

Update on IWC Cooperation with other Organisations

Submitted by the Secretariat

This document should be read in conjunction with IWC/66/04(2015) and IWC/66/04(2016) rev1 which provide observer reports from attendance at other meetings.

Proposals in this paper take account of relevant recommendations from the 2015 and 2016 Scientific Committee meetings (IWC/66/Rep01 (2015) and IWC/66/Rep01 (2016) as well as those of the joint Scientific Committee-Conservation Working Group (IWC/66/CCRep02 and IWC/66/CCRep04).

INTRODUCTION

The Commission and its subgroups have frequently noted the importance of cooperation with other intergovernmental organisations (IGOs) in order to progress the work of the IWC and have made recommendations for strengthening engagement with a range of organisations. At IWC65 in 2014 the Commission adopted Resolution 2014-2 which decided to “seek enhanced collaboration in the conservation of migratory cetaceans with other intergovernmental organisations whose co-operation is essential to secure the lasting protection of these species in the world ocean”.

Subsequently, the Secretariat has worked with the Chairs of the Scientific Committee and of the Conservation Committee, and of their respective working groups to identify and take forward a number of opportunities for cooperation with other organisations. This work has responded to existing IWC recommendations and mandates; Resolution 2014-2 and new and emerging opportunities. This paper provides a report on progress to date and suggestions for next steps.

The Commission is invited to discuss the progress made and to endorse the suggestions in this document.

1. DETAILS OF PROGRESS TO DATE AND FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

1.1 The International Maritime organisation (IMO)

The Secretariat, working with the convenor of the Scientific Committee subcommittee on Human Induced Mortality, has undertaken a number of recent activities to strengthen engagement with the IMO. A meeting with the IMO Secretariat on January 15th 2016 discussed a range of issues of mutual interest and identified a number of follow up actions including (i) the IMO and IWC will continue efforts to cooperate on issues of mutual interest; (ii) joint follow up with contacts in Sri Lanka regarding addressing the blue whale ship strike offshore of Dondra Head; (iii) further liaison on marine debris including, potentially through IMO work with the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection (GESAMP) (www.gesamp.org) and with respect to port reception facilities and (iv) updating IMO on the progress on Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) and discussions in the Scientific Committee on this issue.

A document ‘Information on recent outcomes regarding minimizing ship strikes to cetaceans’ was submitted to the 69th meeting of the IMO Marine Environmental Protection Committee in April 2016 (MEPC 60/10/3, SC/66b/ForInfo28), attended by the Secretariat and Convenor of HIM. The paper was discussed under the agenda item related to Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs) and drew attention to work by the IWC on ship strikes including identification of high risk areas and potential mitigation measures and the collection of data through the IWC ship strike database. The presentation was widely welcomed with supportive comments from Belgium, Chile, New Zealand, United Kingdom, ACOPS, IFAW and the World Shipping Council (WSC).

At its meeting in June 2016 the Scientific Committee welcomed the positive engagement of the Secretariat and the Committee and recommended that it should continue. In particular it recommended that the Commission develop a paper for submission to the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee, providing an update of recent information related to the extent and impacts of underwater noise from shipping.

Proposed next steps: (i) Secretariat to continue efforts to cooperate with the IMO on issues of mutual interest; (ii) Secretariat, in liaison with the Scientific Committee, to develop a paper for submission to the IMO Marine

Environment Protection Committee, providing an update of recent information related to the extent and impacts of underwater noise from shipping; (iii) Secretariat/Convenor of HIM to attend future IMO meetings, including the MEPC (as appropriate) and consider the opportunity for side bar presentations on particular issues; (iv) Secretariat to explore the potential advantages of IWC engagement with GESAMP.

1.2 Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)

IWC recommendations with respect to strengthening its relationship with FAO refer in particular to the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) and its work on gear marking, and the value that gear marking can contribute to entanglement mitigation approaches. There is ongoing work by FAO on to develop Guidelines for the implementation of a System for the Marking of Fishing Gear and this was recently presented at a meeting of FAO COFI, 11-16 July, 2016. The Secretariat attended this meeting and made a statement in support of the gear marking proposal and the potential role of gear marking in mitigation of entanglement of cetaceans. Following endorsement of the process by COFI, the draft guidelines will now proceed to Technical Consultation which is expected to start in 2017.

