

SC/66a/Rep/2

Report of the Planning Meeting for the
2015 IWC-POWER Cruise in the North
Pacific

International Whaling Commission



INTERNATIONAL
WHALING COMMISSION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Planning Meeting was held at the Shinagawa campus of Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, Tokyo, from 11-12 October 2014.

The Planning Meeting finalised details for the forthcoming IWC-POWER cruise to be held from 2 July – 30 August 2015 including transit from and to Japan, using a research vessel, which will be the same type as in the previous cruises (e.g. the *Yushin-Maru No. 3*), kindly provided by Japan. This will be the sixth cruise under the successful international IWC-POWER programme. The proposed plan is given in Fig.1 and will cover waters from 170°E to 160°W between 40°N and 30°N; some 42 days will be available in the research area. As the cruise will partly cover the US Marine National Monument ‘Papahānaumokuākea,’ which requires extra permitting, a backup plan to cover the proposed 2016 area to the east of the proposed 2015 area, was also developed in case permits cannot be arranged in time.

The cruise will *inter alia* provide: (a) information for the proposed *Implementation Review* of Bryde’s whales in terms of both abundance and stock structure; (b) baseline information on distribution, stock structure and abundance for a poorly known area for cetaceans, including those that were known to have been depleted in the past but whose status is unclear; (c) essential information for the development of the medium-long term international programme in the North Pacific in order to meet the Commission’s long-term objectives.

Data collection will focus upon abundance estimation using line-transect data (including use of ‘Independent Observer’ mode to investigate whether $g(0)$, the number of whales seen on the trackline, can be assumed to be 1 for Bryde’s whales), biopsy sampling and photo-identification studies.

A number of tasks to be completed prior to the cruise were identified including application for permits, final choice of researchers (Koji Matsuoka of Japan has been nominated as Cruise Leader), updating of Guidelines for Researchers and obtaining necessary equipment including biopsy darts and improved equipment for angle and distance experiments. Appropriate deadlines and responsible persons were identified.

The Planning Meeting was held at the Shinagawa campus of Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, Tokyo, from 11-12 October 2014. The list of participants is given as Annex A.

1. OPENING REMARKS AND WELCOMING ADDRESS

Kato (as convenor) and Uoya (on behalf of the Fisheries Agency of Japan) welcomed participants to Tokyo and to the meeting.

Uoya noted that the fifth annual IWC-POWER cruise using a vessel provided by Japan had been completed successfully at the end of August 2014 and that valuable information had been obtained. He expressed sincere appreciation to the international researchers involved and the crew members of the research vessel, *Yushin Maru* No 3, for their hard work. The cruise and programme will contribute to the conservation and management of cetaceans in the North Pacific. He drew special attention to the fact that thanks to the persistent cooperative efforts by both the USA and Japan to solve CITES-related issues, skin biopsy samples had been collected in the US EEZ for the first time under IWC-POWER cruises. That success shows that POWER has inherited the good tradition of international cooperation from the predecessor programme, IDCR/SOWER; Uoya sincerely hoped that such a tradition would last as long as possible. Currently, budgetary and other situations surrounding whale research programmes, including this one, are very difficult in Japan, but it is his Agency's intention to continue its financial contribution to this valuable collaborative survey programme. He urged the meeting to keep in mind that good research resulting from good research plans would assist in efforts to continue the financial contribution to the programme. He wished all participants a fruitful planning meeting and a pleasant stay in Tokyo.

On behalf of the IWC, Donovan thanked the meeting organisers for the customary excellent facilities and hospitality, and particularly for the official welcoming function on 10 October. He echoed Uoya's remarks on the value of the IWC-POWER programme. The IWC-POWER cruises were extremely important to the IWC as well as to Japan; clearly a considerable amount of very valuable information was accruing, and the programme continues to provide an excellent example of international cooperation. He looked forward to a successful planning meeting for the 2015 cruise and ultimately valuable results to assist in the medium-term planning process. Finally, in order to meet the agreed long-term goals of the Commission expeditiously, he reminded participants that it was very important to try to involve more countries in the programme, in terms of researchers, analysts and vessels.

The ship's crew, for logistical reasons, was represented at this meeting only by Mr Tsunekawa of Kyodo Senpaku Co. Ltd. At this time of year it is difficult for crew members to attend; for example, this year the meeting conflicts with a Seaman's Congress at Shimonoseki. The meeting noted that while this was not a problem for this planning meeting, a sufficient number of crew members should be present if at all possible when there is a need to discuss the practical details of the medium-term programme; the Steering Group will indicate when this is the case well in advance of any such meeting so that suitable dates can be arranged.

The meeting was saddened that Dr Seiji Ohsumi, a long-term and greatly respected member of the planning meeting, was unable to attend this year through illness. It was agreed that a message wishing him a speedy recovery should be sent.

2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND RAPORTEURS

Kato was elected Chair. Bannister agreed to act as rapporteur, with assistance from Donovan and Matsuoka. Donovan agreed to coordinate final preparation of the report.

3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agreed Agenda is given as Annex B.

4. ORGANISATION OF MEETING

Kato thanked the organisers for providing such excellent facilities. Yamada outlined the arrangements for the meeting including the provision of a wireless internet connection.

