

| Themes | Number | Year | Text | Species | Population status (based on IWC tables and IUCN assessment) | Conservation issues related to ASW activities | IWC Impact (How important is this to the work of the IWC and how much impact can the IWC have) |
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| Pollution | SC1913 | 2019 | The Committee requests that the Conservation Committee considers how to take forward interactions with relevant fora to reduce cetacean exposure to pollutants. | | | | |
| Whale Watching | SC19154 | 2019 | The Committee draws the attention of the Commission, the Conservation Committee and the Secretariat to the need to update the IWC General Principles for Whale Watching, as they have not been updated since 1996. The Committee recommends the approval and adoption of the revised general principles, as given in Annex N, Appendix 2, at the earliest opportunity. | | | | complete and superseded suggest remove |
| Whale Watching | SC19155 | 2019 | Given the need to improve communication and collaboration about whale watching between the Committee and the Conservation Committee, the Committee agrees that: (1) the whale watching sub-committee should serve as an early adopter of the recommendations database, to assess and determine its maximum utility with regard to facilitating communication between and among various IWC committees; (2) the ongoing effort by the Secretariat to archive committee reports and documents on the website is consistent with its suggestion to circulate or otherwise make Conservation Committee reports and documents relevant to Committee work plans available as soon as they are ready for distribution; and (3) a standing agenda item will be added to review such reports and documents from (in particular) the standing Working Group on whale watching as they are produced. | | | | |
| Ship Strikes | SC19175 | 2019 | The workshop recommends the following steps are undertaken by the IWC Ship Strikes Working Group and the IWC Scientific Committee as part of a process to identify High Risk Areas for Ship Strikes based on IMMAs: 1. Traffic information (e.g. Types of vessel, size, speed, flag, etc.) plotting major ship routes and see if they cross IMMAs which host significant or high density populations of species that are threatened and/or vulnerable to ship strikes. 1.1 Recommend analysing spatial patterns of traffic levels in IMMAs to examine the potential for management of vessel traffic within an IMMA. 1.2 Recommend working with relevant agencies (e.g. National Coast Guard offices) that hold this information, for access to shipping data including vessels that are not equipped with AIS. 1.3 Recommend analyses to estimate the proportion of vessel traffic that is not equipped by AIS (e.g. using remote sensing data). | | | | |
| Ship Strikes | SC19176 | 2019 | 2. Species information (e.g. Relative abundance, status, Animal Behaviour/seasonality/key lifecycle use in and within IMMAs) 2.1 Recommend presenting risk analysis in a way that allows comparisons between areas (e.g. Riedem et al. 2012; Beazam et al. 2014; Priyadarshana et al. 2016; Rockwood et al. 2017). 2.2 Recommend when an IMMA is flagged that modelling of data within IMMA is conducted for a more refined estimate of risk (e.g. correct for effort at a minimum, etc.). 2.3 Recommend possible use of tracking and/or behavioural profiling data to further refine risk assessment in the IMMA. If this cannot be done, the group recommends a review of documented behaviours, preferably within the IMMA (e.g. surface feed or deep, social, travel, etc.). Where dive profile data exist these should be used in an approach similar to (Silber et al. 2010) to estimate the proportion of time at depths of high risk for types of vessel operating in the area. Investigate stranding data near flagged IMMA including drift modelling to estimate locations of strikes. Investigate availability of distribution data of at risk species within and around the IMMA, if shipping may be re-routed into other areas. Also, investigate other unintentional consequences of the move (e.g. other species, safety, human activities, etc.) | | | | |
| Ship Strikes | SC19177 | 2019 | 3. Management and Mitigation. Where a High Risk Area has been identified as requiring management action, the workshop recommends the following steps in developing a mitigation strategy: Recommend identifying and engaging with shipping nodes (e.g. big company command centers, port meetings, etc.). Recommend a collaborative approach with stakeholders, prior to going to the IMO (if warranted). Recommend maintaining a feedback loop with shipping will help encourage and sustain success. | | | | |
