAA, USA)	(Teri Rowles)
South African Whale Disentanglement Network (DEA, South Africa)	(Mike Meyer)

#### **REGIONAL NETWORKS (in National Networks)**

British Columbia Marine Mammal Response Network (DFO, Canada)	(Paul Cottrell)
California Large Whale Disentanglement Network (NOAA, USA)	(Sarah Wilkin)
Hawaiian Large Whale Entanglement Response Network (NOAA, USA)	(Ed Lyman)
Atlantic Large Whale Disentanglement Network (NOAA, USA)	(Jamison Smith)

#### **KEY LOCAL RESPONDERS**

Marine Animal Entanglement Response (PCCS, New England, USA,):	(Scott Landry)
Marine Mammal Center (Northern California, USA)	(Frances Gulland)
Whale Release and Stranding (Newfoundland, Canada):	(Wayne Ledwell)

Using the consensus strategy and curriculum developed by this group, the Mattila conducted various levels of training and capacity building for over 130 stranding responders, researchers, veterinarians and government representatives in Argentina and Brazil (see IWC/64/WKM&AWI 11 for detail).

The TA also represented the IWC at several workshops and conferences, including the **Second International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas**, by chairing a panel and giving two presentations on entanglement (Plenary and workshop) and highlighting the IWC ship strike database. The conference was hosted by the French Agency for Marine Protected Areas, 7-11 November, 2011 on the Island of Martinique, with numerous other sponsors. The executive summary was submitted to the IWC (SC/64/O1), and the full proceedings are available through the website, [www.ICMMPA.org](http://www.ICMMPA.org). Mattila also gave an invited key presentation at an **International symposium on the marine mammal protected areas**, in Busan, Korea, 14 February, 2012.

In addition Mattila represented the IWC at the following five workshops:

- 1) **Workshop on Techniques for Reducing Marine Mammal-Gillnet Bycatch**, Woods Hole, MA USA October 17-20, 2011
- 2) **Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team Meeting**, Providence, RI, USA, January 9-13, 2012
- 3) **Criteria and Case Definitions for Human Originated Cause of Death, Proximate or Contributing Cause of Death for: Vessel, Fishing and Gunshot Trauma in Stranded Cetaceans and Pinnipeds**, Woods Hole, MA, USA February 1-2, 2012
- 4) **Southern California Marine Mammal Workshop**, Newport, CA, USA, February 3-4, 2012
- 5) **UNEP-CEP-SPAW Inter-Regional Workshop on Broad-Scale Marine Spatial Planning and Transboundary Marine Mammal Management**, Panama City, Panama, 21-24 May, 2012

Costs of attending all conferences and workshops were provided by the hosts, not the Secretariat. Participation in workshops 1) and 2) was primarily to gather information and determine the utility of a future IWC workshop on preventing large whale entanglement. Participation in 3) and 4) was, in part, related to IWC ship strike work. Participation in workshop 5) was related to both entanglement and ship strike, as these were the two primary human activities discussed in relation to the wider Caribbean region. Mattila also worked on promoting cooperative research between member countries, in several ways, most notably by working closely with the Chair of the Scientific Committee to assist a Korean scientist to visit for a year at NOAA NMFS NEFSC, Woods Hole, USA.

### 3. UPCOMING WORK

As recommended by the experts at the Provincetown workshop, Mattila has worked with the Commissioners from delegations from Argentina and Brazil, and other appropriate authorities, in order to identify and arrange for key candidates from those countries to undertake apprenticeships with an established response network and scientists studying whale entanglement. Mattila will oversee these apprenticeships and will continue to work with the expert group and the Secretariat in order to provide professional training and advice through the new website, and further training workshops. With regard to the latter, Mattila has worked with several Commissioners, the Secretariat and other IGOs (e.g. UNEP-SPAW) in order to arrange workshops for SPAW signatory nations and interested parties in Central America. It is planned that these will take place in November and December. In addition, Mattila will provide a seminar and engage with government representatives about IWC initiatives at the upcoming annual meeting of the Secretariat of the Pacific Region Environmental Programs, and will continue to assist the ship strike database and investigate the utility of an IWC workshop on the prevention of whale entanglements.

### 4. REFERENCES

- IWC/64/WKM&AWRep1, 2011. *Report of the Second Workshop on Welfare Issues Associated with the Entanglement of Large Whales, with a Focus on Entanglement Response*, Submitted to the 64<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the International whaling Commission, Panama City, Panama.
- Mattila, 2012. *Summary of capacity building activities provided by the IWC to: Argentina and Brazil, March, 2012*, IWC/64/WKM&AWI 11, Submitted to the 64<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the International whaling Commission, Panama City, Panama.
- Hoyt, 2012. *Summary Report of the Second International Conference on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (ICMMPA 2), Martinique, 7-11 November 2011*, SC/64/O1. Submitted to the 64<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the International whaling Commission, Panama City, Panama.