5. REVIEW OF AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS

Documents available are listed in Annex C.

6. REVIEW OF DISCUSSIONS AT IWC/65B AND TAG REPORTS

Donovan reported on the successful Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting that was held during the preceding three days (SC/66a/Rep01). The focus of that meeting was on the completion of the short-term part of IWC-POWER and the work required to develop the long-term programme. Matters of direct relevance to the 2015 cruise are dealt with under the relevant agenda items below.

The meeting's attention was drawn to the discussions in the Scientific Committee this year (IWC/65/Rep01(2014)), in particular on preparations for an in-depth assessment of North Pacific sei whales (*ibid.*

item 10.5) and International Cruises (*ibid* item 10.13). Matters of direct relevance to the 2015 cruise are again dealt with under the relevant agenda items below.

7. PRELIMINARY RESULTS FROM THE 2014 CRUISE

Matsuoka spoke to the report of the 2014 cruise originally drafted on the return journey on board the research vessel. The cruise had taken place between 2 July and 30 August 2014, on the Japanese Research Vessel R/V *Yushin-Maru No 3*, with four researchers on board, two from Japan, one from the USA and one from the USA/UK. The research area was in the central North Pacific, north of 30°N, south of 40°N, between 170°E and 160°W (see Fig. 1). The weather was generally good. Survey coverage was 83.4%; a total of 3,233 n.miles was surveyed in Passing with abeam closing mode (NSP). Additionally, 234.9 and 293.2 n.miles were surveyed in transit to and from the research area respectively.

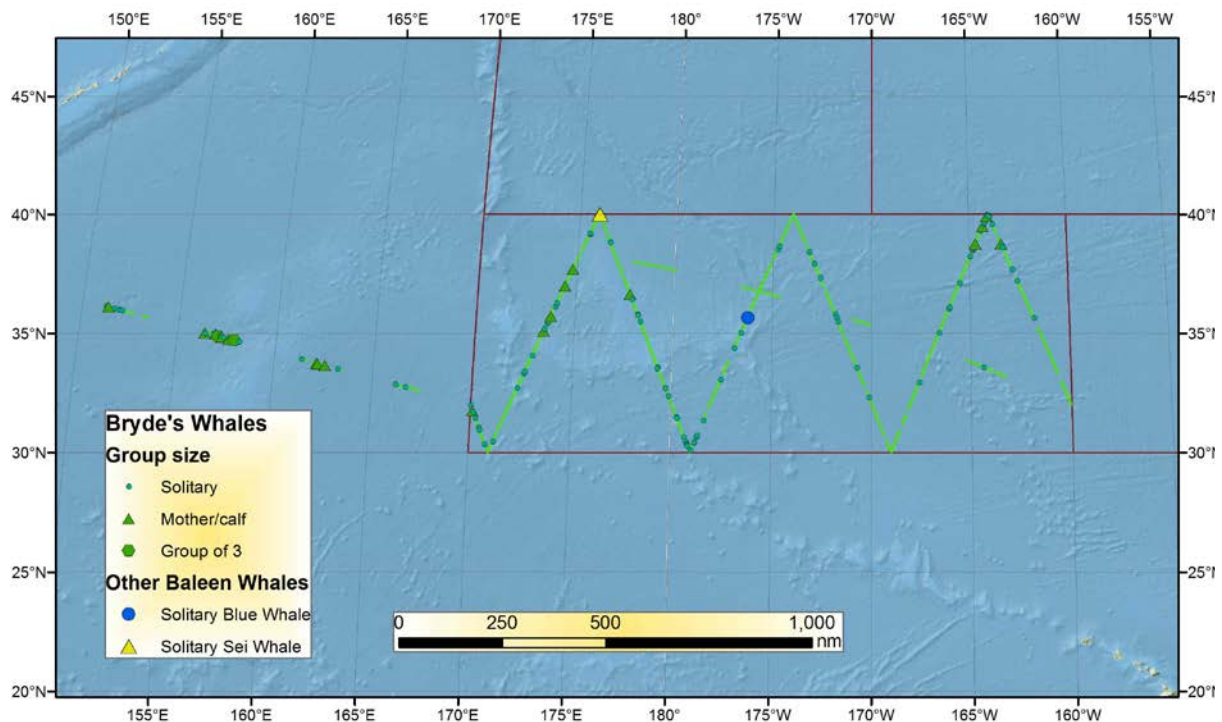


Fig. 1. Map of the 2014 cruise showing the realised cruise track (including effort on transit) and the sightings of baleen whales.

Twelve cetacean species were seen, as well as some identified only to genus (Mesoplodonts, Ziphiids). Bryde's (118 schools/140 individuals) and sperm whales (78/155) were the most frequently sighted large species. There was an unexpectedly high incidence of Bryde's whales in the eastern part of the research area, with 13 sightings within the US EEZ. Apart from one blue whale, there were no sightings of high-priority photo-identification species (humpback, North Pacific right whales) but photo-identification data for 1 blue, 69 Bryde's, 2 sperm whales, 14 Risso's dolphins and one pilot whale were obtained. A total of 80 biopsy samples was collected from 1 blue, 78 Bryde's and 1 killer whale. As in previous years the Estimated Angle and Distance Training Exercises and Experiments were completed. A total of 247 marine debris objects were observed. This, the 5th annual cruise under the POWER programme, was completed successfully, and provided important information on cetacean distribution in an area where no survey had been conducted within recent decades.

