

Draft Scientific Committee Meeting Agenda Anchorage, Alaska, 07– 18 May 2007

[N] = CHAIR'S ANNOTATIONS

1. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS [N]

- 1.1. Chair's welcome and opening remarks**
- 1.2. Appointment of rapporteurs**
- 1.3. Meeting procedures and time schedule [N]**
- 1.4. Establishment of sub-committees and working groups [N]**
- 1.5. Computing arrangements**

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA [N]

3. REVIEW OF AVAILABLE DATA, DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS

- 3.1. Documents submitted [N]**
- 3.2. National Progress Reports on research [N]**
- 3.3. Data collection, storage and manipulation**
 - 3.3.1. Catch data and other statistical material*
 - 3.3.2. Progress of data coding projects*
 - 3.3.3. Progress on program verification projects*
 - 3.3.4. Archiving of simulated datasets to test abundance estimation methods [N]*

4. COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS [N]

4.1. Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS)

- 4.1.1. Scientific Council*
- 4.1.2. Agreement on Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS)*
- 4.1.3. Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS)*

4.2. International Council for the Exploration of the Sea (ICES)

4.3. Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC)

4.4. International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT)

4.5. Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR)

4.6. Southern Ocean GLOBEC

4.7. North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO)

4.8. International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

4.9. FAO – Committee on Fisheries (COFI)

4.10. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES)

4.11. North Pacific Marine Science Organisation (PICES)

4.12. Eastern Caribbean Cetacean Commission (ECCO)

4.13. Protocol on Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife (SPAW) of the Cartagena Convention for the Wider Caribbean

4.14. Other

5. **REVISED MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (RMP) – GENERAL ISSUES**
 - 5.1. Further evaluate proposed “threshold” levels for the Guidelines and Requirements for Implementation [N]
 - 5.2. MSY rates [N]
 - 5.3. Mechanism for revision of the RMP [N]
 - 5.4. Work plan

6. **RMP – PREPARATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION**
 - 6.1. **Western North Pacific Bryde’s whales [N]**
 - 6.1.1. *Complete Implementation of western North Pacific Bryde’s whales*
 - 6.1.2. *Recommended action*
 - 6.2. **North Atlantic fin whales [N]**
 - 6.2.1. *Plan for start of North Atlantic fin whale Implementation*
 - 6.2.2. *Recommended action*
 - 6.3. **Work plan**

7. **ESTIMATION OF BYCATCH AND OTHER HUMAN-INDUCED MORTALITY (BC)**
 - 7.1. **Information and methods to estimate bycatch based on fisheries data and observer programmes**
 - 7.1.1. *Collaboration with FAO on collation of relevant fisheries data*
 - 7.1.2. *Progress on joining the Fishery Resource Monitor System (FIRMS) partnership [N]*
 - 7.1.3. *Modelling approaches to determine appropriate levels of observer coverage*
 - 7.1.4. *Feedback on EU bycatch monitoring schemes [N]*
 - 7.1.5. *NOAA workshop on the bases for determining serious injuries in whales [N]*
 - 7.1.6. *Other methods of determining survival of previously entangled whales*
 - 7.2. **Methods to estimate bycatch based on genetic data**
 - 7.2.1. *Progress on intersessional work related to market sampling [N]*
 - 7.3. **Information and methods to estimate cetacean mortality caused by vessel strikes [N]**
 - 7.3.1. *Results from data collected on vessels relevant to ship strikes*
 - 7.4. **Other issues**
 - 7.4.1. *Methods for estimating additional human induced mortalities e.g. from acoustic sources and marine debris*
 - 7.5. **Work plan**

8. **ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (AWMP)**
 - 8.1. **Complete the *Implementation Review* of bowhead whales [N]**
 - 8.2. **Review progress on the Greenlandic Research Programme [N]**
 - 8.3. **Prepare for gray whale *Implementation Review***
 - 8.4. **Work plan**

9. **ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING STOCK ASSESSMENTS [N]**
 - 9.1. **Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas bowhead whale (BRG)**
 - 9.2. **Annual review of catch data and management advice for Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas bowhead whale (BRG)**
 - 9.3. **Annual review of catch data and management advice for the eastern North Pacific gray whale (BRG)**
 - 9.4. **Annual review of catch data and management advice for minke and fin whales off Greenland (AWMP)**
 - 9.5. **Annual review of catch data and management advice for humpback whales off St Vincent and The Grenadines (AWMP)**
 - 9.6. **Catches by non-member nations (BRG) [N]**
 - 9.7. **Assessments of other large whale stocks off Greenland in addition to minke and fin whales (AWMP) [N]**

