

SC/67b/RP25

SM - Intersessional workshop of the task team on South Asian river dolphins



INTERNATIONAL
WHALING COMMISSION



PROJECT PROPOSAL REQUEST

1. PROPOSAL TITLE

Inter-sessional Workshop of the task team on South Asian River dolphins

2. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSAL AND ITS EXPECTED OUTCOME

The South Asian river dolphin *Platanista gangetica* is listed as an endangered cetacean species by the IUCN Red List assessment. Across its range, in the countries of India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh, the species remains highly threatened by a range of anthropogenic activities at multiple scales. These range from localized threats caused by hunting, fisheries bycatch, or local disturbances as well as from large-scale alterations of the rivers by dams, barrages, waterways and river-linking schemes. In particular large scale and rapidly accelerating water development in the Indo-Ganges-Brahmaputra floodplains make the outlook for the South Asian river dolphin conservation grim.

In recognition of this situation, the Scientific Committee has established a Task Team for the species and the team of experts that this constitutes would very much appreciate the opportunity to meet in person and discuss how to go forward. Hence a small workshop of the Task Team members is envisaged.

3. RELEVANT IWC SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE GROUPS OR SUB-GROUPS

The task team was put together by the Small Cetacean Sub-committee. Issues around South East Asian River dolphins are also relevant to the Sub-committees on Environmental Concerns and Human Induced Mortality as well as AIS and Stock Definition.

4. TYPE OF PROJECT (PLEASE TICK)

Research project	
Modelling	
Workshop/meeting	X
Database creation/maintenance	
Compilation work/editing (e.g. on whalewatching regulations, SOCER, etc.)	
Other (please specify below)	

5. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL AND ITS CONNECTION WITH SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS (DO NOT EXCEED 1500 WORDS)

(A) BACKGROUND, RATIONALE, AND RELEVANCE TO THE PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE IWC SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE:

The workshop is proposed for the intersessional period following SC/67b. Nine members of the task team would be expected to meet in person with other experts joining by Skype. A minimal-cost venue is being sought.

The Task Team initiative is one of the key tools used by the Scientific Committee to generate urgent action and in the case of the South Asian River Dolphin Task Team a number of countries, regions and river systems are involved over a significantly diverse region making this a complex issue.

(B) SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OR TOR AND DELIVERABLES/OUTCOMES:

The key objective of the workshop would be to develop a concrete trans-national plan that coordinates research efforts between countries and regions.

This would In particular:

- 1) Identify research priorities on river dolphin populations;
- 2) Identify research projects that need coordinated efforts;
- 3) Identify key threats across the entire range of the species and any region/country-specific threats;
- 4) Communicate the results of these studies to government agencies and other bodies concerned with river conservation - for example, the Gangetic Dolphin Species Recovery Project of the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, and the National Mission for a Clean Ganga (NMCG), Ministry of Water Resources & Ganga Rejuvenation, New Delhi.

Deliverables:

A full report will be produced and presented to the SM Subcommittee in 2019. Significant progress is anticipated in creating a well-coordinated task team and a clearly defined work program.

(C) METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH/WORK PLAN/ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Broad work Plan

Pre-requisites:

- Inter-sessional work
 - a) Communication between the main task team members.
 - b) Agreement on workshop location and timing
 - c) Preparation of pre-meeting materials

Provisional workshop Agenda

1. Convenor's opening remarks
2. Election of Chair
3. Appointment of rapporteurs

4. Adoption of agenda
5. Review of available documents
6. Discussion of primary threats
7. Discussion of regional issues
8. Review of current task team status
9. Presentation of strawman work plan
10. Identify important outstanding areas for further research
11. Other
12. Adoption of report

Administrative details:

The workshop will involve 9 funded invited participants and potentially others who may join at own cost or remotely.

It will run for two full days. The workshop could take place in 2019 prior to the meeting of the Scientific Committee. It could also be conducted in 2020, depending on budget availability. Nepal has been identified as the best venue in terms of costs and logistics for the task team member.