The meeting thanked Matsuoka, as Cruise Leader, the researchers and the crew, for their hard work that had made the cruise a success and congratulated Matsuoka and his colleagues on producing such a comprehensive report at relatively short notice.

It was **agreed** that a final definitive version of the cruise report would be prepared for circulation to Steering Group members for their comments, noting that final responsibility rests with the authors, before its submission to the 2015 Annual Meeting of the Scientific Committee in San Diego.

8. AVAILABILITY OF RESEARCH VESSELS

8.1 Research vessel offered by Japan

The meeting noted that the same type of vessel would be available as in 2014, e.g. the *Yushin-Maru No.3*, for a total of 60 days.

8.2 Other possibilities

At the 2012 meeting, Ohsumi had noted that covering any area to the east of that surveyed previously would be difficult if not impossible with a Japanese-based vessel because of the long transit distance. He had asked whether the US Government could provide a vessel to cover such an area. Brownell had noted that US vessel availability was always determined several years in advance. At this meeting, he reported that the next Hawaii survey will probably be not before 2017 or 2018, although US vessels will be covering areas within the US EEZ south of Hawaii in the interim.

9. PRIORITY FOR THE 2015 CRUISE

The meeting confirmed that the 2015 cruise objectives would be broadly the same as in previous years, taking into account the likely species mix within the research area. The cruise will focus on the collection of line transect data and biopsy/photo-identification data; this will make a valuable contribution to the work of the Scientific Committee on the management and conservation of populations of large whales in the North Pacific. Information on common minke whales will, however, be limited as the survey will continue in sea states up to 5 which, while acceptable for the other large whales (see also the discussion under Item 12.2), means that many common minke whale sightings will be missed. The cruise will provide:

- (a) information for the proposed *Implementation Review* of Bryde's whales in terms of both abundance and stock structure;
- (b) baseline information on distribution, stock structure and abundance for a poorly known area for several large whale species/populations and small cetaceans, including those that were known to have been depleted in the past but whose status is unclear;
- (c) essential information for the development of the medium-long term international programme in the North Pacific in order to meet the Commission's long-term objectives.

10. REVIEW OF THE BUDGET

The meeting **agreed** that it would assume the same level of Japanese Government funding for the 2015 cruise as for 2014.

The detailed budget for expenditure of Commission funds for the next two cruises is provided as Annex D. Donovan noted the importance of the POWER programme to the Scientific Committee and the Commission.

11. CRUISE PLAN

11.1 Priorities and allocation of research effort

The broad priorities for 2015 are given under Item 9. Given the available period of 60 days – the maximum operational period of the vessel without refuelling/resupply - 42 days would be available for survey.

It was **agreed** that for the 2015 survey, the target distance per day allocated to the line-transect component should be 70 n.miles, i.e. a total of 2,890 n.miles. This will allow around five days for biopsy sampling, photo-identification and the angle and distance experiments.

11.2 Itinerary

As has been the case since 2012, to minimise transit time and thus maximise research time, the home port will be Shioyama. The itinerary is shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Itinerary for the 2015 IWC-POWER cruise.

Date	Event
2 July 2015	Vessel departs Shioyama, northern Japan
9 July 2015	Vessel arrives at the research area start point at 170° 00'E
18 August 2015	Vessel completes the research at 160° 00'W
30 August 2015	Vessel arrives Shioyama

11.3 Research area

The research area agreed by the Committee is shown in Fig. 2a. In addition, due to the logistical difficulties discussed under Item 12.1, Fig. 2b also shows the area for 2016 which is proposed as a backup area for 2015 should that become necessary.

11.4 Research vessel

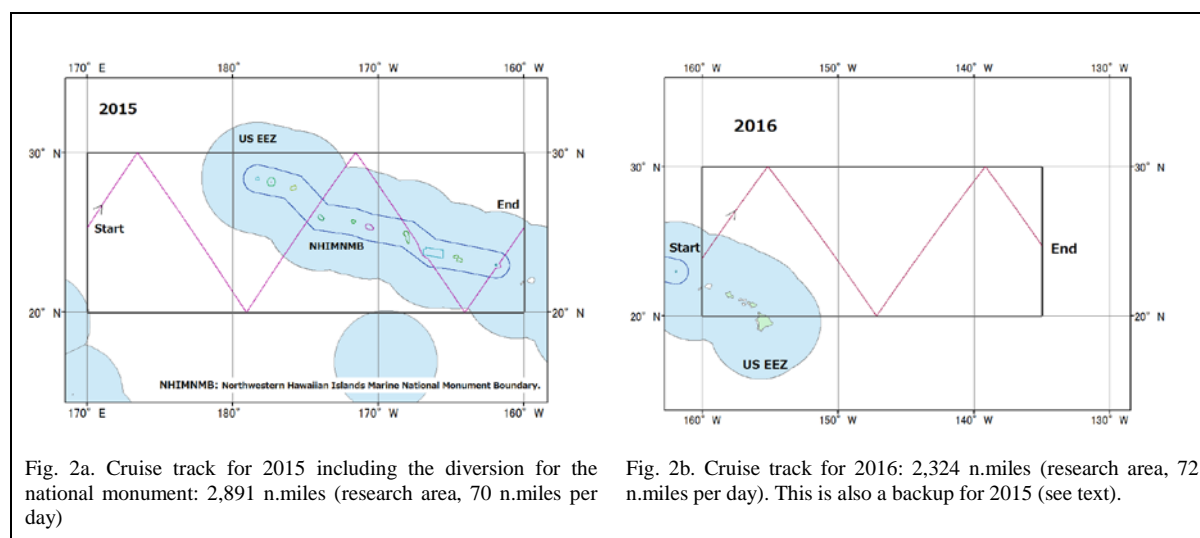
The *Yushin-Maru No. 3* or a similar vessel will again be available. Its specifications are given in Table 2. The vessel has proved to be a good sightings platform as well as of suitable manoeuvrability for efficient biopsy sampling/photo-identification work.

