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# Introduction

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This supplement to the Journal contains the Report of the Scientific Committee from its Annual Meeting held from 30 May to 10 June in Ulsan, Korea. The meeting was attended by almost 200 participants (including some 44 invited participants); 31 member nations were represented. It also contains the reports of five intersessional meetings:

- (1) the Workshop on Future SOWER Cruises held in October 2004 in Tokyo, Japan;
- (2) the Workshop on Habitat Degradation held in November 2004 in Siena, Italy;
- (3) the Workshop on the *pre-Implementation assessment* of western North Pacific Bryde's Whales held in March 2005 in Tokyo, Japan;
- (4) the Initial Workshop in the use of Market Sampling to Estimate Bycatch of Large Whales held in May 2005 in Ulsan, Korea; and
- (5) the Symposium on High Latitude Sea Ice Environments: Effects on Cetacean Abundance, Distribution and Ecology held in May 2005 in Ulsan, Korea.

Several major topics were discussed in Ulsan and a more detailed summary of these is given in the Editorial to Issue 2 of Volume 7 of the Journal.

Discussion of the Revised Management Procedure for baleen whales (RMP) centred on the *pre-Implementation* process for North Pacific Bryde's whales and North Atlantic fin whales. The Committee held an intersessional Workshop on North Pacific Bryde's whales in March 2005 and at the 2005 annual meeting it was agreed that the *pre-Implementation* stage had been completed and that the *Implementation* process would now begin.

The Committee began the first stage of a *pre-Implementation Assessment* for North Atlantic fin whales at the 2005 annual meeting. To progress this work, it was agreed to hold a co-operative intersessional Workshop with the NAMMCO scientific committee on general scientific issues of common interest, particularly with respect to stock structure, abundance and catch history of North Atlantic fin whales.

Work also continued on measures to ensure that total anthropogenic removal limits (especially the estimation of numbers of bycaught animals) calculated by the RMP are not exceeded. The Committee also considered progress on the research programme established to develop a simulation framework to assess the performance of genetics methods used to infer population structure.

High priority has been placed on the development of a management procedure for aboriginal subsistence whaling (AWMP). The AWMP will comprise both generic and case-specific components. After completing work on the Bowhead Strike Limit Algorithm and the eastern gray whale, work in 2005 focussed on the difficult issue of the Greenland fisheries, for which considerably less information is available. Work to develop a research programme for fin and minke whales off Greenland continued. Current aboriginal subsistence whaling operations are reviewed annually and preparations are being put in place for a major review in 2007.

Continuing concern was expressed over the status of a number of small populations of large whales, particularly the North Atlantic right whale (*Journal of Cetacean Research and Management (special issue 2)- Right Whales: Worldwide Status*) and the western North Pacific gray whale.

A major review of the abundance estimates of minke whales in the Antarctic began in 2001 so that an accepted estimate of current abundance can be obtained and any trends can be identified should they exist. The last accepted estimates were for the period 1982/83 to 1989/90. This work continued as a high priority item in 2005 and it is hoped to have new abundance estimates in 2006.

In recent years, the Committee has paid increasing attention to the relationship between cetaceans and their environment and developed two major initiatives, the SOWER 2000 programme and the POLLUTION 2000+ programme (see *Journal of Cetacean Research and Management (special issue 1) – Chemical Pollutants and Cetaceans*). Progress was reviewed at the 2005 meeting.

At the 2005 meeting, the Committee considered the status of the finless porpoise (*Neophocaena phocaenoides*) and reviewed progress on recent recommendations by the Committee on small cetacean species.

G.P. DONOVAN  
Editor

## Supplement Contents

*This supplement to the Journal contains the Report of the Scientific Committee from its Annual Meeting held from 30 May to 10 June in Ulsan, Korea. It also contains: the Report of the Workshop on Future SOWER Cruises held in October 2004 in Tokyo, Japan; the Report of the Workshop on Habitat Degradation held in November 2004 in Siena, Italy; the Report of the Workshop on the pre-Implementation assessment of western North Pacific Bryde's Whales held in March 2005 in Tokyo, Japan; the Report of the Initial Workshop in the use of Market Sampling to Estimate Bycatch of Large Whales held in May 2005 in Ulsan, Korea; and the Report of the Joint Symposium on High Latitude Sea Ice Environments: Effects on Cetacean Abundance, Distribution and Ecology held in May 2005 in Ulsan, Korea.*

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