

Timing and deadlines for the 2021 SC meeting (SC68C)

Robert Suydam (SC Chair), Alex Zerbini (SC Vice-chair), and Iain Staniland (IWC Lead for Science)

20 January 2021

The 2021 IWC Scientific Committee meeting (SC68C) will again be held virtually to reduce risk of COVID-19 exposure to SC members. As the Commission will meet in September 2021, coupled with the reduced agenda of SC68B, we aim to cover the full SC agenda at this meeting. To accomplish this goal, some agenda items will be discussed intersessionally in the months preceding SC68C. The meeting will also be extended by five days to allow participants to have weekends off and to accommodate more meetings of sub-groups/sub-committees and Plenary. Despite these efforts, some items may still be postponed until 2022, especially those that are highly technical. All sub-groups/sub-committees will hold at least one virtual session during SC68C. Below are details regarding proposed meeting dates, intersessional meetings and other topics relevant to the SC meeting.

Meeting dates

- 27 April to 14 May, with weekends off (note: the original dates for the SC meeting were 27 April to 9 May).
- A joint CC/SC virtual meeting is tentatively scheduled for 26 April.
- There will likely be a Plenary session on 27 April.
- Heads of Delegation will meet during the first and last weeks of the meeting.
- Sub-groups/sub-committees will meet 28-30 April, 3-7 May and 10-11 May. If needed, sub-groups/sub-committees may also meet on 27 April and 12 May.
- Plenary, convenors meetings and Heads of Delegation meetings will occur as needed 12-14 May.

Registration

- Registration will be open by 20 January 2021. SC members are urged to register as soon as possible in order to receive notifications of intersessional meetings and other SC meeting information. Please register here: <https://www.eventleaf.com/SC68C>

Intersessional meetings and workshops

- Intersessional meetings, to discuss selected agenda items, will be held 25 January - 23 April. These will be treated as pre-meetings. As such, summaries of discussions, including recommendations, will be reviewed, revised as necessary and agreed during the regular SC meeting. SC members will be given ample notification of those intersessional meetings and a schedule will be posted on the SC meeting portal.

- Some workshops may also be held during this same time period. Discussions and recommendations from workshops will be summarised in standalone reports, as is the normal practice. The SC will review those reports and endorse relevant recommendations at SC68C. Please note that if convenors decide to hold workshops after SC68C but before the Commission meeting (IWC68), the SC will not be able to review and endorse any recommendations from those workshops for presentation to the Commission at IWC68. Thus, those workshop reports will not be presented to the Commission until the following meeting (IWC69).

SC Meeting sessions

- We aim to hold two sessions per day (on meeting days) with up to three concurrent sub-group/sub-committee meetings per session.
- The timings of the sessions will likely vary over the course of the meeting period to accommodate different time zones.
- Meetings that are regionally specific will be scheduled around the appropriate time zone(s).

Submission of SC documents (SC primary and For Information papers)

- *Submission of paper titles:* We strongly request that titles for anticipated SC documents be submitted by 1 Feb 2021. Early submission of titles will help convenors determine what agenda items may be discussed intersessionally and help streamline the work of the SC.
- *Paper submission for intersessional meetings:* Deadlines for papers to be discussed at intersessional meetings will be at the discretion of the relevant convenor. Convenors will communicate regularly with their sub-group members about the availability of papers. Lengthier and more technical papers will be made available far enough in advance that there is adequate time for review.
- *Paper submission for SC meeting:* Papers not discussed during intersessional meetings must be submitted by 12 April 2021. In exceptional circumstances and with permission from the relevant convenor and the SC Chair, other papers may be submitted after that date.

Communication

The SC Chair, Vice-Chair, Lead for Science and SC convenors will ensure that SC members are well informed about: procedures that may differ from the norm; scheduling of sessions and notification of altered schedules; availability of new documents; and other pertinent information.

Table 1: Important dates and deadlines for IWC Scientific Meeting 2021 - SC68C

Deadline / Date	Action
January	
20 th	Registration opens
25 th	Beginning of period for Intersessional workshops/pre-meetings
February	
1 st	Deadline for submission of paper titles to convenors
March	
April	
12 th	Deadline for full papers submitted to SC meeting
23 rd	End of period for Intersessional workshops/pre-meetings
26 th	Preliminary date for Joint CC/SC meeting
27 th	Start of IWC-SC68C – including potential Plenary session
May	
12-14 th	Plenary, convenors and Heads of Delegation meetings as required
14 th	End of IWC-SC68C