11.5. Other matters

There were no matters to discuss under this item.

Table 2
Specifications for *Yushin-Maru No. 3*.

Call sign	7JCH	Barrel height	19.5m
Length overall	69.61m	Upper bridge height	11.5m
Moulded breadth	10.80m	Bow height	6.5m
Gross tonnage	742	Engine power	5280/3900(PS/kW)



12. DETAILS OF THE CRUISE

12.1 Cruise track design

The survey area will be treated as a single stratum. Cruise track design (see Fig. 2) was undertaken using 'Distance' software, following the IWC guidelines and the TAG report recommendation. The randomly selected start point will be along longitude 170°00'W proceeding eastwards to 160° 00'W, based on 70 n.miles/day (see Item 11.2).

The meeting recognised that there are practical and logistical difficulties arising out of the fact that the proposed trackline would pass through an important US Marine National Monument area, 'Papahānaumokuākea', in the north western region of the Hawaiian Island Chain, for which a permit would be needed to enter. Its waters contain numerous reefs and islands, and are dangerous, and include a specially protected area near French Frigate Shoals. In order to minimise unnecessary risks, modifications to the revised trackline are indicated on Fig. 2a.

Given potential difficulties arising out of time constraints in obtaining the necessary permits for the Monument, the meeting **agreed** that a backup plan should be developed: i.e. reversing the order for the proposed 2015 and 2016 cruises. Increased transit times for the backup plan would result in only 32 research days being available covering 2,324 n.miles, departing and returning on 2 July and 30 August, respectively (Table 1).

The meeting recognised the urgent need to consult the US State Department on the permit situation as soon as possible. In addition to Japanese efforts in this regard, the IWC will write to the appropriate US authorities following advice from Brownell.

12.2 Survey mode and research hours

As for previous surveys, activities onboard the ship are classified into two principal groups: on-effort and off-effort. On-effort activities are times when full search effort is being executed and conditions (such as weather and sea conditions) are within acceptable parameters to conduct research. Off-effort activities are all activities that are not on-effort. All sightings recorded while the ship is on-effort are classified as primary sightings. All other

sightings are secondary sightings. All 'off-effort' sightings are recorded as they contribute useful information on distribution even though they are not suitable for abundance estimation.

As before, in the survey area a maximum of 12 hours per day is available for survey, during the period from one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset. Sighting effort is conducted by the two primary observers; researchers and the Chief Engineer or deputies are also present. Primary search effort is only conducted in acceptable weather conditions. These conditions are used as guidelines; in some circumstances, less severe conditions may still be inappropriate for search effort (see below). Following advice from the Scientific Committee and the TAG, the 2015 survey will alternate modes between NSP and IO mode (*ca* every 50 n.miles).

Details of photo-identification and biopsy work are given under Items 12.8 and 12.9.

In transit, the research day will begin 30 minutes after sunrise and end 30 minutes before sunset, with a maximum of a 12 hour research day. Time-zone changes will be in 30 minute intervals, coming into effect at midnight. In transit, and at the Cruise Leader's discretion, as much IO mode effort will be undertaken as possible, to try to ensure that a sufficient sample size is obtained to allow $g(0)$ for Bryde's whales to be estimated.

12.3 Number of crew on effort

As in 2013, two topmen will observe from the barrel at all times in passing mode. Two primary observers will be in the barrel whenever full searching effort using reticle binoculars and angle board is conducted. Two primary observers (Captain and helmsman) will be at the upper bridge with binoculars with reticles, regardless of the research mode. Also present on the upper bridge, whenever the sighting survey is conducted, will normally be the Chief Engineer (or an alternate). With four researchers on board, the Cruise Leader should ensure that the number of researchers searching from the Upper Bridge is standardised. In IO mode, there would be an additional person in the IO platform.

12.4 Navigation and research speeds

As in 2014, 11.5 knots (through the water) will be maintained during research. It was noted that in conditions of heavy swell, searching speed might have to be reduced.

12.5 Acceptable weather conditions

The usual guidelines will apply, i.e. visibility (in principle for seeing common minke whales) >2.0 n.miles; wind speed <21 knots; sea state < Beaufort 6. As noted earlier, these conditions are not suitable to reliably see common minke whales (which is not a priority species – see Table 2 of SC/66a/Rep01) but are sufficient for the other large whale species; the IO experiment is being undertaken to examine whether $g(0)$ is significantly less than one for Bryde's whales.

