

# SC/67B/GEN01

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## Draft Annotated Agenda



INTERNATIONAL  
WHALING COMMISSION

**Draft**  
**Scientific Committee Agenda**  
**Bled, 24 April - 6 May 2018**

[N] = SEE CHAIR'S ANNOTATIONS

**1. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS [N]**

- 1.1 Chair's welcome and opening remarks
- 1.2 Appointment of rapporteurs
- 1.3 Meeting procedures and time schedule [N]
- 1.4 Establishment of sub-committees and Working Groups [N]
- 1.5 Computing arrangements

**2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA [N]**

**3. REVIEW OF AVAILABLE DATA, DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS**

- 3.1 Documents submitted [N]
- 3.2 National Progress Reports on research [N]
- 3.3 Data collection, storage and manipulation [N]

**4. COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

- 4.1 African States Bordering the Atlantic Ocean (ATLAFCO)
- 4.2 Arctic Council
- 4.3 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- 4.4 Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)
- 4.5 Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS)
  - 4.5.1 *Scientific Council*
  - 4.5.2 *Conference of Parties*
  - 4.5.3 *Agreement on Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS)*
  - 4.5.4 *Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS)*
- 4.6 Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)
- 4.7 Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO)
- 4.8 Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)
  - 4.8.1 *Agreement on the International Dolphin Conservation Program (AIDCP)*
- 4.9 International Committee on Marine Mammal Protected Areas (ICMMPA)
- 4.10 International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)
- 4.11 International Maritime Organisation (IMO)
- 4.12 International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- 4.13 North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO)
- 4.14 North Pacific Marine Science Organisation (PICES)
- 4.15 Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPA) of the Cartagena Convention for the Wider Caribbean

**5. GENERAL ASSESSMENT ISSUES WITH A FOCUS ON THOSE RELATED TO THE REVISED MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (RMP) [N]**

- 5.1 Evaluate the energetics-based model and the relationship between  $MSYR_{1+}$  and  $MSYR_{mat}$
- 5.2 Implications of ISTs for consideration of species' and populations' status [N]
- 5.3 General consideration of how to evaluate the effect of special permit catches on stocks [N]
- 5.4 Work plan 2019-20

**6. RMP – IMPLEMENTATION-RELATED MATTERS (RMP) [N]**

- 6.1 Completion of the *Implementation Review* of western North Pacific Bryde's whales [N]
- 6.2 Start of the *Implementation Review* of western North Pacific common minke whales [N]
- 6.3 Workplan 2019-20

**7. ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (AWMP) [N]**

- 7.1 *SLA development for the Greenlandic hunts [N]*
  - 7.1.1 *Fin whales*
  - 7.1.2 *Common minke whales*

7.1.3 Bowhead whales

**7.2 Aboriginal whaling management scheme [N]**

**7.3 Implementation Reviews [N]**

7.3.1 BCB bowhead whales

7.3.2 Review schedule for next six years

**7.4 Workplan 2019-20**

**8. STOCKS SUBJECT TO ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING INCLUDING MANAGEMENT ADVICE (AWMP) [N]**

**8.1 Eastern Canada/West Greenland bowhead whales**

**8.2 North Pacific gray whales**

**8.3 Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas bowhead whale**

**8.4 Common minke whale stocks off East Greenland**

**8.5 Common minke whale stocks off West Greenland**

**8.6 Fin whales off West Greenland**

**8.7 Humpback whales off West Greenland**

**8.8 Humpback whales off St. Vincent and The Grenadines**

**9. WHALE STOCKS NOT SUBJECT TO DIRECTED TAKES [N]**

**9.1 In-depth Assessments (IA)**

9.1.1 Comprehensive Assessment of North Pacific humpback whales [N]

9.1.2 In-depth Assessment of North Pacific sei whales [N]

9.1.3 In-depth Assessment of Indo-Pacific Antarctic minke whales [N]

9.1.3 Workplan 2019-20

**9.2 Evaluation for potential new In-Depth assessments**

9.2.1 North Pacific blue whales (NH) [N]

9.2.2 Non-Antarctic Southern Hemisphere blue whales (SH) [N]

9.2.3 Antarctic blue whales (Areas III and IV) (SH) [N]

9.2.4 Southern Hemisphere fin whales (SH) [N]

9.2.5 North Atlantic sei whales (NH)

9.2.6 North Atlantic right whales (NH) [N]

9.2.7 North Pacific right whales (NH) [N]

9.2.8 Workplan 2019-20

**9.3 New information and workplan for other northern stocks (NH)**

9.3.1 North Pacific fin whales

9.3.2 Omura's whale

9.3.3 North Atlantic Bryde's whales [N]

9.3.4 North Atlantic blue whales

9.3.5 North Atlantic humpback whales

9.3.6 North Atlantic bowhead whales not subject to aboriginal subsistence whaling

9.3.7 North Pacific bowhead whales not subject to aboriginal subsistence whaling

9.3.8 North Pacific sperm whales [N]

9.3.9 Other stocks - Northern Indian Ocean sperm whales [N]

9.3.10 Workplan 2019-20

**9.4 New information and workplan for other Southern stocks (SH)**

9.4.1 Southern Hemisphere sei whales

9.4.2 Southern Hemisphere humpback whales [N]

9.4.3 Southern Hemisphere right whales not the subject of CMPs [N]

9.4.4 Antarctic minke whales

9.4.5 Dwarf minke whales

9.4.6 Southern Hemisphere Bryde's whales

9.4.7 Southern Hemisphere sperm whales

9.4.8 Workplan 2019-20

**10. STOCKS THAT ARE OR HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED TO BE THE SUBJECT OF CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLANS (CMP) [N]**

**10.1 Stocks with existing CMPs**

10.1.1 SE Pacific southern right whales

10.1.2 SW Atlantic southern right whales

10.1.3 North Pacific gray whales [N]

10.1.4 Franciscana [N]

## **10.2 Progress with identified priorities**

*10.2.1 Humpback whales in the northern Indian Ocean including the Arabian Sea*

*10.2.2 Other species/populations*

### **10.3 Workplan 2019-20**

## **11. STOCK DEFINITION AND DNA TESTING [N]**

### **11.1 DNA testing [N]**

*11.1.1 Genetic methods for species, stock and individual identification [N]*

*11.1.2 'Amendments' of sequences deposited in GenBank*

*11.1.3 Collection and archiving of tissue samples from catches and bycatches*

*11.1.4 Reference databases and standards for diagnostic DNA registries*

### **11.2 Guidelines for DNA data quality and genetic analyses**

*11.2.1 Update DNA quality guidelines to include discussion of NGS data [N]*

### **11.3 New statistical and genetic issues concerning stock definition**

*11.3.1 Simulation tools for spatial structuring (e.g. TOSSM)*

*11.3.2 PCA, DAPC, and related methods [N]*

*11.3.3 Terminology*

*11.3.4 Close-kin mark-recapture [N]*

*11.3.5 Epigenetic ageing [N]*

### **11.4 Update on previous recommendations**

### **11.5 Workplan 2019-20**

## **12. CETACEAN ABUNDANCE ESTIMATES, STOCK STATUS [N]**

### **12.1 Summary of abundance estimates and update of IWC consolidated table [N]**

### **12.2 Methodological issues**

*12.2.1 Model-based abundance estimates (and amendments to RMP guidelines)*

*12.2.2 Review new survey techniques/equipment*

### **12.3 Consideration of the status of stocks [N]**

### **12.4 Update on previous recommendations**

### **12.5 Workplan 2019-20**

## **13. BYCATCH AND ENTANGLEMENTS [N]**

### **13.1 Review new estimates of entanglement rates, risks and mortality (large whales)**

### **13.2 Reporting of entanglements and bycatch in National progress reports**

### **13.3 Mitigation measures for preventing large whale entanglement**

### **13.4 Review proposal for global entanglement database [N]**

### **13.5 Estimation of rates of bycatch, risks of, and mortality for small cetaceans [N]**

### **13.6 Scientific aspects of mitigation measures for small cetaceans**

*13.6.1 The IWC Bycatch Mitigation Initiative [N]*

*13.6.2 Collaboration with FAO on bycatch related issues [N]*

*13.6.3 Measures to mitigate bycatch of small cetaceans [N]*

### **13.7 New information on cetacean bycatch in the Western, Central and Northern Indian Ocean [N]**

### **13.8 Update on previous recommendations**

### **13.9 Workplan 2019-20**

## **14. SHIP STRIKES [N]**

### **14.1 Review estimates of rates of ship strikes, risk of ship strikes and mortality [N]**

*14.1.1 Review progress on ship strike database [N]*

### **14.2 Mitigation of ship strikes in high risk areas [N]**

*14.2.1 Review progress towards assessing and mitigating ship strikes in previously identified high risk areas*

*14.2.2 Consideration of methods to identify 'high risk' areas*

### **14.3 Co-operation with IMO Secretariat and relevant IMO committees**

### **14.4 Update on previous recommendations**

### **14.5 Workplan 2019-20**

## **15. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS [N]**

### **15.1 Pollution 2020 [N]**

*15.1.1 Review on intersessional progress on the Pollution 2020 project*

*15.1.2 Report on mercury in cetaceans*

*15.1.2 Impact of heavy fuel oils on cetaceans*

### **15.2 Cumulative impacts [N]**

### **15.3 Diseases of concern [N]**

### **15.4 Strandings and mortality events [N]**

*15.4.1 Update on the IWC Strandings Initiative*

*15.4.2 New information on unusual mortality events*

### **15.5 Noise [N]**

### **15.6 State of the Cetacean Environment Report – SOCER [N]**

### **15.7 Update on other standing topics [N]**

*15.7.1 Marine debris [N]*

*15.7.2 Climate change [N]*

### **15.8 Update on previous recommendations [N]**

### **15.9 Workplan 2019-20**

## **16. ECOSYSTEM MODELLING [N]**

### **16.1 Cooperation with CCAMLR on multi-species modelling**

*16.1.1 Review ecosystem modelling in the Antarctic Ocean*

*16.1.2 Update on cooperation with CCAMLR, including the plan for a joint SC-CAMLR-IWC SC workshop*

