

# **SC/69A/WW/03**

**Sub-committees/working group name: WW**

**Update from the Whale Watching Standing Working Group**

**Iwc Secretariat**



**INTERNATIONAL  
WHALING COMMISSION**

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## Update from the Whale Watching Standing Working Group

IWC Secretariat

### ABSTRACT

This paper provides an update to the Scientific Committee (SC) from the Conservation Committee (CC) Whale Watching Standing Working Group (WW SWG).

### INTRODUCTION

At IWC/SC/68D the SC received an update on the IWC Whale Watching Handbook and several other issues of mutual interest between the Conservation and Scientific Committees. This paper provides a further update on the online [Whale Watching Handbook](#) (progress since SC68D) as well as progress on recommendations relevant to the WW SWG made by the WW sub-committee.

Ryan Wulff stepped down as Chair of the SWG at the Conservation Committee meeting at IWC68.

The SWG would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank Ryan for his leadership, investment and dedication over many years.

### IWC WHALE WATCHING HANDBOOK

During 2022 work on the Handbook focused on updates to existing content requested by countries/data providers and updating the searchable table of literature following the SC68D.

The Handbook's [searchable table of literature](#) was updated with new information in March 2023. The table now features the details and abstracts of more than 550 reports, book sections and peer-reviewed journal articles on whale watching. Any relevant papers presented to this meeting will also be added. Any future updates of the handbook will be undertaken in accordance with the editorial protocol endorsed at SC68B and IWC68.

There have been three edits/updates to the WW Handbook. Additional information has been added for the Bowhead whale species page, a section of the text on the regulations for WW in Norway was updated upon their request and finally one of the case studies (HQWW) was also updated with new figures and revised text. These updates have been completed for all three languages. The Secretariat will continue working with countries and experts for any necessary updates or requests throughout 2023. In addition, scoping has begun for new content.

Since the report to SC68D the Secretariat has begun to implement Version 5 of the communications plan for Whale Watching and the Handbook. (See Annex A). This builds on earlier efforts to increase use of the French and Spanish language versions of the Handbook. A new additional focus is on Africa, South America and Asia, both in terms of raising awareness of the existence of the Handbook and generating content of specific interest to these regions.

The initial focus of promotional activity is the launch of the revised Principles for WW. Main activities include a personalised mailshot to IGOs, NGOs, regional tourism organisations and sustainable travel companies, and placed articles/interviews about the IWC's whale watching work programme. Later in the year, a second push is planned, focused on the cruise industry and throughout the year, social media activity is planned to create a regular flow of information. A full outline of activities can be seen in Annex A.

The generation of new content for the Handbook was discussed during SC68D. It was noted that few new submissions had been received. Requests for new research that could be presented to the SC are a key part of the CC WW communications plan and the Secretariat has been encouraging organisations and researchers to share this message when communicating regarding the General Principles and WW Handbook promotion (see above).

Following IWC68 discussions concerning how to ensure the Handbook stays relevant and ongoing updates are able to be translated, New Zealand reallocated a percentage of funds originally donated for the development of the Conservation Database to the WW Handbook. Thanks to the generosity of New Zealand voluntary funds are available for the maintenance, promotion and ongoing translation of the WW Handbook.

The most recent evaluation shows that use of the Handbook is increasing at a more rapid rate. In April 2022 the website recorded an average of 170 individual visitors per day. In February 2023 the average number was 500. Three of the top ten most frequently visited pages for this period are in the Spanish language section of the website which is also very good news.

#### *Input by SC to the WW Handbook*

The Secretariat, in liaison with the SWG Chair have responsibility for ensuring SC input to the Handbook. New content is being scoped this year to be included in the online Whale Watching Handbook; the SC is invited to make suggestions for new country profiles and/or case studies or supply contacts that might assist in developing these. The SC can provide input via the mechanism outline in the Editorial Protocol. In addition, the SC could contact the Secretariat focal point (Imogen Webster) with input and suggestions. The SWG welcomes input from the Convenors of the Sub-committee on Whale watching Suydam and Urban -Ramirez.