The meeting noted that while fog is unlikely, glare may pose more of a problem in these southern research areas. It was **agreed** that it is important to continue to collect good glare data, recognising that appropriate analytical techniques to incorporate this information into abundance estimates are still being developed. The meeting noted that if glare was a concern immediately ahead, a zigzag course would be adopted.

12.6 Estimated angle and distance experiment

The TAG had discussed this matter and repeats its recommendations of last year regarding improvements that had not been incorporated into the 2014 survey for practical reasons (SC/66a/Rep01). The meeting **agreed** that efforts to implement these important recommendations (that are also relevant to the development of the medium-term plans) should begin immediately. It was **agreed** that the intersessional 'practical logistics' group should be retained, consisting of Donovan, Matsuoka, Miyashita and Palka, to report to the Scientific Committee at its 2015 meeting on a protocol for these experiments to be undertaken on the 2015 cruise.

The improvements are:

- (1) use of relatively inexpensive GPS technology (less than \$200 for a waterproof tough model) on the buoy to improve detectability (a) at greater distances and (b) in more realistic sea/weather conditions than may be possible using the present radar system;
- (2) use of two or more buoys which can (a) reduce the potential lack of independence with one buoy with the correct experimental protocols and (b) allow increased efficiency which will assist when having a greater distance range and when including researchers as well as the crew in the experiment (multi-buoy experiments have been successfully conducted in the North Atlantic).

With respect to the additional buoy, the meeting suggested that perhaps a smaller buoy than the one currently used (to simulate a whale's body rather than the blow) could be provided on the vessel.

12.7. Data format

The TAG (SC/66a/Rep01) discussed improvements to the data forms related to:

- (a) use of paper forms;
- (b) codes for 'unidentified' whales; and
- (c) guidelines for equipment and use of the IWC database for photo-identification studies.

It was **agreed** that Donovan and Matsuoka should update the Guidelines for Researchers accordingly.

12.8 Biopsy sampling

12.8.1 Priority of species

As appropriate for the research area and decided by the Cruise Leader, research time will be given for biopsy sampling of Bryde's, sei, common minke, blue, humpback, gray and fin whales (bowhead and North Pacific right whales are unlikely to be seen south of 40°N) with higher priority for Bryde's and sei whales.

12.8.2 Equipment

Biological sample collection will be by biopsy sampling (skin/blubber collected by projectile dart). Projectile biopsies will be collected using either the approved compound crossbow or Larsen gun system using darts and tips.

The meeting **agreed** that the existing protocol with respect to numbers of attempts per animal, approach methods, classes of animals that can be biopsied, etc., should remain (see the Guide for Researchers).

12.8.3 Keeping of samples

As for the 2014 cruise, it was **agreed** that all samples would be frozen and stored in cryo-vials. Samples will be split into skin and blubber (the latter not being required for genetic analysis) upon return to Japan (for CITES reasons) with one portion being retained at ICR (the Institute of Cetacean Research in Japan) and the other sent to the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC, USA) who curate the IWC samples on behalf of the IWC. Access to samples follows the usual procedure for accessing IWC samples.

12.9 Photo-identification studies

12.9.1 Priority of species

As appropriate and decided by the Cruise Leader, research time will be made available for photo-identification and/or video taping of right, blue and humpbacks as priority following the protocols in the Guide for Researchers. Killer whales may be photographed opportunistically. If the opportunity arises, females accompanied by calves may be approached for photo-identification, but efforts will cease immediately if there is any evidence that the activity may be interfering with pair bonding, nursing, reproduction, feeding or other vital functions.

12.9.2 Keeping of data

The master set of all photographs taken on the IWC-POWER cruises is kept, classified, geocoded and keyworded by the IWC Secretariat within its Adobe Lightroom database; these are copyright of the IWC. Even if researchers use their own cameras, the photographs remain the property of the IWC. All researchers wishing to examine/use the photographs must obtain formal permission from the Secretariat following the protocol available from the IWC Secretariat. The meeting **agreed** that the protocol should also be included in the Guide for Researchers, which, following the recommendations in the TAG report, will be updated by Donovan and Matsuoka.

The meeting **reiterated** that only in exceptional circumstances should researchers on the vessel send copies of photographs direct to other researchers during the cruise (e.g. where this is a condition of a permit to conduct research in national waters); formal permission must be obtained from the IWC through the Cruise Leader.

The issue of individual catalogues is discussed in the TAG report under SC/66a/Rep01 Item 7.3.2.

12.10 Acoustic studies

The meeting **agreed** that there would be no acoustic studies during the 2015 cruise.

12.11 Oceanographic studies

As in 2014, no specific oceanographic studies are planned for 2015. However the meeting noted the possibility of employing a Seaglider in 2015 thanks to the kind offer of a loan from Doug Nowacek. This was discussed by the TAG and also has implications for the medium-term programme (SC/66a/Rep01). Miyashita reported that his Institute (the Far Seas Fisheries Research Institute, NRIFFS) had been using a Seaglider for several years but with mixed results due to a number of technical faults. Donovan undertook to investigate the matter further after consultations with Nowacek and to report back in due course about the financial and practical feasibility of using this on the 2015 cruise.