| Ship Strikes | SC19178 | 2019 | The workshop recommended that, subject to funding, the IWC, working with the IUCN MMPA Task Force and the CMS and its daughter agreements, undertake an initial analysis of global IMMAs, overlaid with shipping data, to identify potential high risk areas, taking into consideration the outputs of the workshop (Ship Strikes Working Group; IWC Scientific Committee; IUCN MMPA/T; ACCOBAMS; CMS). The group recommends that the IWC Secretariat develop a costed proposal and seek funds to accomplish this (IWC Secretariat). | | | | Think this is complete |
| Ship Strikes | SC19179 | 2019 | The workshop recommended that the IWC Ship Strikes Working Group develop case studies to demonstrate the benefits, anticipated and actual costs of measures introduced to reduce ship strikes. The workshop recommended that the IWC Secretariat consider whether an intern could be recruited to support the development of these case studies. | | | | |
| Ship Strikes | SC19180 | 2019 | The workshop suggested that Simone Panigada become the liaison between the IWC Scientific Committee and Conservation Committee, ACCOBAMS Scientific Committee, the CMS and the IUCN MMPA Task Force. | | | | |
| Conservation Management Plans, Marine Debris | SC19194 | 2019 | The workshop urged that consideration of macro- and microplastics be included in the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) currently under development for the Mediterranean fin whale. | Mediterranean Fin Whale | | | |
| Bycatch & Entanglement, Marine Debris | SC19214 | 2019 | The workshop recommended that further research into links between ghost gear and cetacean entanglement be conducted – e.g. in hotspot gear loss areas, also exploring links with key drivers for gear loss (e.g. IUU). The workshop further noted the need to collaborate with the IWC Bycatch Mitigation Initiative (BMI) and the Entanglement Initiative. | | | | |
| Bycatch & Entanglement, Marine Debris | SC19215 | 2019 | Recognising previous recommendations on engagement with the GGGI, the workshop encouraged the IWC to consider the GGGI Best Practice Framework and recommended potentially undertaking pilot projects with GGGI on mitigation approaches to reduce impacts of ALDFG on cetaceans. | | | | |
| Marine Debris | SC19224 | 2019 | The workshop recommended that when communicating on the issue of marine debris, stakeholders should: (i) take into account the audience; (ii) be accurate about the underpinning scientific information and its limitations; (iii) emphasize upstream solutions in addition to end of life measures; (iv) consider consulting communication professionals or social scientists; and (v) wherever possible, focus on positive, actionable messaging. | | | | |
| Bycatch & Entanglement | SC20107 | 2020 | In relation to engagement at RFMO level, the Committee recommends that the BMI: (1) works alongside other RFMOs, in collaboration with the FAO, to develop baseline cetacean bycatch related requirements; | | | | |
| Noise | SC20135 | 2020 | Recalling Resolution 2018-04, and the Commission's request objective to facilitate mitigation of adverse effects of anthropogenic underwater noise, the Committee: (3) encourages intersessional work to further the collaboration between the Scientific Committee and the Conservation Committee on underwater noise. | | | | |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC2018 | 2020 | The Committee reiterates the importance of long-term monitoring of gray whales, strongly recommends that Range States and others support this work and welcomes the new information provided by Mexico, Russia and Japan. | Gray Whale | | | |
| Bycatch & Entanglement | SC20181 | 2020 | The Committee yet again expresses its disappointment and frustration that, despite almost three decades of repeated warnings, the vaquita population hovers at the edge of extinction caused by gillnet entanglement and ineffective fisheries management and enforcement measures in the Upper Gulf of California. Accordingly, it re-emphasises the grave concerns it has raised about the status of the vaquita over many years, laments the deteriorating social fabric of the communities with rampant illegal fisheries and lack of support for legal alternatives, and reiterates the urgent recommendations of the past four Committee meetings, especially regarding the need to remove gillnets from the species range immediately. | Vaquita | | | |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC2024 | 2020 | The Committee reiterates that Arabian Sea humpback whales (ASHW) are a priority candidate for a CMP (IWC, 2019b, p. 31) and recommends that the IWC Secretariat and SWG-CMP continue efforts with Oman and India towards development of a CMP in partnership with CMS, which already hosts a Concerted Action for the population. | Arabian Sea Humpback Whale | | | |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC2027 | 2020 | The Committee reiterates that Arabian Sea humpback whales (ASHW) are a priority candidate for a CMP (IWC, 2019b, p. 31). Further, the Committee: (2) encourages continued collaboration between the Pakistan observer programme and the IWC Bycatch Mitigation Initiative (BMI), and also encourages broader collaboration between relevant national governments, researchers and the BMI including through pilot projects on bycatch management, knowledge exchange or requests for capacity building initiatives; | Arabian Sea Humpback Whale | | | |