### **IWC PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES FOR WHALE WATCHING**

At its meeting in 2019 (SC68A) the SC drew attention to the need to update the IWC General Principles for Whale Watching, which had not been updated since 1996.

After several rounds of comments from both the WW Sub-committee and the WW SWG, the revised and updated Principles were presented to CC at IWC68 and subsequently to the Commission for endorsement.

This document is now available online ([https://iwc.int/document\\_3744.download](https://iwc.int/document_3744.download)), is linked to the WW Handbook, and its dissemination is included as a part of the new Communications Plan (SC2293).

#### *IWC input to CMS draft guidelines for recreational in-water interactions with marine wildlife*

In early 2022 the Secretariat was asked for input on the draft guidelines (RIWI guidelines). These were circulated to both the SC WW Sub-committee and the WW SWG members for feedback which the Secretariat compiled. In February 2023 the Secretariat participated in a CMS conducted webinar to present the latest draft of the Guidelines. The final document will be presented at the CMS COP14 in October 2023. CMS Decision 13.68 requests to consider a joint CMS-IWC RIW product with respect to cetaceans. This could be covered, for example, by including the RIWI guidelines, once adopted by CMS Parties, to the WW Handbook website under 'Download Resources'. Other ideas are welcome.

## **MEMBERSHIP OF THE CC STANDING WORKING GROUP**

The Chair of the WW SWG and Convenor of the SC WW Sub-committee discussed SC representation on the SWG WW at a meeting in early 2021. It was proposed that the Convenor of the SC WW Sub-committee, along with either the Chair or Vice Chair of the SC and one more SC representative be included in the SWG. The WW Sub-committee agreed to this proposal at SC68C.

A review of membership occurred in March 2023 and the membership has been updated with the SC Chair and Vice Chair, the Convenors of the Sub-committee on Whale watching and a SC representative. Currently, there is one industry representative, and a second is being sought, along with additional members from underrepresented regions. Suggestions for new members and another industry representative are welcomed.

Following the review of membership, the SWG was asked to nominate Candidates for Chair. This position is still vacant, and nominations are invited.

A first action for the reconfigured SWG is the comprehensive review of outputs of the IWC Strategic Plan for Whale Watching as recommended by this committee (SC2297) and included in the WW Workplan. This review will allow activities to be refocused if required and be the basis for the development and drafting of the 2025-2035 Whale Watching Strategic Plan.

## **COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE CC AND SC**

At SC68D the WW sub-committee agreed to *reconstitute a standing intersessional correspondence group on communication between the Conservation Committee's Standing Working Group on Whale Watching and the Committee's sub-committee on Whale Watching (SC2296)*. The aim of this group is to discuss development of better methods for disseminating Committee recommendations and advice on whale watching to the CC.

The WW SWG welcomes closer collaboration with the Scientific Committee and hopes that with the refreshed membership of the SWG communication will continue to strengthen. Any further constructive suggestions from the Scientific Committee are welcomed.

## **OTHER**

The Secretariat will attend the European Cetacean Society workshop on "Setting up an international network to reinforce the collaboration with Marine Mammal Tourism companies and enhance their sustainability". This will be an opportunity to engage with industry, researchers and policy makers on whale watching, data collection and sharing, and management of this activity.

## **QUESTIONS FOR THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE**

The Scientific Committee is asked to provide:

1. Any comments on the inclusion of the CMS RIWI guidelines in the Resources section of the WW Handbook, or other ideas with regards to a possible joint product
2. Suggestions for focus areas for new country profiles and/or case studies
3. Comments and suggestions on the Communications plan

## ANNEX A

### Whale Watching Comms Plan – version 5 (comprehensive update) - 2023

#### Aims

- Identify key opportunities to raise awareness of IWC work on whale watching to specific, priority audiences (see table below).
- Create a regular flow of information about whale watching and the Handbook on social media, focusing on conservation and tourism platforms.
- Increase awareness/use of the Spanish and French sections of the Handbook (currently under 20% of page hits).

**Key Messages** (top lines which are repeated across promotional material and in conjunction with additional, more tailored messages).

