



Circular Communication to Commissioners, Contracting Governments
and Members of the Scientific Committee
IWC.ALL.240

IWC Contribution to United Nations Secretary General's Report

The IWC has been invited to submit a contribution to the forthcoming Secretary General's report on oceans and law of the sea. As explained in the attached invitation, this report is prepared pursuant to the General Assembly's draft resolution A/70/L.22, also entitled 'Oceans and Law of the Sea'.

This year the report will focus on the topic of marine debris, plastics and microplastics. The IWC added the topic of marine debris to its agenda at IWC63 in 2011 and has since convened two expert workshops on the subject.

The first workshop, held at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in May 2013 investigated and compiled scientific evidence of the effects of marine plastic debris on cetaceans.

The second workshop took place in August 2014 and explored how the IWC can engage with existing international and regional efforts on the management of marine debris.

The recommendations from both workshops were endorsed by the Commission at IWC65 in 2014.

Following from the attached invitation, I will now proceed to work with the Chair of the Conservation Committee, the Chair of the Scientific Committee and the convenor of the two expert workshops to prepare a draft report for submission to the UN Department of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea.

The report will highlight the findings and recommendations from the two expert workshops and the associated recommendations from the IWC's Scientific and Conservation Committees.

To ensure transparency I will circulate the draft report to the Commission in mid-January prior to submission to DOALOS. However, please be advised that timescales for comment will be short because the deadline for submission is 21 January 2016.

In the meantime, any Contracting Government wishing to contribute to the preparation of the IWC's submission should contact secretariat@iwc.int

Simon Brockington
Executive Secretary

c.c. Accredited observers to the IWC