| Whale Watching | SC2051 | 2020 | The Committee endorses the Editorial Protocol for updating the Whale Watching Handbook presented in SC/688/W/03. It highlights the need for discussion and compromise between the Commissioners, Scientific Committee, and regional experts when drafting and approving content for the Handbook, in order for the Handbook to remain neutral and unbiased and recommends that this continue to be taken into account in the application of the Protocol. | | | | |
| Population assessment, Taxonomy | SC2062 | 2020 | The Committee reiterates that the distribution, population structure and taxonomy of blue whales is poorly understood in the northern and western Indian Ocean (IWC, 2019b, p.21). The Committee recommends that IWC member and non-member governments and regulatory bodies support scientists in the important research priorities given below and adopt management measures in core areas of habitat for blue whales in the Arabian Sea to ensure the conservation of these poorly understood populations. | Blue Whale | | | |

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| Population assessment | SC2063 | 2020 | The Committee reiterates that the distribution, population structure and taxonomy of blue whales is poorly understood in the northern and western Indian Ocean (IWC, 2019b, p.21). The Committee agrees the following research priorities: (1) continued photo-identification and increased genetic sampling and analysis of blue whales off Oman and throughout the region; (2) passive acoustic monitoring to determine seasonal presence and if possible, population abundance and trends; and (3) comparison of blue whale photographic catalogues with other blue whale catalogues in Oman, India, Sri Lanka and any others available in the Indian Ocean (and possibly the Antarctic). | Blue Whale |
| Bycatch & Entanglement | SC2092 | 2020 | The Committee endorses the recommendations in the Report of the workshop on Bycatch Mitigation Opportunities in the western Indian Ocean and Arabian Sea. It particularly highlights recommendations that: (1) national governments should strengthen bycatch assessment, monitoring and reduction programmes as a matter of urgency; | |
| Bycatch & Entanglement | SC2097 | 2020 | The Committee has repeatedly stated its serious concern for the critically endangered harbour porpoise population of the Baltic Proper, e.g. see (IWC, 2020a, p.46). The Committee again recommends, as a matter of urgency, that all countries adjoining the Baltic Proper immediately act to eliminate bycatch of the Baltic porpoise. | Harbour Porpoise |
| Bycatch & Entanglement | SC2098 | 2020 | The Committee has repeatedly stated its serious concern for the critically endangered harbour porpoise population of the Baltic Proper, e.g. see (IWC, 2020a, p.46). In addition, the Committee: (1) encourages further research into stranded and/or bycaught porpoises to investigate all factors negatively impacting on the population, including pollution and prey depletion; | Harbour Porpoise |
| Whale Watching | SC2110 | 2021 | The Committee agrees that posting updated General Principles for Whale Watching to the IWC website has become a matter of urgency. Given the unavoidable delays in the Commission approving and finalising the proposed revisions to the General Principles approved by the Committee at SC/68A, the Committee recommends that those provisions of the proposed update that are not considered controversial, based on the discussion by the Conservation Committee in late 2020 and during the next Conservation Committee meeting in 2021, should be 'fast-tracked' if at all possible and posted on the website at the earliest opportunity. The remaining provisions will be posted when the Scientific Committee, the Conservation Committee, and the Commission approve a final draft. | |
| Whale Watching | SC2110 | 2021 | The Committee agrees that posting updated General Principles for Whale Watching to the IWC website has become a matter of urgency. Given the unavoidable delays in the Commission approving and finalising the proposed revisions to the General Principles approved by the Committee at SC/68A, the Committee recommends that those provisions of the proposed update that are not considered controversial, based on the discussion by the Conservation Committee in late 2020 and during the next Conservation Committee meeting in 2021, should be fast-tracked if at all possible and posted on the website at the earliest opportunity. The remaining provisions will be posted when the Scientific Committee, the Conservation Committee, and the Commission approve a final draft. | |