### **16.2 Applications of species distribution models (SDMs) and ensemble averaging**

*16.2.1 Review progress of guideline for SDMs*

*16.2.2 Review progress of work on SDMs and ensemble modelling*

### **16.3 Modelling of competition among whales**

### **16.4 Standing topics [N]**

*16.4.1 Effects of long-term environmental variability on whale populations*

*16.4.2 Update on body condition analyses for the Antarctic minke whales [N]*

*16.4.3 Review the information on krill distribution and abundance by NEWREP-A [N]*

*16.4.4 Ecosystem services [N]*

### **16.5 Update on previous recommendations**

### **16.6 Workplan 2019-20**

## **17. SMALL CETACEANS**

### **17.1 Review of small cetaceans in rivers and estuaries of South America [N]**

*17.1.1 Boto*

*17.1.2 Tucuxi*

*17.1.3 Franciscana*

*17.1.4 Common bottlenose dolphin*

### **17.2 Review on progress on *Tursiops* taxonomy [N]**

### **17.3 Poorly documented hunts of small cetaceans for food, bait or cash and changing patterns of use [N]**

*17.3.1 Workshop results*

*17.3.2 Future plans*

### **17.4 Small cetacean task team [N]**

*17.4.1 Progress on South Asian river dolphins Task Team*

*17.4.2 How to address emerging issues within the sub-committee*

### **17.5 Review takes of small cetaceans**

*17.5.1 New information on direct takes and live captures [N]*

### **17.6 Update on previous recommendations [N]**

*17.6.1 Māui dolphin [N]*

*17.6.2 Vaquita*

### **17.7 Status of the voluntary fund for small cetacean conservation research [N]**

### **17.8 Workplan 2019-20**

## **18. WHALE WATCHING<sup>1</sup>**

### **18.1 Assess the impacts of whale watching and swim-with-whale operations on cetaceans**

*18.1.1 Review report of the workshop on Modelling and Assessment of Whale Watching Impacts (MAWI) [N]*

*18.1.2 Studies on assessing impacts*

*18.1.3 Potential case-studies: status of whale watching in east Africa and wider Indian Ocean [N]*

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<sup>1</sup> In response to a request from the Chair of the Whale Watching Working Group of the Conservation Committee, we have changed our past practice of treating whalewatching as a single word to the use of two words.

## **18.2 Five-year strategic plan and joint work with the Conservation Committee**

*18.2.1 Recommendation on the Conservation Committee new five-year strategic plan for whale watching [N]*

*18.2.2 Recommendation on the Online whale watching handbook [N]*

*18.2.3 Revised Terms of Reference for the sub-committee on whale watching [N]*

*18.2.4 Update on the Carole Carlson Memorial Whale Watching Fund [N]*

## **18.3 Platform of opportunity data**

### **18.4 Update on previous recommendations**

### **18.5 Workplan 2019-20**

## **19. SPECIAL PERMITS [N]**

### **19.1 General considerations on improving the evaluation process**

### **19.2 NEWREP-A**

*19.2.1 Report on ongoing research*

*19.2.2 Update on previous recommendations*

*19.2.3 Committee conclusions and recommendations*

### **19.3 JARPN II**

*19.3.1 Update on previous recommendations*

*19.3.2 Committee conclusions and recommendations*

### **19.4 NEWREP-NP**

*19.4.1 Report on ongoing research*

*19.4.2 Update on previous recommendations*

*19.4.3 Committee conclusions and recommendations*

### **19.5 Workplan 2019-20**

## **20. WHALE SANCTUARIES**

### **20.1 Review of the Southern Ocean Sanctuary Management Plan**

## **21. SATELLITE TAGGING DEVELOPMENT AND BEST PRACTICES [N]**

## **22. IWC LIST OF RECOGNISED SPECIES**

## **23. IWC DATABASES & CATALOGUES**

### **23.1 Guidelines for IWC catalogues and photo-ID databases (PH)**

### **23.2 Progress with existing or proposed new catalogues (PH)**

*23.2.1 Integration of eastern South and Central Pacific blue, humpback and fin whale photo-catalogues*

*23.2.2 Southern Hemisphere and Indian Ocean humpback whales catalogues*

*23.2.2.1 ANTARCTIC HUMPBACK WHALE CATALOGUE (AHCW)*

*23.2.2.2 ARABIAN SEA WHALE NETWORK'S FLUKEBOOK*

*23.2.3 Southern Hemisphere Antarctic and pygmy blue whales: Catalogues and databases*

*23.2.3.1 SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE BLUE WHALE CATALOGUE (SHBWC) [N]*

*23.2.3.2 ANTARCTIC BLUE WHALE CATALOGUE (ABWC)*

*23.2.4 Southern Hemisphere fin whale photo catalogues*

### **23.3 Progress with existing IWC databases (PH)**

*23.3.1 IWC databases*

*23.3.2 National progress report database*

### **23.4 Potential future IWC databases**

*23.4.1 Global database for disentanglement activities*

*23.4.2 Global bycatch database*

*23.4.3 Development of simple technical guidelines for new proposals*

## **24. IWC MULTINATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAMMES AND NATIONAL RESEARCH CRUISES THAT REQUIRE IWC ENDORSEMENT**

### **24.1 IWC-POWER**

### **24.2 Southern Ocean Research Partnership (IWC-SORP)**

### **24.3 National cruises that require IWC oversight**

**25. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE BUDGET FOR THE CURRENT BIENNIUM [N]**

**25.1 Status of previously funded research, workshop proposals, data processing and computing needs**

*25.1.1 Funded proposals for the current biennium 2017-2018*

*25.1.2 Funded proposals in previous years still ongoing*

*25.1.3 Report on funds reallocations and contingencies for the Research Fund, Voluntary Fund for Small Cetaceans and SORP Voluntary Fund*

**26. COMMITTEE PRIORITIES AND INITIAL AGENDA FOR THE BIENNIUM 2019-2020 [N]**

**27. SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2019-2020 [N]**

**27.2 Budget for the next biennium**

*27.2.1 Invited Participants*

*27.2.2 Workshops*

*27.2.3 Modelling/computing*

*27.2.4 Databases/catalogues*

*27.2.5 Reports*

**28. WORKING METHODS OF THE COMMITTEE [N]**

**28.1 Rules of Procedure of the Scientific Committee**

**28.2 Biennial reporting and related matters**

**28.3 Additional proposals for revisions to ‘Annex P’**

**28.4 Succession plan for key Scientific Committee experts**

**28.5 Update on Data Availability requests**

**28.6 Any other matters [N]**

**29. PUBLICATIONS [N]**

**30. ELECTION OF OFFICERS [N]**

**31. ADOPTION OF REPORT [N]**

## CHAIR'S ANNOTATIONS

**NOTE THAT GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE MEETING, INCLUDING LINKS TO THE PORTAL USED FOR REGISTRATION AND DOCUMENTS, CAN BE FOUND AT: <https://iwc.int/sc67b>**

### ITEM 1: INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

The Scientific Committee (SC67b) will meet in Bled, Slovenia, from 24 April to 6 May 2018. It will be preceded by two pre-meetings:

(1) 'Scientific Committee Advise on Conservation Committee's Five Year Strategic Plan for Whale Watching' (22 April; convenors: Suydam, Fortuna – contact: [rssuydam@gmail.com](mailto:rssuydam@gmail.com)); and

(2) 'Cumulative impacts' (23-24 May; convenors: Hall and Rowles – contact [ajh7@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:ajh7@st-andrews.ac.uk)). The schedule will be: 23 April (full day), 24 April (afternoon and evening), 25 April (report).

These meetings are open to all members of the Scientific Committee; however, given the capacity of the meeting rooms, you **must** contact the relevant convenors (see contact details above) before making travel arrangements and registering for the pre-meetings on the IWC portal (<https://iwc.int/sc67b>).

The Scientific Committee will be followed by the meeting of the 'Joint Working Group of the Conservation Committee and the Scientific Committee' on the 8 May 2018 at the Hotel Golf, Bled. This meeting will focus on the development of a database of recommendations to facilitate the communication and implementation of conservation-related recommendations. The meeting has a partially restricted participation and, given the capacity of the meeting rooms (max number of participants: 40 max; 30 at the table, 10 on additional seats), you **must** contact the co-chairs (Rojas-Bracho, Suydam: [rojasm@cicese.mx](mailto:rojasm@cicese.mx), [rssuydam@gmail.com](mailto:rssuydam@gmail.com)) if you would like to attend before making travel arrangements and registering.

The list of the work agreed to be attempted during the 2017/2018 intersessional period can be found at <https://iwc.int/sctasks> and the list of intersessional correspondence groups and their terms of reference can be found in Annex W to the report of the SC67a meeting (IWC, 2018, pp.424-428).

