

Circular Communication to Commissioners, Contracting Governments
And Members of the Scientific Committee
IWC.ALL.267

**Conservation Committee's review of the decadal review of the Southern Ocean Sanctuary
(SOS)**

The Chair of the Conservation Committee has asked that the following request be circulated to Contracting Governments. The purpose is to obtain input to the Conservation Committee's review of the decadal review of the Southern Ocean Sanctuary (SOS).

Dear Conservation Committee members,

At its 2015 meeting, the IWC Scientific Committee agreed on a dual process to complete its decadal review of the Southern Ocean Sanctuary (SOS). It was agreed that the Scientific Committee would review the scientific aspects of the SOS, whilst aspects relating to policy would be deferred to the IWC Conservation Committee for the provision of advice to the Commission. In 2016 the Scientific Committee completed its review, identifying a number of questions that might usefully be considered by the Conservation Committee. The 2016 planning meeting of the Conservation Committee subsequently agreed a process for contributing to the review carried out by the Scientific Committee without duplicating effort. Full details on the process and associated background documents are included in Attachment 1 to this circular.

The Chair of the Conservation Committee would now like to invite comments on, and contributions to, the first draft of the Conservation Committee's review (Attachment 2 to this circular) which is intended to address:

- 1. Whether the SOS is consistent with other measures to protect whales from anthropogenic and other environmental factors**
- 2. The effectiveness of the SOS and any adjacent whale sanctuaries in terms of International agreements concerning biodiversity and conservation of nature**
- 3. Whether the SOS is consistent with the precautionary approach in accordance to Principle 15 of the 1992 Rio Declaration**

The Scientific Committee also made a number of recommendations that the Conservation Committee may wish to provide additional comments on:

- 1) Appropriate performance measures for the SOS should be developed. These should link the objectives of the SOS with field monitoring programmes. The SC could provide suggestions for appropriate performance measures in relation to the scientific objectives of the SOS to the Commission in future, should the Commission request it.**
- 2) A management plan for the SOS should be developed to clearly outline the broad strategies and specific actions needed to achieve Sanctuary objectives.**

3) The development and implementation of a management plan will require explicit funding.

Returns are requested to Catherine.Bell@defra.gsi.gov.uk and copied to lrojasbracho@gmail.com and Jamie.rendell@defra.gsi.gov.uk by **Thursday 13 October 2016**. A final draft will then be provided for consideration and agreement at the Conservation Committee meeting on Friday 21 October.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Simon Brockington
Executive Secretary

c.c. Accredited observers to the IWC