- The IWC has wide-ranging expertise which it uses to support regulators, operators and the public achieve the shared goals of sustainable and educational whale watching.
- The IWC has produced an online and interactive Whale Watching Handbook, General Principles for Whale Watching and a Strategic Plan, incorporating leading scientific knowledge and management practices.
- The Whale Watching Handbook is a living and global resource containing country and species information, advice and case studies for operators and educational resources, developed in consultation with governments, scientists, industry leaders and environmental organisations around the world.

**Hashtags** (selected using aggregator for Twitter only as IWC doesn't currently use Instagram):

#WhaleWatchingHandbook

#ecotourism

#whalewatching

#responsibletravel

#sustainabletravel

**Funding priorities** (£1.5k available from SWG WW)

- Translation of promotional material into French and Spanish, plus language(s) to reach Asian audiences.
- Short-term contract for a Wikipedia editor.

Event/activity/'news hook'	Timing	Primary Audience(s)	Detail	Comments & Evaluation
Publication of <i>IWC General Principles for Whale Watching</i>	Mar 2023	Multiple - see below  All organisations in priority regions:	<p>Letter from Exec Sec to individuals in each of the following stakeholder groups, highlighting the publication of the Guidelines, reminding them of the contents and aims of the Handbook, asking if they would like to submit Handbook content, and seeking regional 'ambassadors' willing to disseminate future promotional material about the Handbook to local orgs (operators, regulators, educators).</p> <p><b>Africa</b> COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO (see below also) <a href="#">West Africa EcoTourism Network Launch - West Africa Eco Tourism</a> <a href="#">Ecotourism Kenya</a></p> <p><b>South America</b> <b>Colombia:</b> Universidad del Valle Viajes de Monte NGO Fundacion Macuaticos Pontificia Universidad Javeriana <b>Peru:</b></p>	English, French a & Spanish personalised letters sent out March 23. Responses still coming and so far include suggestions for new content/research papers, names of potential regional stakeholder organisations and individuals to engage with, invitations to contribute to newsletters and participate in conferences, and commitments to forward info about the Handbook to operators.