### Item 1.3: Meeting procedures and time schedule

The time schedule is given below:

Date	Items	Comments
22-23 April	Pre-meeting workshops.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scientific Committee Advise on Conservation Committee's Five Year Strategic Plan for Whale watching (WW)</li> <li>Cumulative impacts (E)</li> </ul>
24 April	Welcome (9:00-10:00) Plenary morning session (10:00-12:00). Afternoon: Cumulative impact (continue); Read documents (and possibly sessions of sub-groups).	Welcome, including a brief presentation of the meeting procedures. Items 1-4; plans for Item 19 (SP), 24-26 (Budget and workplan) and 27 (Working methods).
25 April	Plenary morning session (8:30-11:00). Afternoon: Read documents (and possibly sessions of sub-groups). Head of Delegation meeting (11:00).	Continue Item 19 (SP), 24-26 (Budget and workplan) and 27 (Working methods)
26 April-2 May	Predominantly sub-committees (possibly some plenary meeting sessions). SP sessions will not necessarily be in the evening.	To complete sub-committee agendas and agree reports. Head of delegations meeting (2 May).
3 May	<i>Tentative</i> rest day.	Subject to cancellation if insufficient progress is made.
4-6 May	Plenary sessions. Intention to finish no later than 5pm on 6 May.	To complete agenda and agree report, including work plan and draft initial agenda for 2018.
7 May*	09:00-11:00 - Convenors to complete editorial work on sub-committee and plenary reports (including references, intersessional correspondence groups and workplans). 11:00-16:00 - Convenors meeting convened by the new Scientific Committee Chair to consider <i>inter alia</i> the draft initial agenda, priorities, possible changes in organisational structure implied by the draft initial agenda or by discussions during the meeting, development of the preliminary list of Invited Participants.	
8 May	9:30-12:30 - Meeting of the 'Joint Working Group of the Conservation Committee and the Scientific Committee'.	

\*Note: Not SC, but for your information – a Conservation Committee planning group (CCPG) meeting will take place 7 May 09:30-12:30.



It is my intention to begin to address specific Plenary matters early in our meeting; more time will also be given to the review of the Special Permits draft report as, according to the instructions received from the Commission (see Resolution 2016-2). For more information on last year's discussions see IWC/67/Rep01(2017)rev1 (p.105 onward). Starting early will allow a full discussion of matters under Items 19, 24-26 and 27, ensuring adequate progress on relevant agenda items in view of the next Commission meeting in September 2018 (in particular the development of a new biennial budget and workplan 2018-2019), conclusions and recommendations on Special Permits and proposed changes on the Committee's working methods and Rules of Procedure. A more detailed draft timetable will be made available at the beginning of March (<https://iwc.int/sc67b>).

You will notice that the previous practice of initial 15-min meetings of sub-groups during the reading period will be discontinued. Instead, members of the Scientific Committee will have the opportunity to provide input on all sub-group draft Agendas from two weeks before the meeting (i.e. **10 April 2018**), up to the day before the Plenary. Comments will be taken into account by the relevant convenors who will provide revised drafts on the opening day of the Plenary. Election of chairs, final adoption of agendas and identification of documents will occur during the first session of each sub-group. At the Scientific Committee meeting in 2017 we had 105 sessions available for seventeen sub-group deliberations over a seven-day period, based on three concurrent sub-group meetings for each of five work sessions per day, starting at approximately 08:30 and ending at 18:30. This schedule allows for *ad hoc* working groups or even Plenary sessions to meet in the evening (e.g. from around 18:45 to 21:30), or for occasional longer sessions of sub-groups. However, it is my intention to minimise evening sessions to allow: (1) rapporteurs to draft reports; and (2) more time for small break out groups (e.g. to do simulation runs and testing) during the meeting. As in the past, my preference will be for Special Permit sessions to occur during the day, preferably in the morning.

It is hoped that the introduction of the Meeting Directory (you need to sign up to this during online Registration and provide a brief personal biography relevant to your participation at this meeting) will be a useful tool for both seasoned SC members and those new to the SC this year.

The new Executive Secretary (Rebecca Lent) will give brief details of the Secretariat support available to the meeting. New generic e-mail addresses will be available for Document Control this year, details will be circulated at the meeting. All visual/audio presentations need to be approved by the relevant sub-group chair and then please contact the Secretariat AV team ([av@iwc.int](mailto:av@iwc.int)). To ensure optimum onscreen visibility of visual presentations please use the IWC template.

#### Item 1.4: Establishment of sub-committees and working groups

The following 15 sub-groups (Table 1) were identified by the Chair, vice Chair and Head of Science after SC67a. To simplify matters, note that some old 'standing working groups' are now called 'sub-committees'. It is important that you consult the registration and document submission details that can be found on the website to register for sub-groups: (<https://iwc.int/sc67b>).

**Table 1 - Committee sub-groups and convenors for 2018**

Sub-committees/working group name	Convenor	Co-convenor
Scientific Committee Plenary, including sessions on Special Permits, SC/SP	Fortuna ( <a href="mailto:sc.chair@iwc.int">sc.chair@iwc.int</a> )	Suydam (as below)
<i>Ad hoc</i> Working group on Photo-id, PH	Olson ( <a href="mailto:paula.olson@noaa.gov">paula.olson@noaa.gov</a> )	
Standing Working Group on Abundance estimates, stock status and international cruises, ASI	Zerbini ( <a href="mailto:alex.zerbini@noaa.gov">alex.zerbini@noaa.gov</a> )	Givens ( <a href="mailto:geofgivens@gmail.com">geofgivens@gmail.com</a> )
<i>Ad hoc</i> Working Group on Sanctuaries, SAN	Parsons ( <a href="mailto:ecm-parsons@earthlink.net">ecm-parsons@earthlink.net</a> )	
Sub-Committee on the Revised Management Procedure, RMP	Bannister ( <a href="mailto:bannisj@bigpond.com">bannisj@bigpond.com</a> )	Robbins ( <a href="mailto:jrobbins@coastalstudies.org">jrobbins@coastalstudies.org</a> )
Standing Working Group on Aboriginal Whaling Management Procedures, AWMP	Donovan ( <a href="mailto:greg.donovan@iwc.int">greg.donovan@iwc.int</a> )	Brandon ( <a href="mailto:jbrandon@gmail.com">jbrandon@gmail.com</a> )
Working Group on Stock Definition and DNA testing, SD&DNA	Lang ( <a href="mailto:aimee.lang@noaa.gov">aimee.lang@noaa.gov</a> )	Tiedemann ( <a href="mailto:tiedeman@uni-potsdam.de">tiedeman@uni-potsdam.de</a> )
Sub-Committee on In-depth Assessments, IA	Palka ( <a href="mailto:Debra.Palka@noaa.gov">Debra.Palka@noaa.gov</a> )	
Sub-Committee on the other Northern Hemisphere whale stocks, NH	Brownell ( <a href="mailto:rlbcetacea@aol.com">rlbcetacea@aol.com</a> )	
Sub-Committee on the other Southern Hemisphere whale stocks, SH	Jackson ( <a href="mailto:Jennifer.Jackson@bas.ac.uk">Jennifer.Jackson@bas.ac.uk</a> )	
Sub-Committee on Conservation Management Plans, CMP	Walløe ( <a href="mailto:lars.walloe@medisin.uio.no">lars.walloe@medisin.uio.no</a> )	Urban-Rámirez ( <a href="mailto:jurban@uabcs.mx">jurban@uabcs.mx</a> )
Sub-Committee on Non-deliberate Human-Induced Mortality of cetaceans, HIM	Leaper ( <a href="mailto:russell@ivytdemon.co.uk">russell@ivytdemon.co.uk</a> )	Currey ( <a href="mailto:rohan.currey@gmail.com">rohan.currey@gmail.com</a> )
Sub-Committee on Environmental Concerns, E	Hall ( <a href="mailto:ajh7@st-andrews.ac.uk">ajh7@st-andrews.ac.uk</a> )	
Standing Working Group on Ecosystem Modelling, EM	Kitakado ( <a href="mailto:kitakado@kaiyodai.ac.jp">kitakado@kaiyodai.ac.jp</a> )	
Sub-Committee on Small Cetaceans, SM	Scheidat ( <a href="mailto:meike.scheidat@wur.nl">meike.scheidat@wur.nl</a> )	Porter ( <a href="mailto:lindsay.jp@gmail.com">lindsay.jp@gmail.com</a> )
Sub-Committee on Whale Watching, WW	Suydam ( <a href="mailto:Robert.Suydam@north-slope.org">Robert.Suydam@north-slope.org</a> )	New ( <a href="mailto:lfn36@hotmail.com">lfn36@hotmail.com</a> )

## ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF AGENDA

This Agenda is based upon the priority items identified last year and with the recognition that the Commission will hold its biennial meeting in October 2018 in Brazil.

I recognise that some Contracting Governments do not believe that certain topics should be on the Commission and/or Scientific Committee Agendas. The appropriate forum to discuss such views is in the Commission. It is not within my mandate as Chair to exclude items specifically requested for inclusion by the Commission (e.g. by Resolution). To facilitate plenary and sub-committee discussions, I will follow the practice of past years and strongly request that any objections to specific items or topics on the Agenda be raised briefly under this Agenda Item during plenary and then provided in writing to the rapporteur for inclusion in our report. It is not acceptable for these objections to be repeated during discussions of the items in the plenary sessions or during sub-committee or working group meetings. A written reference in the relevant reports to the statements made here under Item 2 will be sufficient. However, as I did last year, I would also like to entertain some discussion with relevant Heads of Delegation on ways to improve this situation and eventually have national delegates contributing to the work of all sub-groups despite different views over IWC competence of their respective Countries.