- 9.8. Work plan**
- 10. WHALE STOCKS [N]**
- 10.1. Southern Hemisphere minke whales (IA) [N]**
- 10.1.1. Estimate abundance of Antarctic minke whales*
- 10.1.2. Reveal reasons for differences between Antarctic minke abundance estimates from CP11 and CP13*
- 10.1.3. Catch-at-age analyses of the Antarctic minke whales*
- 10.2. In-depth assessment of Western North Pacific common minke whales with a focus on J-stock (NPM) [N]**
- 10.2.1. Stock structure*
- 10.2.2. Distribution and abundance*
- 10.2.3. Development of a standard CPUE series*
- 10.3. Finalisation of the Soviet catch data series (SH)**
- 10.4. In-depth assessment of Southern Hemisphere humpback whales (SH) [N]**
- 10.4.1. Humpback whale distribution at mid-latitudes based on historic catch data and JSV data*
- 10.4.2. Issues related to N_{min} and depensation for modelling of humpback whales*
- 10.4.3. Assessment of Southern Hemisphere humpback whale Breeding Stocks B and C*
- 10.4.4. Other issues related to Southern Hemisphere humpback whales*
- 10.5. Progress on the In-depth assessment of Southern Hemisphere blue whales (SH) [N]**
- 10.6. Western North Pacific stock of gray whales (BRG) [N]**
- 10.7. Eastern Arctic bowhead whales (BRG)**
- 10.8. Other small stocks – bowhead, right and gray whales (BRG)**
- 10.8.1. Small stocks of bowhead whales*
- 10.8.2. North Atlantic right whales*
- 10.8.3. Southern Hemisphere right whales*
- 10.8.4. Other small stocks of right whales*
- 10.9. North Pacific sei whales (IA)**
- 10.9.1. Consider beginning a North Pacific sei whale In-depth assessment*
- 10.10. Future SOWER cruises (IA) [N]**
- 10.10.1. Short- and long-term recommendations for future SOWER cruises*
- 10.11. Work plan**
- 11. STOCK DEFINITION (SD)**
- 11.1. Statistical and genetic issues related to population structure and stock definition**
- 11.2. Progress on the TOSSM project [N]**
- 11.3. Consider issues of data quality**
- 11.4. Other issues**
- 11.4.1. Definition of units to conserve and the implications for management*
- 11.5. Work plan**
- 12. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS (E)**
- 12.1. Infectious and non-infectious diseases of marine mammals and impact on cetaceans [N]**
- 12.2. POLLUTION 2000+ [N]**
- 12.3. Southern Ocean Collaboration [N]**
- 12.4. Planning and coordination of IWC's participation in the CCAMLR International Polar Year survey in 2008 [N]**
- 12.5. Progress with respect to the Commission request on handling and release of entangled cetaceans**
- 12.6. Other habitat related issues**

- 12.6.1. *Progress on planning for a possible climate change workshop* [N]
 - 12.6.2. *Receive the State of Cetacean Environment Report* [N]
 - 12.6.3. *Progress on acoustics*
 - 12.7. Work plan**
- 13. ECOSYSTEM MODELLING (EE) [N]**
- 13.1. Review progress on joint CCAMLR/IWC workshop on modelling Antarctic krill predators**
 - 13.2. Review collaboration with FAO**
 - 13.3. Work plan**
- 14. SMALL CETACEANS (SM) [N]**
- 14.1. Population structure, systematics and status of killer whales**
 - 14.2. Infectious and non-infectious diseases of marine mammals and impact on cetaceans** [N]
 - 14.3. Review of previous recommendations** [N]
 - 14.4. Takes of small cetaceans** [N]
 - 14.5. Work plan**
- 15. WHALEWATCHING (WW) [N]**
- 15.1. Assessing biological impacts of whalewatching on cetaceans**
 - 15.2. Identify data sources from platforms of opportunity of potential value to the Scientific Committee**
 - 15.3. Other issues**
 - 15.3.1. *Whalewatching in Alaska*
 - 15.3.2. *Discuss and organize for a workshop on the strategic planning of large-scale whalewatching research*
 - 15.3.3. *Review reports from intersessional working groups*
 - 15.3.4. *Review of whalewatching guidelines and regulations*
 - 15.3.5. *Risks to cetaceans from colliding with whalewatching vessels*
 - 15.4. Work plan**
- 16. DNA TESTING (DNA) [N]**
- 16.1. Genetic methods for species, stock and individual identification** [N]
 - 16.2. Collection and archiving of tissue samples from catches and bycatches**
 - 16.3. Reference databases and standards for diagnostic DNA registries**
 - 16.4. Work plan**
- 17. SCIENTIFIC PERMITS (SP)**
- 17.1. Review of results from JARPA** [N]
 - 17.1.1. *Review report from the intersessional JARPA Review Workshop*
 - 17.1.2. *Overview of JARPA results in the context of IWC resolutions and discussions*
 - 17.2. Review of results from existing permits** [N]
 - 17.2.1. *Japan – Antarctic minke whales, fin whales*
 - 17.2.2. *Japan – North Pacific common minke, Bryde’s, sei and sperm whales*
 - 17.2.3. *Iceland – North Atlantic common minke whales*
 - 17.3. Review of new or continuing proposals** [N]
 - 17.3.1. *JARPA II* [N]
 - 17.3.2. *JARPN II* [N]
 - 17.3.3. *Iceland* [N]
 - 17.4. Improving the Committee’s procedures for reviewing scientific permit proposals** [N]
 - 17.5. Work plan**