| Whale Watching | SC2111 | 2021 | The Committee recommends that, until the revised General Principles for Whale Watching are approved by the Commission for posting to the IWC website, the Secretariat take down the current General Principles (https://www.iwc.int/wguledirectivemanage) and replace them with a disclaimer, drafted interessionally with assistance from the Convenor for the Sub-Committee on Whale Watching and the Chair of the Standing Working Group, noting that an update will be forthcoming. | |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC2148 | 2021 | The Committee also recommended that the report of a second workshop (Central America Humpback Whales population at Panama City) be developed into a draft CMP to be presented at the SC68C meeting. The participating range states developed and presented the draft CMP for this population (SC/68C/CMP/15). There was broad support from the Committee for the comprehensive information included in this draft. Therefore, the Committee recommends its suitability for endorsement. | Humpback Whale |
| Noise | SC2184 | 2021 | The Committee encourages further interseasonal collaboration and coordination between the Scientific Committee and the Conservation Committee on underwater noise. | |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC22132 | 2022 | The Committee reiterates the importance of the CMP for the conservation of the critically endangered Southeast Pacific southern right whale population (IWC, 2019b, p.28). The Committee welcomes the progress made and draws attention to: 1) the need for funding to continue to conduct the passive acoustic monitoring field work and; 2) notes the importance of increasing information about the presence of the species in southern Chile, especially the Golfo de Penas which could merit funding for additional monitoring efforts. | Eastern South Pacific Southern Right Whale |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC22134 | 2022 | To support the Actions outlined in the CMP (Southwest Atlantic southern right whales) and continued progress on these actions, the Committee: (2) reiterates the importance of continuing the long-term monitoring programmes, noting that the COVID-19 pandemic is causing major problems for such long-term programmes and encourages governments to do all they can to avoid interruptions to these important long-term efforts; | Southern Right Whale |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC22135 | 2022 | To support the Actions outlined in the CMP (Southwest Atlantic southern right whales) and continued progress on these actions, the Committee: (3) encourages the continuation of existing aerial coastal surveys and recommends expanding the surveyed area to include deeper waters to assess whether whales are using new habitats, and that a monitoring programme and aerial surveys are developed for Uruguay; (4) encourages the continuation of telemetry studies in Argentina and recommends satellite tagging in Brazil and Uruguay; (5) respectfully requests that the IWC Commissioners for these countries (Brazil, Uruguay and Argentina) continue facilitating the internal permit process for right whale tagging programmes; (6) highlights the importance of research utilising baleen from stranded whales to investigate stress hormone profiles, encourages future studies and the presentation of results to the Committee when they become available; and (7) encourages comparisons of photo-identification catalogues between Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Uruguay, especially Argentina and Brazil. | Southern Right Whale |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC22136 | 2022 | The Committee reiterates the importance of long-term monitoring of gray whales and strongly recommends that Range States and Industry support this work and welcomes the new information provided by Mexico, U.S., Russia and Japan. In particular, the Committee: (1) commends the work in the wintering areas of Mexico, urges its continuation and expresses concern about the high number of strandings, poor body condition and low calf counts observed in Mexico in 2019-2022 as related to the UME event; | Gray Whale |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC22141 | 2022 | The Committee recognises the range States revisions following the Committee's recommendations from SC68B and SC68C for the CMP for South American river dolphins and commends the range States for the appointment of a full-time coordinator. The Committee: (1) encourages the range states to work with the IWCs Bycatch Mitigation Initiative since bycatch was identified as a key threat for river dolphins; (2) recognises the importance of the piracatinga fishing ban to the recovery of the Amazon River dolphin populations and strongly recommends