12.12 Satellite tagging

No satellite tagging activities are planned for the 2015 cruise.

12.13. Other matters

12.13.1. Marine debris

The meeting reiterated the importance of observations of marine debris in non-IWC contexts such as modelling the predicted movement of debris from the 2011 Tsunami across the Pacific. The protocol adopted for recording such material (15 minutes in every hour) would continue in 2015 to prevent compromising cetacean sightings searching effort. The TAG had discussed the issue and recognised the importance of consulting with other agencies to determine their preferred data requirements (SC/66a/Rep 1; item 6.2). Palka undertook to provide the Cruise Leader with relevant information on such matters from NOAA.

13. INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS AND ALLOCATION OF RESEARCH PERSONNEL

13.1 Number of researchers

As in previous years, up to four researchers can be accommodated on the vessel.

13.2 Nomination and allocation of researchers [GREG REWRITE]

For 2015, the following framework for researcher involvement was **agreed**¹:

- (1) Japan (IWC-POWER range state, vessel provider, Matsuoka);
- (2) USA (IWC-POWER range state, US EEZ to be traversed, person to be decided);
- (3) Taylor (US/UK) who participated last year (pending final confirmation);
- (4) Yoshimura (Japan, range state) who participated last year.

Matsuoka was appointed Cruise Leader.

A reserve scientist should be sought in the event that one of the above was unable to participate for any reason. The Steering Group would take responsibility for the decision, operating by correspondence. There is a need to have the relevant researcher's name, preferably in time for inclusion in the biopsy permit submission for operations in the US EEZ.

14. GENERAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2015 CRUISE

14.1 Identification of the home port organiser

Kanda undertook to act in this capacity.

14.2 Entry and other permits

The meeting noted that the proposed 2015 cruise will include the US EEZ (around Hawaii) – but see the discussion under Item 12.1.

As during the TAG, while welcoming the excellent progress made between Japan and the USA reported last year with respect to CITES, Brownell noted that for the 2015 IWC-POWER cruise, the plan is to cover/cross about 3/4 on the Hawaiian EEZ including the new Papahānaumokuākea National Monument². An additional permit would be needed to enter and work within the Monument and there are fixed permit deadlines, 3 times per year. For activities beginning between June and August 2015, the deadline is 1 February 2015.

Brownell also noted that there is no requirement for a NOAA person to be on the cruise for biopsy samples entering and exiting the US EEZ which were collected on the High Seas. However, if biopsy samples are collected in the US EEZ it is necessary that a NOAA person be on the POWER vessel as was the case for the 2014 POWER cruise.

14.3 Review of recommendations from the 2015 cruise.

The TAG had reviewed these (SC/66a/Rep01) and agreed that Donovan and Matsuoka will update the Guidelines for Researchers accordingly.

15. IN TRANSIT SURVEY

15.1 Home port to research area and back

As for 2014, while recognising the need to move rapidly to and from the research area, the meeting **agreed** that should the opportunity arise, biopsy and photo-identification could be undertaken on right, gray and blue whales, in that order of priority. Standard passing mode would be adopted during transit, but on the return, IO mode should be attempted as much as possible, particularly if the sample size was small during the main survey (see Item 12.2).

¹ Originally it had been hoped that a Korean scientist may be able to attend but after the meeting, An informed the group that it would not be possible for a Korean scientist to participate in 2015.

² <http://www.papahānaumokuākea.gov/>

16. TRANSPORTATION OF DATA, SAMPLES AND EQUIPMENT

16.1 Equipment

It was **agreed** that the tabled equipment list be adopted as amended, and with responsibilities as indicated (see Annex D). Donovan has arranged with Larsen for the necessary darts to be obtained.

16.2 Data and samples and necessary permits

Within two months of the end of the cruise, all sightings data, validated, will be forwarded to IWC. Biopsy samples will be forwarded by NRIFS to SWFSC in La Jolla, California, in accordance with CITES provisions. Matsuoka, as Cruise Leader, will submit all identification photographs and accompanying data to IWC. Any borrowed equipment (except IWC cameras and lenses) will be returned to its owners.

16.3 Responsible persons

The Cruise Leader is responsible for submitting all sightings data and identification photographs to IWC (see Item 16.2) and all samples to NRIFS. Yoshida at NRIFS will be responsible for sending biopsy samples to SWFSC.

17. COMMUNICATIONS

17.1 Safety aspects (daily reports)

Daily vessel position reports should be submitted to ICR, NRIFS, the Fisheries Agency and Kyodo Senpaku Co Ltd.

17.2 Between the Cruise Leader and the IWC

As in previous years, weekly reports will be provided to the IWC Secretariat and members of the Steering Group. Donovan **agreed** to establish a mailing list so that one address can be used for all.

17.3 Fog and sea temperature information

It was **agreed** that fog information would not be required, otherwise the same arrangements as in 2014 would apply.

17.4. Other official communications

Given that there will be operations within the US EEZ, the same arrangements will apply as in 2014 for official communications. The US researcher would be responsible for communicating with the US authorities before entering the US EEZ, and possibly before entering the 'Monument' area. The meeting noted that reporting the vessel's position may be a condition of the permit for entry into the 'Monument' area.

