



International
Whaling
Commission

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Meeting Procedures at IWC65

I would like to extend a warm welcome to all delegates who are planning to attend the International Whaling Commission's 65th Meeting in Slovenia this year.

This is the first time the Commission has met on a biennial cycle, and also the first time that the planning for the meeting has benefited from the support of a Bureau. This means that there will be changes to some of the meeting procedures, all of which will help us complete the full range of business within the four days available.

The main changes are:

1. The order of the agenda items has been modified to focus on decision making. Items which propose an amendment to the Schedule of the International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling are placed at the start of the agenda. Following this, a new item 'Resolutions' has been introduced to allow early discussions on all draft Resolutions. Other items follow in a similar order to previous meetings.
2. The items will be heard in the same order that they are presented on the agenda. In due course I will establish draft timings to show on what day, and at what time we expect each item to be opened.
3. The Bureau's advice is that the purpose of the Sub-committee meetings is to provide time for a greater level of debate and to forward recommendations for decision to plenary. To avoid repetition the Bureau advised the Chair to allocate less time for plenary debate where material had already been covered in Sub-committee and to focus plenary discussions on items which require the Commission to take a decision.
4. The Secretariat has already circulated the reports of the Scientific Committee arising from its 2013 and 2014 meetings. Given the separation of the Scientific Committee meetings from the Commission, I have received advice from the Bureau that discussion on individual agenda items should move directly to Commissioner interventions without the oral summary from the Chair of the Scientific Committee.

As Chair my intention is to provide the Commission with an opportunity to endorse all Scientific Committee recommendations under relevant agenda items. To help this process a complete list of recommendations arising from both the 2013 and 2014 meetings will be made available by the Chair of the Scientific Committee prior to the opening of IWC65.

Contracting Governments are invited to submit any advance questions relating to the advice or recommendations from the Scientific Committee. Queries can be submitted to the Secretariat who will forward them to the Chair of the Scientific Committee for response.

5. A new item has been introduced towards the end of the agenda to formally adopt all recommendations arising from all sub-committees.

6. A document summarising the outcomes, decisions and required actions will be provided to plenary for adoption at the end of the meeting.
7. And finally the Chair will make a closing statement

At the time of writing the Commission has received three proposals for Schedule amendments, up to seven draft Resolutions and several proposals to update the Commissions' Rules of Procedure and Financial Regulations. The duration of IWC65 is shorter than for previous Commission meetings and consequently time available for debate will be at a premium.

Therefore the Bureau have advised Sub-committees to work towards the development of consensus recommendations wherever possible. If time has been allocated to discussions during Sub-committee my intention is to move quickly towards decision making during plenary rather than repeating debate which has already been heard at Sub-committee.

With this in mind, I encourage all Commissioners to attend all relevant Sub-committee meetings. The overall shortening of IWC65 should assist Commissioners and Contracting Governments in attending for the entire duration of the meeting.

It is extremely positive to see so many important and well considered documents coming forwards for discussion and potential agreement. Together they speak to a strong commitment for collaborative international working through the IWC. I am looking forward to meeting everyone later this year in Slovenia.



Jeannine Compton-Antoine
Chair, International Whaling Commission

c.c. Intergovernmental Organisation observers to the IWC