According to the Committee's Rules of Procedure comments to this draft Agenda '*will normally be considered for incorporation into the draft agenda presented to the opening plenary only if received by the Chair 21 days prior to the beginning of the Annual Meeting*' (i.e. 3 April 2018).

## ITEM 3: REVIEW OF AVAILABLE DATA, DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS

### Item 3.1: Documents submitted

As in previous years, you **must** use the online system for **registration** and for **submission of documents**. This is done through the IWC Meeting Portal (see link at <https://iwc.int/sc67b>).

Following on from our discussions of improvements in working methods in recent years, please note that:

- (1) only primary documents and For Information papers that are **directly relevant** to the Committee's/sub-groups agendas will be accepted – acceptance will be determined by the convenors of the relevant sub-groups who will take advice when appropriate of convenors of intersessional groups – **if in any doubt** at all please submit your proposed document title and a short summary of what it will contain to the relevant convenor (see above) before you write the paper;
- (2) the 'classic' agenda item 'other' will not appear on sub-group's agendas – should important and urgent new findings become available after the initial deadline for comments on the full agenda (21 days before the meeting i.e. **3 April 2018**) a request to include such an item must be sent to the Chair who will consult with the Vice-Chair, relevant sub-group chair and Head of Science to determine if inclusion is warranted or if it should be left to the following meeting.

**The deadline for primary papers is 7 days before the start of the meeting (i.e. 17 April 2017).** *Exceptional cases* will be evaluated by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Head of Science in light of their importance to the agenda. Documents will be distributed wholly electronically (website and memory sticks) by the Secretariat.

### Item 3.2: National Progress Reports on research

Last year, the Committee agreed to improvements with respect to National Progress Reports. Under this item we will discuss progress made and any difficulties encountered with respect to online data entry of progress reports. An intersessional correspondence group under Double (ICG-1) will report.

Despite considerable effort and costs to develop an online system to encourage and facilitate reporting (for details of how to submit Progress report data see <https://iwc.int/scprogress>) many countries still fail to submit the required reports. Heads of Delegations are **strongly encouraged** to ensure that National Progress Reports are compiled and uploaded.

We will also discuss the need to validate data provided in National Progress Reports, particularly those related to takes, and if the need is identified discuss ways to achieve it.

### Item 3.3: Data collection, storage and manipulation

Under this agenda item, Allison (Secretariat) will report on catch data and other statistical material, progress of data coding projects and verification projects.

## ITEM 4: COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Cooperation with other organisations is increasingly important. Many of the organisations on this list are ones that have met since our last meeting and with whom we exchange observers. They are included in alphabetical order. Observers, please, send your reports to the Secretariat no later than **20 March 2018** ([secretariat@iwc.int](mailto:secretariat@iwc.int)). If possible, we will consider

these on Day 1 (24 April). To save time, there will be no presentations and I will assume that Committee members have read these. I will ask members whether there are any general questions or comments that should be addressed under this Agenda Item. Note that this item is largely a reporting and administrative item - directly relevant scientific matters will be dealt with fully under appropriate Agenda Items and, as necessary, within sub-groups.

The Committee will also receive an update from the Intersessional Correspondence Group under Mattila that has been established to work with the IUCN Marine Mammal Protected Areas Task Force, in order to provide advice on the most appropriate use of the IWC's (and other) historical datasets in the Important Marine Mammal Area (IMMA) consideration process.

## **ITEMS: 5-19**

These items have been prepared in consultation with the Convenors to take specifically into account relevant Commission Resolutions and Agenda Items. Note that the Committee Agenda here does not necessarily repeat the fully detailed sub-group Agenda Items, however this year I have tried to provide a reasonably comprehensive version. We hope that this will help the communication process and guide your expectations. Note also that some of the Agenda Items here will incorporate discussions from more than one sub-group – this is indicated on the Agenda itself.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT**, in order to guarantee a better working environment and improve our way to deliver our advice to the Commission, the Committee has been engaged in challenging restyling of its working methods, also in regard to how it conducts its business at the annual meeting and intersessionally. This entails, *inter alia*, (a) a more careful scrutiny of documents that are discussed during the sub-groups week; (b) a stricter organisation of the timing of all sessions; and (c) an improved approach to the drafting of Chair's summaries and recommendations.

### **ITEM 5: GENERAL ASSESSMENT ISSUES WITH A FOCUS ON THOSE RELATED TO THE REVISED MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (RMP)**

There are several common assessment issues that apply to all our work, not simply the RMP. This item will thus include but not be restricted to assessment issues generated from the RMP discussions. Note that some of the general discussions will also occur with other sub-groups (e.g. ASI and AWMP).

#### **Item 5.2: Implications of *ISTs* for consideration of 'status' (with ASI and AWMP)**

The Scientific Committee is expected to provide the Commission with advice on 'status'. How to do this for stocks for which *Implementation Simulation Trials* have been undertaken will be dealt with as a joint session (led by intersessional work undertaken by Allison, Donovan, Punt and Zerbini).

#### **Item 5.3: General consideration of how to evaluate the effect of special permit catches on stocks**

This item arises from past and current discussions of special permits. The objective is to consider if general guidelines can be developed (perhaps eventually to be added as guidance to Annex P) for standardised approaches on how best to evaluate the effect of special permit catches on stocks. Discussions on the actual effects of catches on specific special permits will occur under Item 19.

### **ITEM 6: RMP-IMPLEMENTATION-RELATED MATTERS (RMP)**

This agenda item includes: (1) ongoing *Implementation Reviews* (Western North Pacific Bryde's whales) expected to be completed at this meeting and (2) *Implementation Reviews* starting at the present meeting (North Pacific common minke whales). Items related to the stock structure and abundance of these stocks will be dealt with early in the meeting by the sub-groups on SD&DNA and ASI, respectively who will report relevant findings to the sub-committee on the RMP.

There is a system of regular (5-6 year) *Implementation Reviews* with established guidelines. The current schedule of *Implementation Reviews* (which may need to be adjusted if the *Implementation Reviews* that are scheduled first take longer than anticipated) is:

- (1) Western North Pacific Bryde's whales: Started in 2017 (expected to be completed in 2018).
- (2) Western North Pacific common minke whales: Starting in 2018 (expected to be completed in 2020).
- (3) North Atlantic common minke whales: Starting in 2022.
- (4) North Atlantic fin whales: Starting in 2023.

#### **Item 6.1: Western North Pacific Bryde's whales**

The Committee will review the report of the Second Intersessional Workshop on the *Implementation Review* on North Pacific Bryde's whales (SC/67b/Rep03).

## Item 6.2: North Pacific common minke whales

The Committee completed an *Implementation Review* for western North Pacific minke whales in 2013. This year will start a new *Implementation Review*. The Committee will review the report of a Preparatory Intersessional Workshop on the *Implementation Review* on North Pacific minke whales (SC/67b/Rep02).

## ITEM 7: ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (AWMP)

This item continues to be discussed as a result of IWC Resolution 1994-4, which has been strengthened by IWC Resolution 2014-1. The primary issues at this year's meeting comprise: (1) developing SLAs (*Strike Limit Algorithms*) and providing management advice for Greenlandic hunts, with a focus on fin and common minke whales; (2) providing management advice for aboriginal hunts (see Item 8); and (3) additional work related to the AWS (Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling Management Scheme).

### Item 7.1: SLA development for the Greenlandic hunts

In 2014, the Commission adopted Resolution 2014-1 that *inter alia* called upon the Scientific Committee to work expeditiously to complete SLAs for the remaining Greenland hunts and consider multispecies issues. The Commission had endorsed the *Humpback SLA* in 2014 and the *West Greenland (WG)-Bowhead SLA* in 2016. At its 2018 meeting, the Commission will be setting new block quotas for all aboriginal hunts. In Greenland, a multispecies hunt occurs; in West Greenland, this involves catches of common minke, fin, humpback and bowhead whales. The Committee will have to complete and recommend SLAs for all Greenland hunts by the 2018 Scientific Committee meeting. It will review progress made at the intersessional workshops on these matters that were held in Copenhagen, in October 2017 and March 2018 (SC/67a/Rep05) - there will be a single report covering both workshops). These workshops will have also received the report of the intersessional correspondence group under Allison/Brandão (ICG-3) that was established to finalise technical specifications to incorporate approaches to allow the movement rates among regions to be dependent on relative local depletion levels for common minke whales off Greenland.

### Item 7.2: Aboriginal Whaling Management Scheme

Under this item we will finalise the common aspects of the scheme in time for the 2018 Commission meeting. An intersessional correspondence group under Givens (ICG-2) has been established to develop an updated draft AWS for consideration at the second intersessional workshop and at SC67b.

### Item 7.3: Implementation Reviews

Guidelines for *Implementation Reviews* are provided in IWC (2012). The primary objectives of an *Implementation Review* are to: (1) review the available information (including biological data, abundance estimates and data relevant to stock structure issues) to ascertain whether the present situation is as expected (i.e. within the space tested during the development of the SLA) and determine whether new simulation trials are required to ensure that the SLA still meets the Commission's objectives; and (2) to review information required for the SLA, i.e. catch data and, when available at the time of the Review, new abundance estimates (note that this can also occur outside an *Implementation Review* at an Annual Meeting).