		<p>IGOs with interest in sustainable WW</p> <p>NGOs that have supported/ referenced the Handbook previously</p> <p>Entanglement Network member orgs</p>	<p>Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos  Universidad Cientifica del Sur  Pacifico Adventures  Oceanica Expeditions  <b>Chile:</b>  NGO CIFAMAC  Universidad de Valparaiso  NGO Panthalassa  <b>Asia:</b>  to follow</p> <p>CMS (Handbook partner)  ACCOBAMS  ASCOBANS  SPREP  SPAW  IORA  CPPS  COMHAFAT/ATLAFCO  <a href="#">Marine Mammal Twinning/Ocean Governance (EU)</a></p> <p>ORCA  IFAW  AWI  HSI  Defenders of Wildlife  WDC  Oceancare</p> <p>Suggested because of links with whale watching operators and their support to national entanglement response network by reporting and standing by (when feasible) entangled whales.</p>	<p>Activity tbc</p>
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<p>Publication of <i>IWC General Principles for Whale Watching</i></p>	<p>Mar 2023</p>	<p>Eco-tourism sector – global</p>	<p>A second attempt to engage with orgs and companies promoting sustainable tourism, suggesting links to the Handbook are included on their sites, and the Handbook is highlighted where appropriate as a useful resource for travellers.</p> <p>UN World Tourism Organisation  <a href="#">Sustainable development   UNWTO</a></p> <p><a href="#">Wanderlust Sustainable Travel</a>  <a href="#">BBC Wildlife Travel Planner</a>  <a href="http://www.responsibletravel.com">www.responsibletravel.com</a>  <a href="http://www.naturetrek.co.uk">www.naturetrek.co.uk</a>  <a href="https://www.travelstride.com/guide/eco-sustainable-green-travel-tours-companies">https://www.travelstride.com/guide/eco-sustainable-green-travel-tours-companies</a>  <a href="http://www.drinkteatravel.com/choose-sustainable-tour-operator">www.drinkteatravel.com/choose-sustainable-tour-operator</a>  <a href="#">Home - The International Ecotourism Society</a>  <a href="https://www.voyageons-autrement.com">https://www.voyageons-autrement.com</a>  Global Sustainable Tourism Council  <a href="https://www.gstcouncil.org/topics/news/">https://www.gstcouncil.org/topics/news/</a>  <a href="https://travindy.com/">https://travindy.com/</a>  <a href="#">Best Places For Dolphin &amp; Whale Watching - Friend of The Sea</a>  <a href="#">Federation of Community based Tourism Organizations (FECTO)   One Planet network</a>  <a href="#">International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators</a></p>	<p>Joint approach with CMS proposed to engage UN orgs inc UNWTO &amp; UNEP – details tbd</p> <p>Personalised e-mails sent March 23.  Low response rate (3) so far.</p>
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Publication of <i>IWC General Principles for Whale Watching</i>	Mar 2023	Specialist science and conservation media	MMS podcast – i/v arranged with IWC Head of Programme Development  <a href="#">SevenSeas Media</a>  <a href="#">Cetus GeoMagazine</a> (Australia focus: we have discussed a placed article previously and could offer one linked to publication of the Guidelines)  Earth Journalism Network	Podcast broadcast Mar 23 and available <a href="#">here</a> .  Article agreed for April edition  Article scheduled for the next issue (issue 10)  Article or interview offered to journalist sponsored by EJN to attend IWC68.
Publication of <i>IWC General Principles for Whale Watching</i>	Mar 2023	Social media with focus on conservation, whale watching and eco-tourism	Post/request post of a short, explanatory piece and Handbook link to wide range of groups inc. IWC Twitter (& IWC website) CetalFauna - Facebook Whale Watching Worldwide – Facebook Lonely Planet - Facebook	Posted/contacted with material. Mar 23
Publication of new material in the Handbook (e.g. each time a new case study or country profile is published).	Ongoing and targeted to the region or sector that is the focus of new Handbook content.	Relevant member governments  Regional environmental & tourism orgs  Regional whale watching operators	tbc – depending on what new content is published and what support or resources are available to track down contacts.	
Focus on cruise industry	When resources allow	International and regional cruise companies	Specialist industry media (digital & print) – details tbc Cruise Hive Cruise Industry News Seatrade Cruise News Porthole Cruise	

			Cruise Addicts	
Themed days (use UN and other 'World Day of..' as a news hook depending on opportunities available through sponsor org or more widely.	8 June  27 Sept  24 Jan  3 March =	tbc – but will be audiences relevant to:  World Oceans Day World Tourism Day  UNESCO International Day of Education  World Wildlife Day	tbc – likely to be social media focused.	
The Economist Extended Essay	Nov 2023	Economists, policy makers, business leaders	In discussion on broader piece about relationship between whales and economics, including whale watching	Initial scoping interview, Feb 23.
tbc (see row below also)	tbc	Public with interest in conservation/eco-tourism.	Seeking placed articles, interviews or links Anthropocene BBC Wildlife Magazine	
tbc (see row above also)	tbc	tbc	Seek opportunities to offer interviews with key figures in IWC WW inc SC WW (Robert Suydam who has already been approached independently (see quotes in <a href="#">Hakai Magazine</a> ) and CC WW (currently vacant)	
Wikipedia	Ongoing – when resources are available	General public	Wikipedia editing rules proved impenetrable last time and the IWC voice is still absent from any content inc. on whale watching. We will need funding in order to make this happen.	
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<b>Version 3 (last comprehensive update – 2020)</b>				
'Species of the week' initiative on Twitter and IWC website.	Launched 14/4/20	General public.  Children (home-schooling).  IWC Twitter followers.	New, <a href="#">weekly webpage</a> and Tweet featuring a 'Species of the Week' quiz and picture competition for children, directing people to the Handbook for quiz answers.	<b>Complete</b> – initiative ran for 6 weeks.  Small but consistent spike in Handbook hits in 24 hours following each weekly quiz/ artwork post.  16% rise in IWC Twitter following from Wk 1 – Wk 6 (note: also several other factors inc. the rise in people at home/online).
<a href="#">Publication of new cetacean factsheets.</a>	Published 15/7/20	WW guides and educators  General public seeking more info on whale watching.	<a href="#">IWC website news item</a> with links.  Post to Cetal Fauna Facebook Group (Information sharing forum with 8.2k members).	<b>Complete.</b> The Handbook recorded a daily visitor increase averaging 56% during the week following publication. The factsheets section attracted the most hits of any website section with 18%  More outreach is planned for the factsheets, focusing on schools and children.
Review of Handbook's Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) in order to improve search rankings.	Ongoing.	Generic – anyone searching online for information about whale watching.	SEO Review complete. Secretariat has begun rolling programme to register/broaden SEO keywords.  Also planning to edit Wikipedia entries related to whale watching to ensure IWC work, links and references are incorporated which will improve search rankings.	<b>Complete.</b> SEO now has title, description and keywords in three languages which should boost rankings.  Wikipedia edits are underway. Hope to have completed the whale watching page by end of Nov. Update: impossible to edit internally due to Wikipedia rules. Will need to review and possibly seek funding.