(D) SUGGESTIONS FOR OUTREACH

Lay summary for public awareness and material to enrich the IWC website with information on river dolphins in South East Asia can be provided.

6. TIMETABLE FOR ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Activity to be undertaken	Key person(s)	Start(mm/yy)	Finish (mm/yy)
Workshop	ALL	02/19	02/19
Task Team further develop agenda and determine location for meeting.	Task Team	5/2017	As appropriate
Task Team coordinators issue invitations and make other practical arrangements	Task Team and Convener of Steering Group and SM Convener	As appropriate	As appropriate

Expected outputs	Completion date (mm/yy)
Task Team South East Asian River dolphin Workshop Report to present at the SM Subcommittee in 2019	05/19

7. RESEARCHERS' (OR STEERING GROUP) NAME(S) AND AFFILIATION

Please, also specify if the project team has any direct connection (e.g. same research group or institute, collaborator on common project) with people involved or likely to be involved in taking the funding decision (e.g. IWC SC heads of delegations, SC convenors, etc.). Add as many rows as you need to the table below.

Name	Affiliation	Connection with decision
Mark Simmonds	University of Bristol	Task team Steering group coordinator
Nachiket Kelkar	Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment	Task team member
Uzma Khan	Pakistan WWF	Task team member
Shambhu Paudel	The Himalaya	Task team member
Dipani Sutaria	Independent Indian Ecologist	Task team member
Lindsay Porter	St Andrews university	SM chair
Tbd		
Tbd		
Tbd		

8. TOTAL BUDGET

Breakdown into: (1) salaries/wages (include name/position of each individual and breakdown of time and duties i; (2) travel/subsistence expenses (breakdown by person and justification) unless for IPs for workshops where a total estimate based on an average for the total number of IPs is acceptable; (3) services (e.g. aircraft/vessel time, consultancy fees, ARGOS fees, etc.); (4) reusable capital equipment (e.g. reusable equipment such as a hydrophone, cameras, etc. Note that this equipment will have to be registered at the IWC Secretariat and will remain property of the IWC at the end of the project), (5) expendable capital equipment (e.g. consumables, tags, stationery), (6) shipping costs, (7) insurance costs, (8) in kind co-funding (specify whether other funding is available for personnel/name, equipment, venues, etc.). Note that "Overheads" are not admissible. Add as many rows as you need to the table below.

Type	Detailed description	Cost in GB pounds
(1) Salaries (by person)		0
(2) Travel/subsistence (by person or est. total for IPs)	Flight, Hotel x 3 nights, local transportation, per Diem (45GBP/day x3) x 9 people	8958
(3) Services (by item)		0
(4) Reusable equipment		0
(5) Consumables		0
(6) Shipping (by Item)		0
(7) Insurance (by item)		0
(8) Co-funding		0
(9) Other		0
Total		8,958

9. DATA ARCHIVING/SHARING

Please state your plans for data archiving and sharing. Note that data collected primarily under IWC grants are considered publicly available after an agreed period of time for publication of papers, usually about two years. The work of the IWC depends on the voluntary contribution of data to the various databases and catalogues IWC supports. Please consult the Secretariat (secretariat@iwc.int)

Results of the workshop will be made public in form of a report that will be presented at the SC68a/SM.

10. PERMITS (PLEASE TICK)

Do you have the necessary permits to carry out the field work and have animal welfare considerations been appropriately considered?	
Do you have the appropriate permits (e.g. CITES) for the import/export of any samples?	

If 'Yes' please provide further details and enclose copies where appropriate:

Appendix 2 – DRAFT SCORING SHEET

If a project presents multiple primary objectives which are achieved using sub-projects, a sheet should be used to evaluate each single sub-project. Note that not all criteria are equally applicable depending on the nature of the project (e.g. field work versus workshops).