Proposed next steps: (i) Secretariat to participate in the FAO Technical Consultation on gear marking that is expected to commence in 2017, coordinating input with the Scientific Committee; (ii) The Secretariat continue its efforts to strengthen its relationship with FAO with regards to by-catch and entanglement and to explore opportunities for engagement on other issues.

1.3 The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

The Secretariat has undertaken a number of recent efforts to establish and to strengthen engagement with the CBD. This included an exchange of letters, and a meeting between the Secretariats of the IWC and the CBD in March 2016 at which a range of issues of mutual interest were discussed including marine debris; whale watching; underwater noise; marine bushmeat and ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs). Giuseppe Notarbartolo di Sciara represented the IWC at a CBD expert meeting on the future of EBSAs, 22-24 February 2016.

In February 2016 the Secretariat submitted an information document on IWC work on cetacean conservation and the sustainable management of whaling (UNEP/CBS/SBSTTA 20/INF/57) to the 20th meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological advice (SBSTTA). This document gave a brief description of IWC work on the conservation and management of cetaceans and provided some detailed information on the status and recovery of large whales. The next meeting of the CBD Conference of Parties from 4-17th December 2016 will include an in-depth review of the CBD work programme on marine and coastal biodiversity including issues such as marine debris, anthropogenic underwater noise and training activities. The IWC has the opportunity attend and contribute to this meeting.

Proposed next step: Secretariat to continue to explore opportunities for cooperation with the CBD and to participate in its forthcoming 13th Conference of Parties in December 2016.

1.3.1 The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

At its tenth meeting (18 -29 October 2010, Nagoya, Japan) the CBD Conference of Parties adopted a revised and updated Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, for 2011-2020. This plan has since been adopted by all the biodiversity-related conventions 2 and is accepted as an overarching framework on biodiversity for the entire United Nations system as well as for other partners engaged in biodiversity management and policy development.

The 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets address a range of issues on which the IWC also has a mandate or interest including conservation of threatened species (target 12); sustainable consumption and production (target 4); sustainable fisheries (target 6); pollution (target 8); protected areas (target 11); traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities (target 18) and research and technology transfer (target 19). Thus there is the opportunity for engagement with the Aichi Targets, and the relevant policy planning processes, to strengthen the progression of IWC priorities.

Proposed next step: The IWC Secretariat to review the relevance of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets to work of the IWC.

1.4 The Liaison Group of Biodiversity Related Conventions (BLG)

Following productive discussions between the IWC and CBD Secretariat, the IWC Executive Secretary was invited to observe the 11th ordinary meeting of the Biodiversity Liaison Group on 23 August 2016 in Bonn, Germany. The IWC Secretariat has subsequently been invited to join this group.

The Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions (the Biodiversity Liaison Group) is a liaison group between the secretariats of the seven biodiversity-related conventions. It was established through a Decision of the Parties to the CBD (CBD Decision VII/26) in order to enhance coherence and cooperation in implementation, and meets regularly to exchange information on activities of mutual interest and to explore opportunities for increased cooperation. Given the range of issues of mutual interest across the remits of the IWC and these other Conventions, the BLG would provide a useful forum to discuss and cooperate on these issues.

Proposed next step: The Secretariat propose accepting the invitation to join the Biodiversity Liaison Group provided at Annex 1 and to attend meetings in person or by teleconference.

1.5 The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS); Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas (ASCOBANS) and Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic area (ACCOBAMS).

The IWC Secretariat has an existing Memorandum of Understanding with the CMS Secretariat which acts as a framework for cooperation on issues of mutual interest. In June 2015 the IWC Secretariat and the Secretariats of CMS and ASCOBANS met to discuss opportunities for strengthening engagement. A number of opportunities were identified including ongoing consultation and information sharing on respective programmes (e.g. on entanglement, marine debris, ship strikes, and climate change); immediate opportunities for collaborative working (e.g. joint work on strandings guidance and necropsy protocols and IWC input to the development and implementation of CMS boat based wildlife watching guidelines); the potential for collaborative research and joint fundraising; and the opportunity to jointly engage other stakeholders of interest including the RFMOs and the FAO.

The Secretariat attended meetings of the ASCOBANS advisory committee (28th September-1st October 2015); the ACCOBAMS advisory committee (20th-22nd October 2015); and the ASCOBANS 8th Meeting of Parties (MOP) (30 August-1 September) to input on issues of concern to the IWC. A number of the resolutions adopted by the 8th Meetings of the Parties of ASCOBANS specifically mention engagement with the IWC including those on small cetacean by-catch; ocean energy; impacts of Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs); small cetacean strandings response and marine noise.