			Also investigating scope to include Handbook material on Google Scholar.	Have discussed with IT and not sure this will be feasible. Each article needs an abstract in order to feature. Unclear whether we can produce an abstract for the whole Handbook or would this have to be page by page. If anyone is familiar with workings of <a href="#">Google Scholar</a> , please let me know.
Improve visibility of the 'languages' tab on Handbook homepage.	As soon as resources allow.	Generic - French and Spanish speakers.	Make languages tab more prominent (incorporate flags?).	<b>Complete.</b> Flags now visible on all webpages.
Create YouTube demo of the Handbook.	Now – basis of the YouTube recording will be Gianna's presentation to CC Meeting.	Generic – anyone searching online for information about whale watching.	Post on IWC website (home page and Whale Watching Handbook page) and Twitter, and ask CMS to do the same.  Post to other social media platforms (see below).	<b>Complete.</b> Published on 27/11.
Publication of each new case study and each new country profile.	Rolling programme is most realistic option – focusing on each target audience individually, depending on when preparations can be put in place.	Whale watching industry.  National governments esp those supplying new material for the Handbook: Canada, Maldives and Chile, Denmark (Greenland),	IWC Circular reminding IWC community of the benefits of engagement with the Handbook, seeking support for promotion, and highlighting the need for Spanish and French language outreach. The Circular might include a short multi-purpose press release/article, with an appeal to all members of the IWC community to disseminate this text to their own stakeholders as widely as possible. CMS Notification to their membership as above.	<b>Complete.</b> <a href="#">Circular and multi-purpose text</a> sent 6/11. 3 responses as of 18/11 including Environment Society of Oman invite: Feb 21 – Env. Society of Oman online web event inc opening remarks and tour of Handbook.  <b>Complete:</b> note to SWG members, seeking their support to insert text about the Handbook when they publish annual, national guidelines.

		<p>Dominica, Ecuador, Mexico.</p>	<p>Provide a short text for governments to include in official gazettes that post whale watching requirements and regulations (Lorenzo).</p> <p><b>If resources are available:</b> Approaches to travel companies known to be 'eco-friendly' - with the message that there is more content now for them to use to advise their target groups on how to choose responsible WW experiences.</p> <p><a href="http://www.responsibletravel.com">www.responsibletravel.com</a>  <a href="http://www.naturetrek.co.uk">www.naturetrek.co.uk</a>  <a href="http://www.stridetravel.com/eco-sustainable-gree-travel-tour-companies">www.stridetravel.com/eco-sustainable-gree-travel-tour-companies</a>  <a href="http://www.drinkteatravel.com/choose-sustainable-tour-operator">www.drinkteatravel.com/choose-sustainable-tour-operator</a></p> <p>Approaches to tourism bodies in specific regions and countries (IORA, AECO others?)</p>	<p>Draft e-mail attached. Work through the list whenever time/opportunity allows.</p>
<p><b>Non-specific</b></p>				