a renewal of the piracatinga fishing ban for more than one year, and (3) encourages the proponents to explore potential funding opportunities within the IWC (e.g. Voluntary Fund for Conservation, joint Conservation/Small Cetacean Research Fund, through the BMI) to help support the SARDI and the CMP development. | South American River Dolphin |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC22149 | 2022 | At SC68B and SC68D, the Committee reiterated the recommendation that the Central American humpback whale population be treated as a priority population for the purpose of the CMP development process. Therefore, the Committee recommends the continuation and increased collaboration of the Range States and continues to recommend its suitability for endorsement. The Committee also recommends that the revised CMP be presented at the next meeting. | Humpback Whale |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC22150 | 2022 | ACCOBAMS is considering drafting a CMP for sperm whales in the near future and the Committee agrees that consideration should be given to this being a joint ACCOBAMS/IWC CMP. The Committee reiterates the recommendation from SC68C (SC2149) that the Mediterranean sperm whale be treated as a priority population for the purpose of the CMP development process. | Dwarf Sperm Whale |
| Conservation Management Plans | SC22151 | 2022 | The Committee notes that ACCOBAMS has adopted the IWC guidelines for its CMPs. It welcomes progress made in developing a CMP for Mediterranean fin whales and reiterates the recommendation of last year (SC2150) that the Mediterranean fin whale be treated as a priority population for the purpose of the CMP development process. The Committee encourages the relevant IWC members and ACCOBAMS parties to work towards finalising a draft CMP for fin whales for presentation at the next meeting. | Mediterranean Fin Whale |
| Pollution | SC2256 | 2022 | The Committee welcomes the report of the IWC Pollution 2025 Workshop (SC/68D/REP/02) and endorses its recommendations. It recognises the importance of understanding cumulative impacts of human-induced stressors on marine ecosystems. | |
| Pollution | SC2257 | 2022 | The Committee notes with concern the high levels of some flame retardants reported for several populations of dolphins in South Africa and the western Indian Ocean and encourages the relevant authorities to support systematic monitoring of pollutants and additional research to identify and mitigate the sources of pollutants. | |
| Climate Change | SC2262 | 2022 | The Committee welcomes the report of the virtual IWC Climate Change Workshop (SC/68D/REP/01) and endorses its recommendations. The Committee encourages further work, recognising the importance of continuing the integration of new information on climate change impacts to cetacean populations into its work. Whilst a second workshop, intended as an in-person meeting, could not be supported at this time the Committee encourages the Climate Change Steering Group to promote integration of climate change aspects within the work of all relevant sub-committees. | |

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| Climate Change | SC2263 | 2022 | The Committee recognises that climate change will affect the recovery for many cetacean species and recommends that future studies of population dynamics and recovery for cetaceans consider the effects of climate change on survival and fecundity. | |
| Noise | SC2264 | 2022 | Recalling Resolution 2018-04, and recognising the threats posed to cetaceans by underwater noise, the Committee: (1) encourages further collaboration between the IWC and the IMO with regards to addressing ship noise; and (2) reiterates the need for intersectoral collaboration between the Scientific Committee and the Conservation Committee on underwater noise, particularly with respect to addressing seismic survey impacts. | |
| Marine Debris | SC2265 | 2022 | The Committee reiterates its growing concerns about the impacts of marine debris on marine wildlife. The Committee: (1) encourages new information on wastes arising from the COVID-19 pandemic that are entering the marine environment, and in particular that findings of these materials during necropsies be reported; (2) encourages necropsies that examine stomach contents for marine debris materials whenever possible. | |
| Marine Debris | SC2266 | 2022 | Recognising the importance in addressing the marine debris issue on a global scale, the Committee: (1) requests the Commission to support the development of the international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, at the UN Environment Assembly; (2) requests that the Secretariat engage in the ad hoc open-ended working group to prepare for the work of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to end plastic pollution convened by the UNEP Executive Director resulting from UNEA 5.2 resolution 5/14; and (3) recommends the Secretariat consult on ship-based marine debris with the IMO. | |