Proposed next steps: Secretariat to continue its ongoing cooperation with CMS, ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS and to take forward immediate areas for collaboration including development of best practice for strandings response and IWC input to CMS boat based whale watching guidelines.

1.6 Arctic Council

The IWC Secretariat's Head of Science attended the first meeting of the Arctic Council Working Group for the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Meeting (PAME) from 1st-3rd February 2016 and gave a presentation on IWC's Arctic relevant programmes and activities. In response, PAME expressed its support for ongoing communication, cooperation and collaboration between PAME, IWC and NAMMCO on issues of mutual interest. These include conservation measures; Arctic marine shipping assessment and marine traffic systems; engagement with Arctic indigenous marine communities and Arctic indigenous resource use; and off-shore oil and gas guidelines.

There are outstanding Scientific Committee recommendations for further engagement with the Arctic Council including the IWC requesting observer status on the Arctic Council, and the proposal to write to the Arctic Council with proposed measures to reduce ship strikes along arctic shipping routes. The most recent meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC66b) identified a number of further opportunities for engagement with the Arctic Council, including on Arctic disaster response plans.

Proposed next steps: IWC Secretariat and Scientific Committee continue engagement with the Arctic Council on marine mammal and marine biodiversity issues, and Arctic disaster response plans and continuing to explore the potential for collaboration with PAME.

1.7 International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

The IWC has maintained its observer arrangement through the Scientific Committee and continued its engagement with IUCN in a number of areas particularly Conservation Management Plans (CMPs) and participation in the IUCN Western Gray Whale Advisory Panel (WGWAP). At its most recent meeting the Scientific Committee endorsed the work and recommendations made by WGWAP.

The Secretariat is a member of several IUCN Task Force, including the Task Force on Marine Mammal Protected Areas. This group is leading work on the establishment of criteria for Important Marine Mammal Areas (IMMAs) and there are opportunities for this work to be further discussed in the IWC, including for the utility of the IMMA approach (along with other area based measures) in the planning of mitigation strategies for ship strikes and other threats to marine mammals. At its most recent meeting the Scientific Committee recommended that efforts to finalise the process to identify IMMAs should include integration of information on anthropogenic noise into site selection and management.

Proposed next step: Continue liaison with the IUCN WGSP and with the IUCN Task Force on Marine Mammal Protected Areas, including to explore ways to progress the relevant IWC recommendations on ship strikes and anthropogenic noise.

1.8 Regional Marine Fisheries Organisations (RFMOs)

The IWC has a number of shared interests with the RFMOs, most particularly in relation to by-catch; entanglement and marine debris. It currently liaises with the RFMOs through observers at meetings and through the Regional Fisheries Body Secretariats network (RSN). At the last meeting of the RSN the Executive Secretary gave a presentation on the IWC global entanglement programme.

Proposed next steps: The Secretariat will continue its efforts to strengthen engagement with the RFMOs. In addition, the commission may wish to invite the Scientific Committee and Conservation Committees to raise any issues for communication to particular RFMOs on which IWC are represented as observers, or for the Executive Secretary to bring to the RSN.

1.8.1 The Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CAMLR)

The IWC continues its observer arrangement with CAMLR through the Scientific Committee. The most recent meeting of the SC identified a number of opportunities for closer engagement with CAMLR including a two-step process for collaboration with CAMLR on multispecies models.

Proposed next step: Collaboration with CAMLR to continue through the Scientific Committee

1.9 North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO)

The IWC has continued to develop its engagement with NAMMCO on several issues including hunting safety and continued improvement in humane killing methods. In February 2016 the IWC's Executive Secretary attended the NAMMCO Council meeting as observer. NAMMCO is attending IWC66 in order to present the outcomes of its recent expert workshop on improvement in hunting methods.

In October 2015, the IWC Head of Science attended the NAMMCO symposium on the impacts of human disturbance on Arctic marine mammals and gave a presentation on relevant work within the IWC. The development of this work area, along with emerging NAMMCO work streams on entanglement and strandings, present opportunities for continued collaboration with the IWC.

Proposed next step: IWC Secretariat to take forward further discussions with NAMMCO with respect to shared interests and identify any opportunities for closer collaboration.