#### Item 7.3.1: BCB bowhead whales Implementation Review

The *Implementation Review* for BCB bowhead whales will start (and potentially be completed) at this meeting. An intersessional Steering Group under Suydam (SG-3) has been established to prepare for this *IR*. The list of data available to the members of the Scientific Committee can be found at <https://iwc.int/data-availability>.

#### Item 7.3.2: Review schedule for the next six years

The list of reviews developed at last year's meeting is given below. This item will allow us to reconsider this in the light of progress under Item 7.3.1.

Timetable for AWMP Implementation and Implementations Reviews

Hunts	Year SLA developed (IRs completed)	Next Implementation Review
Alaskan and Chukotkan bowhead	2002 (2007, 2012)	Start 2018
Chukotka and Makah gray	2004 (2010)/2013	Start 2019
West Greenland humpback	2014	Start 2020
West Greenland bowhead	2015	Start 2021
West Greenland fin	2017/18 est.	2023 estimated
West Greenland/East Greenland common minke	2018	2024 estimated

## **ITEM 8: STOCKS SUBJECT TO SUBSISTENCE WHALING INCLUDING MANAGEMENT ADVICE**

The Commission is considering the renewal of catch/strike limits for aboriginal subsistence whaling hunt at its 2018 meeting. The Committee has agreed that the best way to provide advice to the Commission on such hunts is through long-term *SLAs*. The first *SLAs* agreed were for the hunts for Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas stock of bowhead whales and Chukotkan hunt of eastern gray whales (advice for the proposed Makah hunt was developed in 2013). An *Interim SLA* was developed for the Greenland hunts (up until 2018) to allow time to develop long-term *SLAs* for these hunts. The Committee endorsed the *Humpback SLA* in 2014, and the *WG-Bowhead SLA* in 2016 and expects to finalise *SLAs* for the remaining Greenland hunts in 2018 (see Item 7).

## **ITEM 9: WHALE STOCKS NOT SUBJECT TO DIRECTED TAKES (IA, SH, NH)**

Under this agenda item the Committee considers: (1) those stocks in the process of (or final preparations for) an in-depth assessment (i.e. North Pacific sei whales and North Pacific humpback whales); (2) Southern Hemisphere (SH) stocks for which a recent in-depth assessment has occurred or for which data are being assembled to see if an in-depth assessment is feasible (humpback, fin and blue whales); and (3) Northern Hemisphere (NH) stocks for which a recent in-depth assessment has occurred or for which data are being assembled to see if an in-depth assessment is feasible (North Pacific blue whales, North Atlantic right whales, North Pacific right whales, North Atlantic bowhead whales, Sea of Okhotsk bowhead whales, Sperm whales). Items related to the stock structure and abundance of these stocks will be dealt with early in the meeting by the sub-groups on SD&DNA and ASI.

### **Item 9.1: In-depth Assessments (IA)**

#### *Item 9.1.1: Comprehensive Assessment of North Pacific humpback whales*

An intersessional Steering Group under Clapham (SC-15) was established to further the preparation for the North Pacific humpback whale comprehensive assessment by (1) consolidate and prioritise the stock structure hypotheses developed at the first Workshop from a modelling perspective and develop appropriate draft presence/absence and mixing matrices for consideration at the next Workshop; (2) facilitate the additional work on abundance estimates; (3) finalise plans for the second Workshop in 2018.

The Committee will receive the report from this intersessional workshop.

#### *Item 9.1.2: In-depth Assessment of North Pacific sei whales*

An intersessional Steering Group under Cooke (SG-14) was established to continue progress on developing the in-depth assessment including: (1) finalise and review the data inputs for the assessment (intersessional Steering Group); (2) conduct initial runs of the assessment using the assumptions proposed by the sub-committee (Punt); (3) review result of initial runs and specify alternative assumptions if required (intersessional Steering Group); (4) report to the SC meeting on the final model inputs and the results.

#### *Item 9.1.3 In-depth Assessment of Indo-Pacific Antarctic Minke Whales*

An intersessional correspondence group under Murase (ICG-20) was established to finalise the manuscript consolidating the in-depth assessment, considering comments received during this year's meeting, and to submit the manuscript to a peer-reviewed journal.

### **Item 9.2: Evaluation for potential new In-Depth assessments**

#### *Item 9.2.1: North Pacific blue whales (NH)*

An intersessional correspondence group under Branch (ICG-18) was established to review available data needed for an assessment of North Pacific blue whales.

#### *Item 9.2.2: Southern Hemisphere Pygmy blue whales (SH)*

The work under this agenda item largely relies on progress made intersessionally by three correspondence groups.

An intersessional Steering Group under Torres-Florez (SG-10) was established to standardise DNA profiles between regions, in order to facilitate comparisons and consider sample depletion.

Another intersessional correspondence group under Redfern (ICG-10) was established to apply habitat models developed for California Current and Eastern Tropical Pacific to construct habitat use analyses for Chilean blue whales and validate with sightings data.

A third intersessional correspondence group under Širović (ICG-15) was established to reconcile different vocalisations for pygmy blue whales in order to develop a set of calls for comparative purposes and constructing hypotheses of population structure.

*Item 9.2.3: Antarctic blue whales (Areas III and IV) (SH)*

The work under this agenda item largely relies on progress made intersessionally by three correspondence groups.

An intersessional correspondence Group under Olson and Jackson (ICG-17) was established to continue working on the Southern Hemisphere Blue Whale photo-identification catalogue (which includes pygmy and Antarctic blue whales) to progress towards population assessment; particularly to assess temporal and spatial progress on catalogue and preparation of Australian catalogue for quality coding.

An intersessional correspondence group under Kelly (ICG13) was established to inspect post-CPIII sightings data collected for Antarctic blue whales and fin whales, and Antarctic blue whale photo-IDs, with a view to providing updated abundance/ trend estimates. This group is also relevant to Item 9.2.4 too.

Finally, an intersessional correspondence group under Brownell and Kato (ICG-14) was established to match up Antarctic blue whale baleen plates at the Smithsonian Institution with the original catch data in Japan.

*Item 9.2.4: Southern Hemisphere fin whales (SH)*

The work under this agenda item largely relies on progress made intersessionally by three correspondence groups.

The first under Herr (ICG-11) was established to review, collate and summarise available fin whale sightings, catch, acoustic, tracking and abundance information across the Southern Hemisphere.

The second group under Jackson (ICG-16) was established to examine fin whale stock structure in the Antarctic Peninsula region using relevant available data.

Finally, the group under Kelly described above (Item 9.2.3) is also relevant for this agenda item.

*Item 9.2.6: North Atlantic right whales (NH)*

An intersessional Steering Group under Brownell (SG-4) was established to prepare for a right whale workshop.

*Item 9.2.7 North Pacific right whales (NH)*

See note on Item 9.2.6.

**Item 9.3: New information and workplan for other northern stocks (NH)**

*Item 9.3.3: North Atlantic Bryde's whales*

The Committee will receive an update on progress on the efforts to conserve the Gulf of Mexico Bryde's whale, the world's most critically endangered baleen whale. Issues related to ship strikes and IMO are considered under Item 14.

*Item 9.3.8: North Pacific sperm whales*

An intersessional correspondence group under Brownell (ICG-19) was established to consider possible ways to provide 'broad brush' information on abundance and status of sperm whales with a possible focus on the North Pacific. Information includes: (1) population structure; (2) available abundance estimates from smaller areas; (3) revised catch histories for pelagic and land station operations; (4) potential datasets to improve understanding; and (5) identifying simple assessment approaches.

*Item 9.3.9: Other stocks - Northern Indian Ocean sperm whales*

See note on item 9.3.8.

**Item 9.4: New information and workplan for other Southern stocks (SH)**

*Item 9.4.2: Southern Hemisphere humpback whales*

An intersessional correspondence group, under Weinrich (ICG-8), was established to examine approaches to obtain reliable estimates of abundance (e.g. DuFresne *et al.*, 2014) from sighting surveys for of Breeding Stock D.

Another intersessional correspondence group, under Jackson (ICG-9), was established to review mixed stock analysis approach, including: (1) sample sizes collected from breeding grounds and their influence on mixing; (2) population substructure in Oceania and the impact of combining versus using individual stocks on catch allocation; (3) some possible stratifications of the 'pure' breeding stock samples to test alternate composition of 'pure' stocks (particularly with respect to East Australia); and (4) development of the likelihood model to account for unsampled haplotypes.

*Item 9.4.3 Southern Hemisphere right whales not the subject of CMPs*

An intersessional correspondence group, under Jackson (ICG-12), was established to review newly available pre-modern catch data pertaining to southern right whales.

## **ITEM 10: STOCKS THAT ARE OR HAVE BEEN SUGGESTED TO BE THE SUBJECT OF CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLANS (CMP)**

This agenda item considers stocks, with a specific focus on progress with scientific aspects, that are: (1) the subject of existing CMPs (e.g. southeast Pacific and South Atlantic right whales, North Pacific gray whales, franciscana) or (2) are likely candidates for a CMP (e.g. Arabian Sea humpback whales) or have been suggested to be candidates. Items related to the stock structure and abundance of these stocks will be dealt with early in the meeting by the sub-groups on SD&DNA and ASI.

### **Item 10.1; Stocks with existing CMPs**

#### *Item 10.1.3: North Pacific gray whales*

The Committee will receive the report from the fifth intersessional workshop on ‘Rangewide gray whale assessment’ with a goal of completing the rangewide review at the 2018 Annual Meeting as well as information on progress on updating the scientific components of the existing CMP.