| Bycatch & Entanglement | SC2270 | 2022 | The Committee recalls its previous concerns and recommendations regarding the declining status of the vaquita and reiterates the urgent recommendations of the past six Committee meetings, detailed in Appendix O. | Vaquita |
| Bycatch & Entanglement | SC2271 | 2022 | The Committee draws attention to evidence that clearly indicates the vaquita population is still decreasing and that the threat of gillnet entanglement, including in and near the Zero Tolerance Area (ZTA), is increasing. Contrary claims of vaquita recovery in some media are false and have been refuted by this Committee given the multiple lines of evidence presented. Gillnetting within the ZTA has increased since 2018 due to the continuation of illegal fishing for totoaba, and the openly conducted and increased illegal fishing for shrimp and finfish. | Vaquita |
| Bycatch & Entanglement | SC2272 | 2022 | The Committee strongly recommends that to provide the best possible assessment of the declining vaquita population, the acoustic monitoring and visual survey work planned between May 2022 and June 2023 be fully funded and that the Mexican authorities take steps to assure that the field teams can carry out this work safely and efficiently and requests that an update be provided of this monitoring at the next SC meeting. | Vaquita |
| Bycatch & Entanglement, Population assessment | SC2273 | 2022 | The Committee emphasises that between 6 and 10 (0.78 probability) vaquita remain and the species is close to extinction solely due to entanglement in gillnets and stresses that any inferred demographic gain from the small number of vaquita births documented since 2019 has probably been offset by unrecorded bycatch given that (i) nets that kill vaquitas are still in the water, (ii) very little monitoring of beaches (for stranded carcasses) has taken place since the start of the pandemic; and (iii) calves and young individuals are the age classes most vulnerable to bycatch. The Committee urges the Government of Mexico to fully permit and fund the implementation of alternative fishing gears for shrimp and legal finfish to help communities eliminate the need to fish illegally by providing viable, legal livelihoods that do not endanger vaquitas and other megafauna species. | Vaquita |
| Bycatch & Entanglement | SC2281 | 2022 | The Committee draws attention to the unsustainable levels of bycatch from the two small populations of Australian humpback (<i>Sousa sahulensis</i>) and Australian snubfin dolphins (<i>Orcaella heinsohni</i>) in the Kikori Delta, Papua New Guinea, and agrees that there is an urgent need for collaborative action (i.e. research, community/government consultation and by-catch mitigation) to reduce dolphin mortality as a matter of priority and: (1) agrees to offer technical support to the Piku Biodiversity Network (PBN, University of Canberra) for continuation and extension of their monitoring studies and for developing strategies to reduce inshore dolphin by-catch in the Kikori Delta, in coordination with the Bycatch Mitigation Initiative and the Marine Mammal Bycatch Expert Panel; (2) requests that the Secretariat contact the Government of Papua New Guinea to advise them of concerns surrounding the high and increasing bycatch of dolphins in the Kikori Delta, which is driven by high prices for swim bladders exported to China. | Australian Snubfin Dolphin, Australian Humpback Dolphin |
| Directed takes | SC2288 | 2022 | The Committee expresses serious concern over the imminent risk of extirpation of the narwhal (<i>Monodon monoceros</i>) population present in southeast Greenland due to overhunting. The Committee recommends that Naalakkersuisut, the executive body for the government of Greenland, immediately reduce the quota for the southeast Greenland hunt of narwhals to zero. | Narwhal |
| Directed takes | SC2289 | 2022 | The Committee recommends that the Secretariat write a letter to Naalakkersuisut to express its serious concern over these continued hunts and to immediately reduce the hunting quota for southeast Greenland narwhals to zero. | Narwhal |
| Directed takes | SC2291 | 2022 | The Committee reiterates its longstanding recommendation that no small cetacean removals (live capture or directed harvest) should be authorised until a full assessment of status has been made (e.g., IWC 2021b) | Atlantic White-sided Dolphin |
| Whale Watching | SC2297 | 2022 | The Committee recommends that the comprehensive review of the outputs of the IWC Strategic Plan for Whale Watching, be undertaken interessionally by the SWG, which will now include the WW co-convenors (Suydam and Urban), the Chair or vice-Chair of the Committee (Zerbini or Porter) and another member of the Committee (Parsons). | |