IWC SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE PROPOSALS FOR FUNDING - REVIEW CRITERIA - TEST				
TITLE OF THE PROJECT/sub-projects:				
PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:				
Key criteria	Explanation of scoring	Score	Supporting Remarks	
<i>Relevance to Scientific Committee priorities</i>				
1	How well aligned are the scientific outcomes of the project/activity with the current SC priority areas?	1 - Not aligned/poorly aligned (e.g. too vague or generic reference to general SC priorities) 2 - Reasonably aligned (e.g. some aspects may be vague or links are not clear) 3 - Well aligned (e.g. outcomes clearly deliver in the most part on priority areas, may also address longer term or potential future issues). 4 - Closely aligned (e.g. of interest for multiple sub-groups or delivers on specific SC high priority topics/recommendations in the immediate or short term).		
2	To what extent will the outcomes of the project/activity contribute to improvements in the conservation and management of cetaceans?	1 - Not at all 2 - Poorly 3 - Reasonably or over the longer term 4 - Well or over the medium term 5 - Excellently or to almost immediate effect		
Note: if in each of the two above key criteria under this section the project does not score singularly at least 2 points, do not proceed in further evaluation. Of course, proposals within a sub-group would only be developed if in their estimation scores were of 4 or above.				
<i>Approach and methodology</i>				
3	What degree of scientific merit/value is there in carrying out the work?	1 - Not demonstrated or of low scientific value 2 - Useful/basic scientific value 3 - Very good scientific value 4 - Excellent/innovative scientific value		
4	Is the proposed methodology scientifically sound and feasible in terms of field and analytical methods?	1 - Feasibility unrealistic & poor methodology or not properly addressed 2 - Feasibility & methodology acceptable but would benefit from some substantial amendments		

		3 - Feasibility & methodology good, some small changes beneficial 4 - Feasibility & methodology excellent or a highly promising innovative approach to an important question facing the Committee		
5	What is the likelihood of success based on the proposed overall approach and methodology?	1 - No chance of success 2 - Low chance of success/better approaches available 3 - Medium chance of success/some changes to the approach necessary 4 - High chance of success/little or no changes to the approach necessary		
5a	Are objectives of the research likely to be achieved within the proposed time-frame?	1 - No or unlikely 2 - Partially or potentially ambitious 3 - Yes with some minor suggestions 4 - Yes		
5b	Are any proposed intermediary targets timely and achievable?	1 - No or unlikely 2 - Partially 3 - Probably 4 - Yes		
5c	Is the proposed time-frame/work necessary (e.g. can the project produce results in a shorter time period)?	1 - No or unlikely 2 - Partially 3 - Probably 4 - Yes		
5d	Is the sample size adequate to achieve the stated objectives?	1 - Not demonstrated/not properly addressed 2 - No or unlikely (too low/too high) 3 - Probably (additional analysis needed) 4 - Yes		
6	Is the project likely to affect adversely the population(s) involved?	1 - Not properly addressed/ unknown 2 - Yes severely 3 - Possibly at a low level 4 - No		
6a	IF YES , are analyses provided on simulations of the effects using different time-frames for the project if applicable?	1 - No 2 - Partially 3 - Yes		
Note: if in each of the above key criteria under this section the project does not score singularly at least 2 points, do not proceed in further evaluation. Of course, proposals within a sub-group would only be developed if in their estimation scores were of 3 or above.				
Project team and Project management				

7	To what extent does the team have the relevant expertise, experience, and balance?	1 – Poor or not demonstrated 2 – Sufficient 3 - Very good 4 - Excellent		
8	Contingency plan: To what extent have potential problems/risks been considered and appropriate mitigation proposed?	1 – Poor or not demonstrated 2 – Sufficient but could be improved 3 - Fully or requiring only minor suggestions or not applicable		
Value for Money				
10	Does the project represent good value for money?	1 – No or significant amendments would be needed 2 – Yes but with some minor amendments 3 – Yes		
11	Have sufficient links been made to the wider research community/other organisations/capacity building.	1 – No 2 – Some but significant amendments needed 3 – Yes but with some minor additions 4 – Yes or not applicable		