#### *Item 10.1.4: Franciscana*

The Committee will start preparing for an in-depth review on the Franciscana CMP.

## **ITEM 11: STOCK DEFINITION AND DNA TESTING (SD&DNA)**

This agenda item merges two previously separate sub-groups, the Working Group on Stock Definition and the Working Group on DNA. Under this single item, the Committee will: (1) review of new papers on stock structure on behalf of other sub-groups; (2) review and update of guidelines for ensuring DNA data quality and for analyses of genetic data; (3) consider general statistical and other issues related to stock structure matters using a suite of data and techniques; (4) develop terminology appropriate to stock definition, unit-to-serve and ‘viable’ population for use across sub-groups and the Committee; (5) use of population models to test spatial stock structure models; (6) genetic methods for species, stock and individual identification; (6) results of the ‘amendments’ of sequences deposited in GenBank; (8) collection and archiving of tissue samples from catches and bycatches; and (9) reference databases and standards for diagnostic DNA registries. Information on specific stocks will be considered under those Agenda Items.

### **Item 11.1: DNA testing**

This DNA item has been considered since 2000 in response to IWC Resolution 1999-8.

#### *Item 11.1.1: Genetic methods for species, stock and individual identification*

The Committee will consider papers relating to the ToR and comparison of methods for SNP development and assessment.

### **Item 11.2 Guidelines for DNA data quality and genetic analyses**

#### *Item 11.2.1: Update DNA quality guidelines to include discussion of NGS data*

An intersessional correspondence group, under Tiedemann (ICG-21), was established to discuss updating guidelines to include data produced using next generation sequencing approaches.

### **Item 11.3: New statistical and genetic issues concerning stock definition**

#### *Item 11.3.1: Simulation tools for spatial structuring (e.g. TOSSM)*

An intersessional correspondence group, under Lang (ICG-22), was established to review software packages and evaluate their utility to the SD&DNA WG. The Committee will further consider papers applying such methods for stock definition and/or abundance estimation.

#### *Item 11.3.2: PCA, DAPC and related methods*

The Committee will consider papers related to PCA, DAPC and related methods and its performance in detecting stock structure.

#### *Item 11.3.4: Close-kin mark-recapture*

The Committee will consider papers related to close-kin mark-recapture and its performance in detecting stock structure.

#### *Item 11.3.5: Epigenetic ageing*

The Committee will consider papers related to epigenetic ageing and its use in discussions of stock definition and/or abundance estimation.

## **ITEM 12: CETACEAN ABUNDANCE ESTIMATES AND STOCK STATUS (ASI)**

In recent years, the Committee has recognised the need for consistency in the way it reviews and categorises abundance estimates, which in the past were reviewed only within the sub-group to which they were submitted. Since 2017, all abundance estimates are reviewed by a dedicated Working Group on Abundance Estimates, Stock Status and International Cruises (WG-ASI) and the advice passed on to the relevant sub-group early in the meeting, if it was needed urgently. WG-ASI is also tasked with the development of a table of an agreed set of abundance estimates for use by the Committee and a biennial document compiling abundance estimates for the Commission and the public that provides a broad overview by species and ocean basin, and by specific areas if appropriate. In addition, the WG-ASI will provide a biennial overview of the status of whale stocks, largely based upon completed assessments and RMP/AWMP *Implementations* or *Implementation Reviews*. Therefore, under this agenda item the Committee will report on: the development of a biennial document that compiles agreed abundance estimates including a basin wide summary (Item 12.1); (2) consider methodological issues (Item 12.2); (3) development of a summary of information on the status of stocks (based on completed assessments or *Implementations*; Item 12.3). The summary of abundance estimates and the status of stocks is intended to be made available on the IWC website immediately after the Scientific Committee report is published.

An intersessional correspondence group, under Zerbini (ICG-4), was established to: (1) develop a process to facilitate the review of abundance estimates in a timely fashion prior or during the annual meetings; (2) identify minimum requirements for presentation and review of abundance estimates for inclusion in the IWC consolidated table; (3) develop a process to validate non-standard software, non-standard methods and how to consider estimates computed from population models; (4) consider how to evaluate abundance estimates already included in the IWC consolidated table, but not yet reviewed by the SC; (5) amend the RMP Guidelines, particularly in regard to methods so far not included in the guidelines (e.g. spatial modelling and mark-recapture); and (6) develop a process to review national cruise reports with IWC oversight.

### **Item 12.1: Summary of abundance estimates and update of IWC consolidated table**

An intersessional correspondence group under Palka (ICG-5) was established to review estimates of abundance for North Atlantic humpback whales from Icelandic surveys and Asian coastal and river dolphins.

### **Item 12.3: Consideration of status of stocks (with RMP, AWMP, IA)**

The Scientific Committee is expected to provide advice on 'status'. This Item will consider: (a) the discussions under Item 5.2 and how they can be applied to stocks considered under the RMP and AWMP; (b) how to summarise the results of stocks considered under in-depth assessments; and (c) whether it is possible to provide some indication of status for stocks not considered under (a) and (b). The Committee will try to provide an overview document for the Commission on the status of large whales.

## **ITEM 13: BYCATCH AND ENTANGLEMENTS (HIM)**

This Item consolidates the discussions of bycatch and entanglements for large whales and small cetaceans with respect to both estimation and scientific aspects of mitigation.

### **Item 13.4: Review proposal for global entanglement database**

The Committee expects to receive a full proposal for the global entanglement database from the intersessional working group.

### **Item 13.5: Estimation of rates of bycatch, risks of, and mortality for small cetaceans**

The issue of bycatches in fishing gear is a severe problem for small cetaceans. Despite the differences by region, species, fishery type, etc. there are a number of general issues (e.g. how to assess bycatch numbers, scientific aspects of prevention, how to provide advice on population level effects, etc.) that would benefit from a broader discussion than is possible in the sub-committee on small cetaceans. This discussion will be convened by Currey. The Committee will give further consideration to: (a) observer programmes, including technology use and required levels of coverage; (b) role of fisheries data collection schemes; and (c) use of strandings data for quantitative estimation of bycatch.

An intersessional correspondence group (Bycatch Expert Group) under Currey (ICG-7) was established to: (1) review the methodology (i.e. modelling the drift of carcasses) and bycatch estimates in Peltier *et al.* (2016) and compare with any comparable results in the area using observer methodology; (2) review any new data provided by the authors of Peltier *et al.* (2016) that are intended for consideration by the Committee in 2018; (3) review whether modelling drift of bycaught carcasses can help identify the fisheries involved; (4) in the light of (3), make recommendations for the design of new or existing observer programmes; and (5) provide advice to the Committee on general issues (e.g. beyond the specific case of Bay of Biscay) that need to be considered whenever estimates based on strandings are being evaluated.

### **Item 13.6 Scientific aspects of mitigation measures for small cetaceans**

#### *Item 13.6.1 The IWC Bycatch Mitigation Initiative*



The Committee will receive an update on the Commission's Bycatch Mitigation Initiative from the Bycatch coordinator.

*Item 13.6.2 Collaboration with FAO on bycatch related issues*

Mattila will update the Committee on the FAO Technical Consultation on the Marking of Fishing Gear (February 2018). The Committee will also receive a report on the FAO expert workshop on "Means and methods for reducing marine mammal mortality in fishing and aquaculture operations" (March 2018).

*Item 13.6.3: Summary table of measures to mitigate bycatch of small cetaceans*

In 2017, the Committee agreed that a table covering measures to mitigate bycatch of small cetaceans (similar to that produced for large whales in 2017) would be valuable and included this on the work plan for the 2018 meeting.

*Item 13.6.4: Updates related to implementation of new USA rules on imports from external fisheries*

In 2017, the Committee requested updates from the USA and/or other countries that are affected by the implementation of the new US law requiring countries exporting seafood to the USA to demonstrate that their fisheries comply with the US Marine Mammal Protection Act.

**Item 13.7: New information on cetacean bycatch in the Western, Central and Northern Indian Ocean**

In light of information on the scope and scale of cetacean bycatch in the Western, Central and Northern Indian Ocean and the considerable data gaps associated with intensive and extensive gillnet fisheries, the Committee recommended in 2017 that bycatch in the region be included in the work plan for the 2018 meeting.

**ITEM 14: SHIP STRIKES (HIM)**

This Item consolidates the discussions of ship strikes with respect to both estimation and scientific aspects of mitigation.

**Item 14.1: Review estimates of rates of ship strikes, risk of ship strikes and mortality**

An intersessional Steering Group under Leaper (SG-7) was established to continue to assist the ship strike co-ordinators in reviewing cases submitted to the IWC global database and to provide advice on how to reduce the backlog of cases.

**Item 14.2: Mitigation of ship strikes in high risk areas**

An intersessional Steering Group under Leaper (SG-8) was established to: (1) consider how best to respond to requests for advice on routing measures, (2) consider how to collate information regarding cetaceans in the Western Arctic and Bering Strait migratory routes, and (3) provide input into the IMMA process related to shipping.

The Committee will also receive an update on the Intersessional work of the Secretariat with range states and IMO with respect to ship strike mitigation for the endangered Gulf of Mexico Bryde's whales, which is also relevant to Item 9.3.3.

**ITEM 15: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**

The Commission and the Scientific Committee have increasingly taken an interest in the environmental threats to cetaceans. In 1993, the Commission adopted a Resolution on research on the environment and whale stocks and on the preservation of the marine environment. As a result, the Committee formalised its work by establishing a Standing Working Group that has met every year subsequently.