1.10 Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

The IWC has ongoing cooperation with SPREP in a number of areas including entanglement (trainings in Tonga and Vanuatu). SPREP has designated 2016-2017 as the Year of the Whale and in 2017 it will hold a

conference in Tonga on “Whales in a Changing Ocean”. The IWC has been invited to participate in this conference and is exploring opportunities for collaboration with SPREP at this event and beyond including with respect to research; whale watching (dissemination and development of IWC best practice in the region); entanglement and marine debris. There may also be opportunities for joint fundraising efforts.

Proposed next step: Secretariat to accept the invitation to participate in SPREP’s 2017 “Whales in a Changing Ocean” Conference (see Annex 2) and to hold further discussions with SPREP on opportunities to strengthen collaboration and for joint fundraising efforts.

1.11 Permanent Commission of the South Pacific (CPPS)

The IWC has worked with CPPS on entanglement training and they attended the ship strikes workshop (2014) in Panama. The IWC Secretariat accepted an invitation to present at an entanglement and ship strike symposium coordinated by CPPS at the recent meeting of the Latin American Society for Marine Mammalogy. A recent training in Peru was conducted under the Marine Mammal Action Plan and the Conservation Management Plan for Southern Right Whales, and a cooperative training between Peru and Chile is being discussed under the same auspices.

Proposed next steps: IWC to continue engagement with CPPS and explore opportunities for further collaboration in the future.

1.12 UN General Assembly (UNGA) and the UN Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

The IWC Executive Secretary met with the UN Division on Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) in March 2016 to discuss issues of mutual interest and the potential for cooperation, including on the opportunities summarised below. The UN General Assembly annually updates two relevant resolutions each year that are relevant to IWC priorities and to which the IWC could input. These are the Sustainable Fisheries Resolution and the annual Resolution on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The most recent annual resolution on Law of the Sea (A/RES/70/235) “notes with concern the human-related threats which may significantly impact marine life, including its higher trophic levels and calls for cooperation and coordination between States and competent international organisations” and thus highlights that there are opportunities for the IWC to contribute to the UN process.

As an observer to UNCLOS the IWC is invited to report on the implementation of the annual resolution. A report on its implementation of 69/245, was provided by the Secretariat in July 2015. This addressed issues such as marine debris, climate change, ship strikes, habitat degradation, capacity building, and marine science. The IWC was also invited by the UN Division on Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) to contribute to the report of the Secretary General on the issue of “Marine Debris including Plastics and Microplastics” to the seventeenth meeting of the United Nations Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and Law of the Sea, to be held from 13-17 June 2016, and the Secretariat submitted a report (SC/66B/E10). This is published at http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process.htm

Proposed next steps: IWC Secretariat to continue its efforts to strengthen engagement with DOALOS including on issues relevant to UNCLOS.

1.13 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

In September 2015 the Secretariat met with UNEP (Heidi Savelli) to discuss IWC and UNEP collaboration on marine debris. Several opportunities emerged from this including an invitation to join the Global Partnership on Marine Litter (GPML); and for the IWC to review the draft report on marine debris from the Executive Secretary of UNEP to the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) (12.1 below).

There are also opportunities for closer engagement between IWC and UNEP regional offices and organisations, for example on entanglement, by-catch and marine debris on the development and dissemination of best practice and capacity building and joint fundraising.

Proposed next steps: (i) The Secretariat continue in its efforts to strengthen engagement with UNEP, with particular focus on opportunities to collaborate with UNEP regional offices and organisations; (ii) the Secretariat consider joining the Global Partnership on marine litter

<http://www.marinelitternetwork.org/page/global-partnership-marine-litter> as a means of networking, information sharing, knowledge exchange and progress monitoring with respect to marine debris.

1.13.1 UNEP-SPAW

There is a history of cooperation in the Caribbean between the IWC entanglement programme and UNEP-SPAW in the context of the SPAW Protocol's Regional Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean (MMAP). This includes jointly sponsored IWC/UNEP-SPAW entanglement and human impact determination trainings during 2012-2013; and the delivery of a joint workshop on ship strikes in 2014. Parties to the Cartagena Convention and the SPAW Protocol have requested UNEP-SPAW to explore the development of a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) with the IWC to enhance cooperation and collaboration. The recent meeting of the Scientific Committee recommended that an MoC could include specific actions (e.g. outreach and reporting) to encourage the reporting of ship strikes from the region.

Proposed next step: Secretariat to continue discussions on and agree MoC with UNEP SPAW, working with the Scientific Committee as appropriate.

