



Circular Communication to Commissioners, Contracting Governments and
Members of the Scientific Committee
IWC.ALL.325

Expert Panel on Bycatch

At IWC66 in 2016 the Commission endorsed the Scientific Committee's recommendations on bycatch. It also endorsed a Conservation Committee recommendation to establish a Standing Working Group on Bycatch and to establish a Bycatch Mitigation Initiative (BMI) supported by an Expert Panel and a Bycatch Coordinator.

Circular IWC.ALL.312 requested nominations from Contracting Governments, members of the Scientific Committee and observers to the Bycatch Expert Panel and provided details of the selection process. This Circular is to update on progress with establishing the Expert Panel.

I am pleased to report that we had a high response rate to our call for nominees, with forty-one nominations received. We would like to thank everyone who put forward nominations. Due to the need to limit the size of the Expert Panel for logistical reasons we have therefore, at the request of the Bycatch Standing Working Group, established a core Expert Panel of twenty-three members and, in addition, a wider correspondence group to make use of the wide-ranging expertise of nominees and whose advice can be sought by the panel on particular topics. The correspondence group will also have the opportunity to comment on near final drafts of Expert Panel documents; and (as appropriate) be invited to BMI events.

The terms of reference for the panel and list of Expert Panel members are attached. The members' expertise is multi-disciplinary, and includes cetacean ecology, bycatch assessment and monitoring, fisheries technology and mitigation specialists, fisheries management, economists and social science. We are now starting to organise the first Expert Panel teleconference. A further update on the work of the Panel will be provided to the Commission at IWC67.

Rebecca Lent
Executive Secretary

c.c. Accredited observers to the IWC

*Chair: Dr Joji Morishita (Japan)
Vice-Chair: Mr Andrej Bibic (Slovenia)
Executive Secretary: Dr Rebecca Lent*