**Item 15.1: POLLUTION 2020**

The Committee will review updates on the POLLUTION 2020 project, and data integration and mapping of POPs and mercury and their trends. The Committee will provide advice here in light of IWC Resolution 2016-4.

An intersessional correspondence group under Hall (ICG-23) was established to progress the IWC's Pollution 2020 programme, oil spills, and mercury synthesis project. In terms of POLLUTION 2020 project, this group will (1) finalise Phase 1 of the EffectS of Pollutants On Cetacean populations (SPOC) model, with the recent modifications and make available on the IWC website; and (2) begin Phase 2 to include assessing risks from polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDE) and assess population half-life of persistent organic pollutants (POPs) in cetaceans. This group will also: (1) synthesise available mercury data and integrate it into map; (2) identify appropriate IPs for mercury cycling and toxicology; (3) supervise the production of a report on mercury in cetaceans; and (4) identify PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) remediation courses of action.

**Item 15.2: Cumulative impacts**

The Committee will receive the report of the pre-meeting Workshop on Cumulative Impacts (Bled, 23-24 April).

**Item 15.3: Diseases of concern**

An intersessional correspondence group under Stimmelmayer and Simeone (ICG-24) has been established to: (1) finalise the IWC cetacean diseases of concern (CDoC) website redesign and content; (2) determine best approach to maintain

information on the website and in the consultation/discussion forum; and (3) work with the Strandings Initiative (see Item 15.4).

#### **Item 15.4: Strandings and mortality events**

An intersessional Steering Group under Simeone and Mazzariol (SG-16) has been established to work with the Secretariat and Chair of the Scientific Committee to continue development and implementation of the IWC Strandings Initiative. The Committee will receive an update on this Initiative, including on the work of the Strandings Expert Panel. It is expected that the Strandings Co-ordinator will have been appointed and will attend the meeting.

#### **Item 15.5: Noise**

The Committee will receive an update on national and international ocean noise strategies, including intersessional cooperation with the IUCN Western grey whale advisory panel (WGWAP) Noise Task Force and new international and national guidelines and advice (e.g. IUCN, NOAA). The Committee will also receive an update from the Steering Group, under Leaper, on the preparation of an Information document to the IMO Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC-April 2018). This document included a summary of the relevant material and discussions within the Committee on shipping noise in the form of a paper that might be presented to MEPC 72 if requested.

In addition, the Committee will receive an update from the intersessional correspondence group under Cholewiak (ICG-25) that was established to: (1) update on national and international noise strategies; (2) identify synergies between international noise strategies and develop priorities for future actions; (3) contribute to acoustic component of cumulative impacts workshop, as needed.

#### **Item 15.6: State of the Cetacean Environment Report – SOCER**

This year the SOCER report will focus on Atlantic Ocean, Black Sea and Mediterranean. Committee members are encouraged to make submissions using the standardised form for data entry, which can be downloaded from: <http://iwc.int/socer>.

Under this item the Committee will also discuss the future of SOCER.

#### **Item 15.7: Update on other standing topics**

Under this standing agenda item, the Committee will receive updates on standing agenda items that are planned for future biennia (e.g. marine litter and climate change). No substantial discussion is expected under this item, as it is more focused on planning future discussions and initiatives.

##### *Item 15.7.1: Marine debris*

An intersessional correspondence group under Simmonds (ICG-27) was established to develop a proposal for a workshop on marine litter and plastics to be presented at SC/67b.

##### *Item 15.7.2: Climate change*

An intersessional correspondence group under Simmonds (ICG-26) was established to discuss future work including refining planning for a workshop on climate change.

#### **Item 15.8: Update on previous recommendations**

Under this item the Committee may receive updates on progress on past recommendations (e.g. Harmful Algal Blooms).

### **ITEM 16: ECOSYSTEM MODELLING (EM)**

Each year, under this Item the Committee reviews new work on a variety of issues related to ecosystem modelling, falling under three areas: (1) reviewing ecosystem modelling efforts undertaken outside the IWC; (2) exploring how ecosystem models can contribute to developing scenarios for simulation testing of the RMP; and (3) reviewing other issues relevant to ecosystem modelling within the Committee. Given Resolution 2016-3 (Resolution on Cetaceans and Their Contributions to Ecosystem Functioning), “Ecosystem services” was added in 2017 as a new standing topic.

#### **16.1 Cooperation with CCAMLR on multi-species modelling**

##### *16.1.2 Update on cooperation with CCAMLR, including the plan for a joint SC-CAMLR – IWC SC workshop*

An intersessional Steering Group under Kitakado (SG-19) was established to commence planning of a joint Workshop between IWC-SC and SC-CAMLR WG-EMM.

#### **16.2: Applications of species distribution models (SDMs) and ensemble averaging**

##### *16.2.1: Review progress of guideline for SDMs*

An intersessional Steering Group under Murase (SG-20) was established to develop guidelines and recommendations for best practice in species distribution modelling.

#### **Item 16.4: Standing topics**

As in the case of Item 15.7, under this standing agenda item, the Committee will receive updates on standing agenda items that are planned for future biennia or for which not sufficient progress was made to change previous recommendations. No substantial discussion is expected under this item, but just reports.

##### *16.4.2: Update on body condition analyses for the Antarctic minke whales*

Given the conclusions from 2017 Scientific Committee, this item has been placed under the standing topics and will be on the agenda *only* in years when major results can be discussed.

##### *Item 16.4.3: Review the information on krill distribution and abundance by NEWREP-A*

The Committee will be informed on the discussion on new analysis presented at a CCAMLR expert meeting.

##### *Item 16.4.4: Ecosystem services*

The Committee will receive a report from the intersessional correspondence group on biological hypotheses relevant to IWC Resolution 2016-3 under Ritter (ICG-28) that was established to develop proposals for a way forward at SC/67b, and how to best integrate this stream of work into the Scientific Committee.

### **ITEM 17: SMALL CETACEANS**

#### **Item 17.1: A review of small cetaceans in rivers and estuaries of South America**

This year the Small Cetaceans sub-committee will discuss as a priority topic the status of small cetaceans that occur in South American rivers, lagoons and estuaries. Particularly, it will consider populations of Boto, Tucuxi, Franciscana and common bottlenose dolphin.

#### **Item 17.2: Review on progress on *Tursiops* taxonomy**

In 2015 the Committee started a 3-year review of *Tursiops spp.* throughout its range. The first two years were dedicated to the review on the knowledge on taxonomic status of *Tursiops* in Indian and Pacific Oceans (Taiwan, Australia, New Zealand and possibly eastern India), North Atlantic (including the Mediterranean, Black and Caribbean seas and the Gulf of Mexico) and South Atlantic. The third year of the review covered the remaining areas.

Under this item the Committee will receive the report of the intersessional workshop on *Tursiops* taxonomy (La Jolla, January 2018). The workshop will provide an overview of evaluation of *Tursiops* conducted in SC/66a, SC/66b and other relevant new information.

#### **Item 17.3: Poorly documented hunts of small cetaceans for food, bait or cash and changing patterns of use**

The Committee will receive: (a) the final report of the first workshops on ‘poorly documented hunts of small cetaceans for food, bait or cash’ held in Thailand in November 2016; (b) the report from Boto/piracatinga Workshop (Brazil, 19-22 March 2018) and (c) an update from the intersessional Steering Group on: (1) the ‘toolbox’ of investigative techniques to assist in documenting more clearly takes of small cetaceans; (2) the organisation of the last workshop on marine wildmeat in Africa (2019); and (3) actions to increase formal liaison with other Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

#### **Item 17.4: Small cetacean task team**

A Steering Group under Simmonds (SG-22) that was established to assist the Scientific Committee in providing timely and effective advice on situations where a population of cetaceans is or suspected to be in danger of a significant decline that may eventually lead to its extinction; the ultimate aim being to ensure that extinction does not occur. This year the Committee will receive an update on progress made on South Asian River dolphins.

#### **Item 17.5: Review takes of small cetaceans**

##### *Item 17.5.1: New information on direct takes and live captures [N]*

The Committee will consider new information on directed takes and live captures contained in National Progress Reports and from other sources. Incidental takes will be considered by HIM under Item 8.6.

#### **Item 17.6: Progress on previous recommendations**

IWC Resolution 2001-13 urges Contracting Governments to respond to Scientific Committee requests for information and recommendations for action regarding conservation of small cetaceans. This resolution also instructs the Committee to continue to review progress on previous recommendations on a regular basis.

##### *Item 17.6.1: Māui dolphin*

Under this sub-item the Committee will consider the annual update provided by New Zealand, as previously requested by the Committee.

### **Item 17.7: Status of the voluntary fund for small cetacean conservation research**

The Committee will receive a report on projects awarded in 2016 under the Voluntary Fund for Small Cetacean Conservation Research.

### **ITEM 18: WHALE WATCHING (WW)**

IWC Resolutions 1993-9 and 1994-14 directed Member States to submit information on whale watching. With Resolution 1996-2, the Commission directed the Scientific Committee to begin examining whale watching and its impacts. The first report from the Sub-Committee on Whale Watching was in 1998. At that meeting, Terms of Reference for the Sub-Committee were: (1) scientific protocols for research on the effects of whale watching; (2) the scientific basis for management; (3) research on the efficacy of mitigation; (4) criteria for selection of suitable areas for long-term studies on the effects of whale watching on cetaceans.

The Committee will receive updates from relevant intersessional groups under relevant Agenda sub-items.