1.13.2 United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA)

A recent Resolution on "Oceans and the Seas" from the second meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 2) held from 23-27th May 2016, called for 'continued cooperation and coordination among a range of global and regional for a and organisations on marine issues, including the International Whaling Commission, to deliver coherently on Sustainable Development Goal 14 and its interrelated targets'.

At the invitation of UNEP, the IWC Secretariat commented on UNEP's report on marine plastic debris and marine microplastics to the second meeting of UNEA, held from 23-27th May 2016. At this meeting, UNEA adopted a Resolution on marine debris which welcomed the work of the IWC (and others) on the impacts of 6 marine debris on marine biological diversity and invited the coordination of this with other relevant work under the GPML.

Proposed next steps: The Secretariat continue to take a watching brief on developments under UNEA.

1.14 The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25th September 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), under which sit a total of 169 targets. Several of the SDG targets provide a clear mandate for action on issues related to IWC priorities. In particular, SDG 14 is to "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development". Targets under SDG 14 address issues of interest to IWC including pollution; marine debris; fishing practices; area based conservation (marine protected areas); sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable tourism; scientific research and technology transfer. The SDGs present the opportunity for these issues to be addressed in an integrated manner along with other sustainable development issues such as poverty elimination (Target 1); food security (Target 2); public health (Target 3); water quality (Target 6); sustainable consumption and production (Target 12); action to address climate change (Target 13) and biodiversity conservation (Target 15).

The inclusion of issues relevant to IWC priorities in the SDGs presents opportunities for the IWC to engage in this global discussion on progress and priorities relevant to its mandate; to influence action by governments, regional bodies and the private sector; and for enhanced cooperation with other organisations on issues of mutual interest relevant to the SDGs. It could also present opportunities for fundraising.

The UN General Assembly has recently agreed to organize a global conference on the implementation of SDG once every three years. These global conferences will be the main forum at which the global community will review progress and decide on future action to achieve Goal 14 and its various targets. The first of these conferences will be organized in 2017 in Fiji and the IWC has the opportunity to participate in this meeting.

Proposed next steps: (i) The IWC review the relevance of the SDGs to IWC work (ii) The IWC Secretariat keep a watching brief on and take forward (as appropriate) opportunities for engagement with the process for SDG review and implementation



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

Secretariat provided by the United Nations Environment Programme



Simon Brockington
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11 October 2016

Dear Mr. Brockington,

On behalf of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG), I would like to express our appreciation for your participation in the Eleventh Ordinary Meeting of the BLG which took place on 23 August in Bonn, Germany at the CMS Secretariat premises.

We highly welcomed your presentation which illustrated the evolution of the work of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) over the last 70 years and showed opportunities for synergistic activities.

IWC has already established cooperative arrangements with some of the BLG members but, during the meeting, it became clear to all that there is great potential and scope for further cooperation both at a bilateral level and as a group.

We consider IWC an important partner addressing specific elements of biodiversity conservation and we would like to jointly explore ways to strengthen and build on existing partnerships to enhance implementation of our mandates.

To this end, we would like to invite IWC to join the BLG as a fully-fledged member.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'BC', with a checkmark-like flourish at the end.

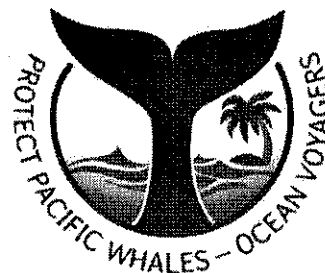
Bradnee Chambers
UNEP/CMS Executive Secretary
on behalf of the BLG



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The Pacific environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

20 September 2016

Simon Brockington
Secretary
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Dear Dr Brockington,

Warm greetings from the Pacific

I understand that you are aware that SPREP Members have designated 2016/17 as the Year of the Whale in the Pacific islands, and that you have been discussing with SPREP staff the possibility of a closer collaboration between SPREP and IWC during the Year of the Whale.

The purpose of this letter is to invite you to attend a conference that SPREP is organising in association with the Government of Tonga next year. The meeting will have the theme 'Whales in a Changing Ocean', and I believe that the IWC Secretariat can make a significant contribution to this conference in several areas, including stock assessment, whale-watching, entanglement, by-catch in fishing operations and climate change.

We expect to be able to provide funding to support your attendance and I sincerely hope that you will be able to attend. We anticipate that the meeting will be held in March or April and at this stage we still have some flexibility on the exact date. I should therefore be grateful if you could indicate whether you will be able to attend, and if so, whether there is a particular window of opportunity that would suit you.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Kosi Latu
Director General