<p>Some possible platforms and dates that might be appropriate vehicles for outreach on the Handbook. In some circumstances we may increase our impact by pairing up a platform and a date (for example a placed article in ECO Magazine on World Habitat Day).</p>	<p>Broadcast 2/7/20</p>	<p>Marine mammal scientists and others with an interest in marine mammals or careers in marine science.</p>	<p>Marine Mammal Science podcast interview <a href="#">‘The Whale Watching Handbook.’</a></p>	<p><b>Complete</b> – 38 min interview inc. positive/comprehensive discussion of Handbook aims, content and success so far. The MMS podcast consistently achieves top ranking for nature-themed podcasts across a wide range of countries.</p>
	<p>Published April/21</p>	<p>Marine &amp; marine science trades and industries</p>	<p>Publications: placed article or interview with special interest media ECO Magazine, BBC Wildlife.</p>	<p><b>Complete</b> – ECO Magazine article published Apr 21 as part of special edition on IWC.</p> <p>BBC Wildlife referred us to BBC Wildlife Travel Planner.</p>
	<p>International Day of Education Jan 24</p>			<p>Oct 20 – presentation to UNEP SPAW CARIMAM conference.</p>
	<p>World Wildlife Day March 3</p>		<p>Events (virtual/in-person subject to Coronavirus): present, demonstrate, display banner, handout information.</p>	
	<p>International Day for Biological Diversity May 22</p>		<p>Geneva Forum: annual conference including Annual International Platform on Sustainable Tourism. (Free to attend if virtual in Dec 2021).</p>	
	<p>World Environment Day June 5</p>		<p>Social Media: share any relevant news with: Cetal Fauna Marine Mammal Magazine Marine Biologist Network Conservation of Cetaceans Wildlife Workers Network</p>	

	<p>World Oceans Day June 8</p> <p>World Tourism Day Sept 27</p> <p>World Animal Day Oct 4</p> <p>World Habitat Day Oct 7</p> <p>International Day of Education Jan 24</p> <p>World Wildlife Day March 3</p> <p>International Day for Biological Diversity May 22</p> <p>World Environment Day June 5</p>		<p>International Marine Conservation Congress African Marine Mammal Research Marine Mammal Observer Association Whale Watching Guides of the World</p>	
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	World Oceans Day 8 June			
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## ANNEX B

### Whale Watching Workplan 2022-2024

The Whale Watching Strategic Plan provides the overarching vision for the period 2018-2024. High level objectives presented in the workplan below directly correspond to the three objectives identified as the key components of the Strategic Plan. There is a suite of short-, medium-, and long-term actions associated with each objective. Short-term actions are taken to be those which can be delivered within two years of the adoption of the Strategic Plan, with medium-term actions delivered over five years. Two long-term actions are identified in this iteration of the Strategic Plan: (1) Continued development of the digital Whale Watching Handbook, and (2) Development of an integrated research plan.

The Whale Watching Handbook (Handbook), the SC Sub-committee on Whale Watching, and the Standing Working Group on Whale Watching will be important mechanisms through which these objectives can be achieved.

IWC WHALE WATCHING WORKPLAN 2022-2024								
High level objective & Description of activity	Timeframe			Lead	IWC community involved	Budget per year/ total budget	Potential funding source(s)	Priority Core=essential Top High Medium
	2022	2023	2024					
<b>Objective 1: Information Sharing</b> Identify methods to facilitate cooperation and information/expertise-sharing between Contracting Parties and others to support the development of a responsible whale-watching sector, including the provision of benefits to local communities.								
1.1 Use the Handbook to continue to improve industry and public access to data, information, and research results	x	x	x	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching	SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching, Secretariat			