#### **Item 18.1: Assess the impacts of whale watching on cetaceans**

##### *Item 18.1.1: Review report of the workshop on Modelling and Assessment of Whale Watching Impacts (MAWI)*

Under this item the Committee will receive the report of the workshop on Modelling and Assessment of Whale Watching Impacts (MAWI), held in conjunction with the European Cetaceans Society (April 2018). This workshop was tasked with: (1) defining specific research questions and hypotheses that will benefit understanding of the impact of whale watching, (2) identifying those whale watching locations that would be most suitable and amenable for targeted studies addressing these questions, and (3) summarising the current modelling tools available to analyse the data that will be collected.

The Committee will also receive an update from two Intersessional Correspondence Groups: (1) the group on 'habituation' of cetaceans to whale watching activities, under Simmonds (ICG-33), that was established to assess significance of cetacean 'habituation' and 'sensitisation' to the presence of whale watching activities and initiate a review of the topics 'habituation' and 'sensitisation'; (2) the group on Swim-with-whale operations, under Rose (ICG31), that was established to assess the extent and potential impact of swim-with-whale operations.

##### *18.1.3: Potential case-studies: status of Whale watching in east Africa and wider Indian Ocean*

In order to identify potential case studies, the Committee will review the existing information on the status of Whale watching in east Africa and wider Indian Ocean.

#### **Item 18.2: Five-year strategic plan and joint work with the Conservation Committee**

##### *Item 18.2.1: Recommendation on the new Conservation Committee's five-year strategic plan for whale watching*

The Committee will receive the report of the pre-meeting on the Review Conservation Committee's Strategic Plan on Whale Watching and will provide its recommendations as requested by the CC Standing Working Group on Whale Watching.

Under this item the Committee will also receive a report from the Intersessional Steering Group that has been established under Parsons to discuss development of better methods for disseminating recommendations and advice on whale watching to the Conservation Committee.

Finally, if available, it will also receive an update by Ferriss on the cooperation with IORA.

##### *Item 18.2.2: Recommendation on the Online whale watching handbook*

The Committee will provide its feedback to the Conservation Committee on the content of the draft Whale watching Handbook. If time allows, there will also be a short Plenary presentation by Minton and Wulff.

##### *Item 18.2.3: Revised Terms of Reference for the sub-committee on whale watching [N]*

The Committee will revise the Terms of Reference for the sub-committee on whale watching in relation to those of the Conservation Committee Standing Working Group on Whale watching.

##### *Item 18.2.4: Update on the Carole Carlson Memorial Whale Watching Fund*

In 2017 the Committee recommended the establishment of a voluntary 'Carole Carlson Memorial Whale Watching Fund' to (a) support research, education and outreach in the context of whale watching activities and (b) ensure that whale watching is sustainable, educational and humane. The Committee will receive an update from the Secretariat on this issue.

## **ITEM 19: SPECIAL PERMITS**

The SP working group (SP) will discuss special permit programmes with a focus on progress with the recommendations made since last annual meeting on: (a) NEWREP-A; (b) JARPEN II and (c) NEWREP-NP. This year the Committee is expected to make its biennial recommendations and conclusions to the Commission.

This item will also integrate the work of several sub-groups (e.g. RMP, SD&DNA, ASI and EM) on specific items/recommendations. Improvements to Annex P arising out of discussions during Expert Workshops or suggestions from Committee members will be dealt with initially early in the meeting.

Please note that I will ensure that discussions are focussed on scientific matters. There will be no discussion of matters better suited to the Commission.

## **ITEM 20: WHALE SANCTUARIES**

Under this Item the Committee will discuss the draft Management Plan for the Southern Ocean Sanctuary and provide its advice to the Commission.

## **ITEM 21: SATELLITE TAGGING DEVELOPMENT AND BEST PRACTICES**

This agenda item will review the report of a workshop sponsored jointly by the IWC, the US Office of Naval Research (ONR) and NOAA. The workshop discussed best practices for deployment of electronic tags on cetaceans, the needs for further tagging technology development, and future work required to assess the potential impact of tags on cetaceans.

## **ITEM 22: IWC LIST OF RECOGNISED SPECIES**

Cooke will update the Committee on the list revised after the IUCN reviews are concluded.

## **ITEM 23: IWC DATABASES & CATALOGUES (PH)**

The IWC is increasingly acting as a repository of data (including genetic samples, currently archived at the Southwest Fisheries Science Center, NOAA, US). These include: the IWC catch database; the National Progress Report database; the IWC sightings database (IWC-DESS) which holds sightings and effort data from the IWC IDCR, SOWER and POWER cruises as well as data submitted under the RMP; the IWC photographic archive for the IWC IDCR, SOWER and POWER cruises; a number of photo-identification catalogues (e.g. Southern Hemisphere blue whales, Antarctic humpback whales, various species from IWC-POWER, etc.); the global ship strikes database and possibly a future global entanglement database. This item will address: (1) common guidelines and principles for IWC databases including data availability; (2) design issues and (3) provide a summary of holdings. Information and analyses using data will continue to be discussed under the relevant items. These discussions are dealt with by the *Ad hoc* Working Group on Photo-identification (PH). The Secretariat will report on progress made on IWC Global Data Repositories and National Progress Reports.

The Committee will also receive updates from the following intersessional groups: (1) an Intersessional Correspondence Group, under Olson and Jackson, tasked to fill data gaps in Chile and Australia regional holdings of the SHBWC and assess data readiness for use in abundance estimates; (2) a Steering Group under Olson to begin the compilation of technical appendices for photo-ID guidelines.

### **Item 23.2: Progress with existing or proposed new catalogues**

*Item 23.2.3: Southern Hemisphere Antarctic and pygmy blue whales: Catalogues and databases*

Item 23.2.3.1: SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE BLUE WHALE CATALOGUE (SHBWC)

See Item 9.2.

## **ITEM 24: IWC MULTINATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAMMES**

The Committee will review the report of the IWC-POWER Technical Advisory Group and the Planning Committee that met in Tokyo in October 2017 (SC/67b/Rep01) and review recommendations for the 2018 cruise. The item will integrate advice from the NH, IA and ASI sub-groups. The Committee will also review progress under the Southern Ocean Research Partnership (SORP) programme. This item will integrate advice from several sub-groups.

## **ITEM 25: SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE BUDGET FOR THE CURRENT BIENNUM**

The Committee will provide a brief update on all activities carried out during the last intersessional period with the status on the current funding.

## **ITEM 26: COMMITTEE PRIORITIES AND INITIAL AGENDA FOR THE BIENNUM 2019-2020**

The Committee will develop a targeted 2-year workplan for the consideration of the Commission with the objective of providing the Commission (and its sub-groups) with consolidated advice for its 2020 biennial meeting. This will be based upon the workplans developed by sub-groups but will also allow discussion of relative priorities in Plenary, taking into account the Committee's workload.

## **ITEM 27: SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNUM 2019-2020**

This year the Committee will have to prepare a budget for the next biennium for Commission's approval. Sufficient time will be devoted to the discussion of activities that require financial support using the agreed procedure (IWC, 2015, p.70).

## **ITEM 28: WORKING METHODS OF THE COMMITTEE**

The Committee has agreed to keep this Item on the Agenda to allow for discussion of possible proposals to improve the working methods of the Committee, including discussion on the balance between cost savings and the efficiency of the Committee, and matters related to Annex P. The Committee also agreed to place this Item on the agenda to stimulate discussion within the Committee as to how best to improve communications on conservation matters to the Conservation Committee and Commission.

A revised version of the Scientific Committee Handbook will be available on the website 30 days before the annual meeting: <http://iwc.int/scientific-committee-handbook>.

Under this item the Committee will also receive an update on the succession plan for SC expertise to identify a way or ways to address the issue of succession of key members of the Committee, particularly related to the *Implementation Review* and assessment processes (including modelling expertise). **Item 28.5: Any other matters**

Since our last discussion in 2015 on animal welfare related matters relevant to the Committee (IWC, 2016, p.86), Nicol ([cnicol@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:cnicol@rvc.ac.uk)) developed a '*Welfare Assessment Tool*' following the recommendations of the Workshop to 'Develop Practical Guidance for the Handling of Cetacean Stranding Events' (South Africa, 2016) on this matter. Some hypothetical scenarios have been run through the 'Welfare Assessment Tool' (i.e. on whale watching, PCBs contamination, and entanglement) and these will be presented to the Committee for its advice.

The final report from the *Governance Review* is expected to be released in early April. Committee's members are asked to read the relevant portions of the report prior to the annual meeting. The Committee will receive a brief introduction on this report and on the Governance Review process.

The Independent Review Panel report represents the view of the three panellists and is the first step of the Governance Review process. Thus, the Committee is asked to review their report and provide feedback to the Commission on those recommendations related to the Committee.

## **ITEM 29: PUBLICATIONS**

The Committee will review progress with publications including: the IDCR/SOWER Commemorative Volume; the Indo-Pacific Antarctic minke whale assessment paper; and consider a discussion document provided by the Secretariat showing some of the recent changes to increase the SC's role in the *Journal of Cetacean Research and Management*.

## **ITEM 30: ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

This is my final year as the Committee's Chair and the current Vice-chair (Suydam) will be elevated to the Chair according to our rules. A new Vice-Chair will be elected this year.

## **ITEM 31: ADOPTION OF REPORT**

I will do my best to ensure that we finish before 5pm on the final day with a near-completed report.

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