



International  
Whaling  
Commission

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CIRCULAR COMMUNICATION TO COMMISSIONERS AND CONTRACTING GOVERNMENTS  
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**Summary of Resolutions and other decisions arising from the 63rd Annual Meeting of the International Whaling Commission, 11-14 July 2011, Jersey**

This Circular Communication provides an initial summary of the Resolutions, decisions and actions arising from the Commission and Sub-committee meetings held from 5-14 July 2011. Participants should refer to the Chair's report of the Annual Meeting (when it becomes available in due course) or the adopted reports of the individual Sub-committee meetings for a full account of these outcomes.

In addition to the actions listed below, the Commission adopted the report of the Scientific Committee which contained many recommendations and actions relating to the Commission's scientific work programme. The Chair of the Scientific Committee and the Head of Science will prepare a document in the near future giving a list of intersessional tasks and workshops to be undertaken by the Scientific Committee.

**1. Resolutions:**

The Commission agreed, by consensus, the following Resolutions:

- Resolution 2011-1 on Improving the Effectiveness of Operations within the International Whaling Commission. This resolution included the following actions:
  - a) The adoption of a package of amendments to the Commission's Rules of Procedure and its Financial Regulations (see Circular Communication IWC.ALL.164 of 27 July for further details).
  - b) A request to the Secretary to report 100 days before the Commission's 64th Annual Meeting on potential options for providing assistance to member governments with limited means to participate actively in the Commission's work, while retaining consistency with the Convention.
  - c) A request to the Scientific Committee to continue its practice of reviewing its operations and Rules of Procedure.
  - d) A request to the Secretary to convene a working group of Contracting Governments and observers immediately prior to IWC/64 in 2012 to consider the role of observers at Commission meetings based on experience gained at IWC/63 in 2011.
  - e) A request to include a regular item on effectiveness of IWC operations on the Commission's agenda to ensure the rules and procedures are kept up to date and in line with international best practice.
- Resolution 2011-2 on Safety at Sea.

These Resolutions have been placed on the Commission's website in accordance with the updated Rule of Procedure O.2.

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Secretary: Dr. Simon Brockington

## **2. Other actions arising:**

### **Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling**

With regard to Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling, the Commission agreed to:

- Establish a small working group to identify and consider any unresolved ASW issues with a view to suggesting short and long term ways forward at IWC/64 in 2012.

### **Whale Killing Methods and Associated Welfare Issues**

With regard to its work on Whale Killing Methods and Associated Welfare Issues, the Commission agreed to:

- Establish a package of short and long term measures to improve welfare issues related to the entanglement of large whales (see Appendix 4 of IWC/63/Rep 6).
- Establish an IWC voluntary fund to assist with the cost of these actions.

### **Conservation**

Time constraints prevented the Commission from giving full and proper consideration to the Conservation Committee's report (IWC/63/Rep 5). Because of this the Commission adopted the Committee's report but deferred full discussion of the items until next year. The adoption of the report included the following decisions and actions:

- Endorsement of the report of the joint IWC – ACCOBAMS workshop and two year work plan for reducing mortality from ship strikes.
- Endorsement of the proposed strategic plan for whalewatching (2011-2016), while noting that some aspects need to be formally reviewed by the Scientific Committee before final adoption.
- Endorsement of new terms of reference for the Standing Working Group on Whalewatching including the Scientific Committee's views on expanded membership of the Standing Working Group on Whalewatching.
- Endorsement of the establishment of a small working group on Conservation Management Plans.
- Endorsement of terms of reference for the small working group on Conservation Management Plans.
- Endorsement of funding principles for the management of voluntary funds for Conservation Management Plans.
- Endorsement of a Scientific Committee recommendation to allow improved communication between the Scientific Committee and the Conservation Committee on a case by case basis.
- With regard to marine debris, the Commission agreed to (1) endorse the Honolulu Commitment; (2) establish a standing item on marine debris on the Conservation Committee agenda and (3) request the Scientific Committee continue reviewing potential threats to cetaceans arising from marine debris.

### **Finance and Administration**

The Commission adopted the report of the Finance and Administration Committee meeting (IWC/63/Rep 2) held on 7 July and agreed the following recommendations:

- To separate, in principle, the meetings of the Scientific Committee and Commission by a period of 100 days or longer from 2013 onwards. Concerns over the confidentiality of the Scientific Committee report, and of the potential for other scientific analyses to be undertaken during the intersessional period were dealt with as part of a package of measures put forward under Resolution 2011-1.
- A drafting group to be established to present proposals to IWC/64 in 2012 for enabling the Commission to meet every two years from 2012 onwards. This group will focus on developing options for the establishment of a Standing Committee to guide the implementation and delivery of the Commission's work during the two year intersessional period. The group will also examine any further issues relating to moving to biennial meeting frequency (See IWC/63/Rep 7 for fuller account).

- The Finance and Administration Committee considered a series of changes to the Commission's rules and procedures, including its financial regulations. These were implemented through adoption of Resolution 2011-1 on Improving the Effectiveness of Operations within the International Whaling Commission (see above).
- In relation to a study on carbon neutrality, the Secretariat proposed to present a report to IWC/64 on the possibility for the Commission to move to a paper free way of working.
- The work of the Intersessional Correspondence Group on strengthening IWC financing would continue subject to updated terms of reference. As part of this, the F&A Committee noted the need for a clear set of priorities to be developed for considering projects for external funding.
- The Commission agreed a budget which would result in no increase in overall expenditure compared to the 2010/11 level.
- The Commission agreed to a proposal from the USA to provide technical support to the IWC in the area of reducing conflicts between cetaceans and marine resource users.

### **3. Elections**

With regard to elections, the Commission:

- Agreed that elections for the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission would be held by postal ballot.
- Agreed that Alexandre De Lichtervelde (Belgium) would become Vice-Chair of the Conservation Committee.
- Agreed that the USA would fill the vacant role on the Advisory Committee.
- Agreed that Switzerland would take on the role of Chair of the Budgetary Sub-committee, and the USA will become Vice-chair role of the Budgetary Sub-committee. The UK agreed to fill the open seat on this Sub-committee.

### **4. Next meeting**

On date and place of next meeting, the Commission:

- Gratefully accepted the offer from the Government of Panama to host IWC/64 in Panama City from 11 June to 6 July 2012. Further details will be circulated shortly.

A full summary of the outcomes, decisions and required actions arising from the 63rd Annual Meeting will be provided with the Chair's report of the meeting in due course.

Simon Brockington  
Secretary to the Commission

c.c. Intergovernmental Organisation observers to the IWC