

# Annex U

## Considerations for Issuing an Extinction Alert

These are suggestions of a small group formed to develop guidance on the interpretation of circumstances listed in CC/68/15/01. The group includes Butterworth, Cipriano, Collier, DeMaster, Lundquist, Simmonds, Slooten, Stachowitsch, Wilson (Sec).

The group agreed that the Extinction Alert protocol was designed to be different from any list of Critically Endangered cetaceans (e.g., IUCN Red List). Further, the Extinction Alert protocol was intended to avoid the event of a species or stock becoming extinct before the IWC could warn of the situation in the hope of promoting amelioration, given the biennial meeting schedule of the Commission and, of course, the Committee. This additional guidance should be helpful when deciding which species or subspecies can be considered for future Extinction Alerts.

CC/68/15/01, as approved by the Commission, describing the following circumstances when Extinction Alerts can be issued:

‘Statements would be issued in two specific circumstances:

1. A cetacean species or distinct population is possibly extinct or has gone extinct; and
2. There is a sudden grave concern about the survival of a cetacean species or a distinct population.’

In its interpretation of these circumstances, the Committee **recommends**:

1. Cases should be brought forward sparingly so as not to devalue the use of the Extinction Alert;
2. Each Extinction Alert should be proposed by the Committee based on a case-by-case evaluation of the species or distinct population;
3. There is a reasonable expectation that issuing an Extinction Alert may achieve significant media coverage and result in positive impacts; e.g., that it may raise the profile of the situation of the taxon concerned in such a way that the public and people in positions of influence may be more fully informed;
4. Scientific considerations which might be used to assist when evaluating ‘sudden grave concerns’ include, alone, or in combination, inter alia:
  - new information on the status of the species/subspecies or population; e.g., a precipitous reduction or the new awareness of a previously unrecognised and threatened population or species/subspecies;
  - small size of the species or population;
  - clear evidence of continuous, ongoing or longer-term declines likely to lead to extinction in the near-term;
  - catastrophic threat(s) in primary habitat.