17.5. Private (i.e. non-IWC-related) communication

Researchers may send and receive non-cruise related communications, including e-mails, at their own expense. Accounts must be paid by researchers before arriving at Shioyama. Payment for e-mails is required in Japanese yen by cash. Prepaid card such as the KDDI card (super world card) will be used for private voice communications. Researchers can buy this card at Shioyama city (convenience store, etc.) before departure.

18. MEETINGS

18.1 Pre-cruise meeting

A pre-cruise meeting will be held in Shioyama on 1 July 2015. In addition to the researchers and crew, at least all Japanese members of the Steering Group are encouraged to attend. The report of the pre-cruise meeting will be circulated to the IWC-POWER Steering Group when completed.

18.2 Post-cruise meeting

As in previous years, the post-cruise meeting will be held on board the vessel during the return transit leg.

18.3 Home port arrangements and responsible persons

Kanda will co-ordinate the home port arrangements in co-operation with the Cruise Leader. The shipping agent in Shioyama will be Tohoku Dock Tekko Co. Ltd.

19. REPORTS

19.1 Planning meeting report

The planning meeting report was drafted by Bannister with assistance from Donovan and circulated for comments by participants for final agreement. It will be tabled at the IWC/SC meeting in 2015.

19.2 Cruise reports

The 2014 cruise report was drafted on the return journey of the cruise following the guidelines provided by Donovan in 2012. As discussed under Item 7, that report will be circulated to the Steering Group before final preparation by the authors; the final version will be sent to the Secretariat for submission to the next IWC Scientific Committee annual meeting as in the past. The 2015 Cruise Report should be handled in the same way.

20. OTHER LOGISTICS

20.1 Press releases

As in 2014 the Cruise Leader will prepare a draft in co-ordination with the IWC Secretariat, the final version being released by ICR in the format prepared by the IWC. For domestic reasons the press releases should be available both before and after the cruise, as in 2014. Donovan reported that as last year, the IWC website will include a press release pointing to the relevant IWC-POWER cruise web page; there will regular updates of activities on the website as the cruise progresses, and a summary at the end of the cruise. See also discussion under Item 21.2.

20.2 Security

Based on previous experience, no security problems are anticipated. The IWC banner will be readily visible.

It was noted that for safety, life vests are to be worn for all activities below the bridge, during any operations on the foredeck, e.g. during biopsy.

20.3 Accommodation and food costs

The IWC will cover the accommodation and food costs for the scientists involved; the cost (¥2,500 per day) remains unchanged from previous years.

21. OTHER MATTERS

21.1 Data validation and analysis

21.1.1 Validation

Work on data validation continues at the Secretariat. Where difficulties have arisen, these are being dealt with in cooperation with the Cruise Leader.

21.1.2 Analysis

Donovan reported on discussions of wider issues in the TAG meeting (SC/66a/Rep01), noting the value of full Scientific Committee input into the analytical stages of POWER as well as the design phases.

21.2 Workplan

The Workplan is given in Table 3.

Table 3

Workplan for preparations for the 2015 IWC-POWER cruise

Deadline	Item	Responsible persons
30 November 2014	Advice on obtaining permits for research in the National Monument as well as the US EEZ and beginning of the permit application process (PAP)	Brownell/Okazoe (with assistance from Donovan if necessary)
30 November 2014	Approach to the company on improved equipment for the angle/distance experiments (ADE)	Matsuoka (with assistance from the 'practical logistics' group if necessary)
30 November 2014	Final report on possible use of 'Seaglider' for submission to 'practical logistics' group	Donovan and Nowacek (Donovan will be at Nowacek's lab from 17-19 November)
1 December 2014	Advice to 'practical logistics' group on likely/actually available equipment for the ADE	Matsuoka
1 December 2014	Update on the progress with PAP	Okazoe
6 January 2015	Final selection of researchers and reserve	Steering Group
6 January 2015	Final Guidelines for Researchers and photographic database completed (aside from ADE)	Matsuoka and Donovan
1 March 2015	Protocol for ADE agreed including text for the Guidelines for Researchers	'Practical logistics' group
31 March 2015	Final decision on appropriate research area in light of permitting information	Steering Group

22. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Kato noted that the 2016 cruise will complete the first stage of the POWER programme south of the Bering Sea. Planning for the mid-term programme will require consideration of this year's TAG report, analyses of the existing data and discussion at next year's Scientific Committee meeting (in the IA sub-committee). He also noted that this meeting had been greatly assisted by the deliberations of the TAG just beforehand which had enabled full discussion of the relevant items on the first day, allowing the rapporteurs time to draft the report on the second day.

On behalf of the IWC, Donovan thanked all those who had participated in the meeting. The IWC-POWER cruises are a particularly important component of the IWC's work. As the meeting has recognised, they are an excellent example of international collaboration. He stressed the importance of an enthusiastic and efficient crew, without whom the cruises could not succeed. He asked that the meeting's appreciation to the crew be conveyed to them. He thanked in particular the Chair and the interpreters who had performed their difficult tasks with their customary efficiency and good humour. The meeting had been facilitated both by the deliberations of the TAG and by the very good cruise report. There are many similarities between the 2014 cruise and the planned 2015 cruise. Kato thanked everyone for their co-operation and hard work.