1.2 Ongoing maintenance of the IWC WW Handbook including: -Scoping of new content -Regular updating the searchable table of literature -Modest updates to existing content requested by countries/data providers	x	x	x	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching, Secretariat	SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching			
1.3 Further development of IWC WW Handbook including: - development of new content		x	x	Secretariat	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching, SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching			
1.4 Promotion of the WW Handbook and related resources (communication strategy) - Researchers - Whale watching managers - Naturalists - Operators - Public	x	x	x	Secretariat, Standing Working Group on Whale Watching,	SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching, IWC community			
1.5 Review of implementation of the IWC Strategic Plan to date to help identify priorities. * Within two years of commencing work on the actions outlined, this Working Group aims to undertake a comprehensive review of outputs to allow activities to be refocused, if required.	x			Standing Working Group on Whale Watching,	SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching, Secretariat			
1.6 Draft new Strategic Plan 2025-2035 (10year)			x	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching,	SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching, Secretariat			
<b>Objective 2: Capacity Building and International Collaboration</b> Support the development of a responsible whale watching sector and the provision of benefits to local communities.								

2.1 Identify, on a regional basis, specific capacity building, research and development needs. In particular, those (or including those) providing long-term benefits for the livelihood of local communities.	x	x	x	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching	BMI (Secretariat), SC Sub-committee on WW			
2.2 Continue to Support the IORA Network on Sustainable Whale Watching	x	x	x	SC Sub-committee on WW, intersessional correspondence group for cooperation with IORA	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching			
2.3 Identify and list in the Handbook, funding and development organisations able to offer assistance relevant to the establishment and maintenance of whale watching operations at varying scales.	x	x	x	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching	Secretariat, SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching, IWC community			
2.4 Work with relevant international bodies, industry associations and outside expertise, to develop guidance and training tools in the Handbook that address occupational health and safety aspects of whale watching operations.	x	x	x	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching	Secretariat, SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching, IWC community			
2.5 Investigate and promote best practices on cost-effective monitoring and compliance regimes and alternative strategies to promote environmentally responsible whale watching.	x	x	x	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching, Secretariat	SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching, IWC community			
2.6 Identify and work with key partners and priority organizations who might contribute to the vision and objectives/goals.	x	x	x	Secretariat, Standing Working Group on Whale Watching	SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching, IWC community			
<b>Objective 3: Research and Data Collection</b> Continue to develop the necessary research principles and tools to assist the collection of data important to ensuring that whale watching (1) does not significantly and adversely affect the								

behaviours and fitness of individual cetaceans or populations or their habitats and (2) realizes its potential benefits, e.g., educating the public, positively affecting attitudes toward conservation, improving local economies								
<p>3.1 Continue the Modelling and Assessment of Whale Watching Impacts (MAWI) initiative, to develop tools and methodologies to assist researchers and managers in their efforts to assess potential impacts of whale watching on cetaceans and to mitigate them. This initiative is ongoing and could focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigating modelling methods to link short- (e.g., behavioural reactions) and medium-term (e.g., changes in population distribution) responses with potential impacts from whale watching to long-term (i.e., &gt;10 to 20 years) consequences (e.g., vital rates).</li> <li>• Establishing standard data collection methodologies, including from platforms of opportunity.</li> <li>• Identifying key locations for whale watching research projects and programmes, taking into consideration logistics, capacity and management urgency;</li> </ul>	x			SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching, MAWI	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching			
<p>3.2 Develop a long-term integrated research programme to better understand the potential impacts of whale watching on the demographic parameters of cetacean populations. Seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate whether there is a causal relationship between whale watching</li> </ul>	x	x	x	SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching			

<p>exposure and the survival and vital rates of exposed cetacean individuals and populations;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the mechanisms involved in causal effects, if they exist, in order to define a framework for improved management</li> </ul>								
<p>3.3 Develop processes and mechanisms for whale watching activities to collect and provide scientifically robust and useful data to researchers and research programmes</p>	x	x	x	SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching			
<p>3.4 Develop an approach (e.g., hold an intersessional workshop; establish a joint intersessional working group) to integrate social and ecological scientific research within the IWC to inform whale watching management and promote potential benefits.</p>	x	x	x	Standing Working Group on Whale Watching	SC Sub-Committee on Whale Watching			