The meeting expressed its appreciation of Kato's handling of the agenda. The meeting concluded at 16:20 hours on 11 October 2014. Immediately after the meeting the participants signed a document for forwarding to Dr Ohsumi to wish him a speedy recovery, together with a group photograph, see Item 1.

Annex A

List of Participants

Rock An	Cetacean Research Institute, Korea
John Bannister	Invited Participant
Robert Brownell	Southwest Fisheries Science Center, USA
Greg Donovan	Head of Science, IWC Secretariat
Hidehiro Kato	Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, Japan
Naohisa Kanda	Institute of Cetacean Research, Japan
Koji Matsuoka	Institute of Cetacean Research, Japan
Tomio Miyashita	National Research Institute of Far Seas Fisheries, Japan
Hiroto Murase	National Research Institute of Far Seas Fisheries, Japan
Naohito Okazoe	Fisheries Agency of Japan, MAFF, Japan
Debra Palka	Northeast Fisheries Science Center, USA.
Masaomi Tsunekawa	Kyodo Senpaku Co., Ltd., Japan
Toshinori Uoya	Fisheries Agency of Japan, MAFF, Japan
Yosuke Yamada	Fisheries Agency of Japan, MAFF, Japan
Midori Ohta	Interpreter, Japan
Hiroko Yasokawa	Interpreter, Japan

Annex B

Agenda

1. OPENING REMARKS AND WELCOMING ADDRESS
2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND RAPPORTEURES
3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
4. ORGANIZATION OF MEETING
5. REVIEW OF AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS
6. REVIEW OF DISCUSSIONS AT IWC 65b AND TAG REPORTS
7. PRELIMINARY RESULTS FROM THE 2014 CRUISE
8. AVAILABILITY OF RESEARCH VESSELS
 - 8.1 Research vessel offered by Japan
 - 8.2 Other possibilities
9. PRIORITY FOR THE 2015 CRUISE
10. REVIEW OF THE BUDGET
11. CRUISE PLAN
 - 11.1 Priorities and allocation of research effort
 - 11.2 Itinerary
 - 11.3 Research area
 - 11.4 Research vessel
 - 11.5 Other matters
12. DETAILS OF THE CRUISE
 - 12.1 Cruise track design
 - 12.2 Survey mode and research hours
 - 12.3 Number of crew on effort
 - 12.4 Navigation and research speeds
 - 12.5 Acceptable condition
 - 12.6 Estimated Angle and Distance Experiment
 - 12.7 Data format
 - 12.8 Biopsy sampling
 - 12.8.1 Priority of species
 - 12.8.2 Equipment
 - 12.8.3 Keeping of samples
 - 12.9 Photo-identification studies
 - 12.9.1 Priority of species
 - 12.9.2 Equipment
 - 12.9.3 Keeping of data
 - 12.10 Acoustic studies
 - 12.11 Oceanographic studies
 - 12.12 Satellite tagging studies
 - 12.13 Other matters
13. INTERNATIONAL RESEARCHERS AND ALLOCATION OF RESEARCH PERSONNEL
 - 13.1 Number of researchers
 - 13.2. Nomination and allocation of researchers
14. GENERAL PREPARATIONS FOR THE 2015 CRUISE
 - 14.1 Identification of home port organiser
 - 14.2 Entry and other permits
 - 14.3 Review of recommendations from the 2014 cruise
15. IN TRANSIT SURVEY
 - 15.1 Home port to research area and back
16. TRANSPORTATION OF DATA, SAMPLES AND EQUIPMENT
 - 16.1 Equipment
 - 16.2 Data and samples and necessary Permits
 - 16.3 Responsible persons
17. COMMUNICATIONS
 - 17.1. Safety aspects (daily report)
 - 17.2 Between Cruise Leader and IWC
 - 17.3 Weather and sea temperature information
 - 17.4 Other official communication
 - 17.5 Private communications
 - 17.6 Terms of payment of communication cost
18. MEETINGS
 - 18.1 Pre-cruise Meeting
 - 18.2 Post-cruise Meeting
 - 18.3 Home Port arrangements
 - 18.4 Responsible persons
19. REPORTS
 - 19.1 Planning meeting report
 - 19.2 Cruise report
20. OTHER LOGISTICS
 - 20.1 Press release
 - 20.2 Security
 - 20.3 Accommodation and food costs
 - 20.4 Other matters
21. OTHER
 - 21.1 Data validation and analysis
 - 21.2 IWC website
22. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Annex C

List of documents

POWER/15/WP

1. Report of the planning meeting for the 2014 IWC-POWER Cruise (SC/65b/Rep01).
2. SC/65b reports (SC report extracts)
3. SC/65b/Annex G (Appendix)
4. Cruise report of the 2014 IWC-Pacific Ocean Whale and Ecosystem Research (IWC-POWER).
5. Summary of the IWC-POWER surveys (2010-2014)
6. Proposal for the 2015 IWC-POWER (SC/65b/IA11).
7. Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument (map)
8. Required equipment for the 2015 IWC-POWER.
9. Proposed track design for 2015 IWC-POWER.
10. TAG 2014 Meeting Report (SC/66a/Rep01)