18. WHALE SANCTUARIES (S) [N]
19. REQUEST FROM THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WITH RESPECT TO WESTERN NORTH PACIFIC COMMON MINKE WHALES [N]
20. RESEARCH AND WORKSHOP PROPOSALS AND RESULTS
 - 20.1. Review results from previously funded research proposals
 - 20.2. Review proposals for 2007/2008 [N]
21. COMMITTEE PRIORITIES AND INITIAL AGENDA FOR THE 2008 MEETING [N]
22. DATA PROCESSING AND COMPUTING NEEDS FOR 2007/2008 [N]
23. FUNDING REQUIREMENTS FOR 2007/2008 [N]
24. WORKING METHODS OF THE COMMITTEE [N]
25. ELECTION OF OFFICERS [N]
26. PUBLICATIONS
27. OTHER BUSINESS
28. ADOPTION OF REPORT [N]

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CHAIR'S ANNOTATIONS [N]

ITEM 1: INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

The Scientific Committee (SC/59) will meet in Anchorage, Alaska, from Monday 07th to Friday 18th May, 2007. It will be preceded on Saturday and Sunday, 5th and 6th May, by a special symposium on infectious and non-infectious diseases of marine mammals and impacts on cetaceans, and by pre-meetings of the AWMP and RMP sub-committees. As some scientists are involved in both AWMP and RMP, these sub-committees will not meet simultaneously.

General information can be found at: (<http://www.iwcoffice.org/meetings/meeting2007.htm>).

The website contains a list of the work agreed to be attempted during the intersessional period (http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/sctasks.htm) and the list of intersessional correspondence groups and terms of reference (Annex R: http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/screport.htm). I have referred to some, but not all of these intersessional groups in the notes to the agenda.

Item 1.3: Meeting procedures and time schedule

Date	Items	Comments
Monday, 07 th May, 9am	Plenary session, then read documents	Items 1-4
Tuesday, 08 th May, 9am	Initial meetings of sub-committees and working groups (max 15 minutes each)	To elect Chairs, review draft agenda, identify documents etc.
Wednesday 09 th May – Monday 14 th May	Predominantly sub-committees (possibly some plenary sessions)	Complete agenda and agree reports
Tuesday 15 th May	<i>Tentative rest day!</i>	Subject to cancellation if insufficient progress is made....
Wednesday 16 th May – Friday 18 th May	Plenary sessions. Intention to finish no later than 5pm on Friday	Complete agenda and agree report, including draft initial agenda for 2008
Saturday 19 th May	Convenors to complete editorial work on sub-committee and plenary reports, and if necessary consider refinements of this agenda, priorities, and changes in organisational structure implied by the agenda or by discussions during the meeting.	

Item 1.4: Establishment of sub-committees and working groups

The following groups were identified by the convenors immediately after SC/58. Although each group has a tentative annex number, some reports may be incorporated directly into the Scientific Committee's report. PLEASE NOTE: that this year you will again be asked to sign up for sub-committees and working groups in advance. Details will be given in a circular and registration and document submission details will soon be found on the website (http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/2007categories.htm)

Convenor	Title	Annex
RMP: Bannister	Revised Management Procedure	D
AWMP: Donovan	Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling Management Procedure	E
BRG: Walløe	Bowhead, Right and Gray Whales	F
IA: Palka	In-depth Assessments	G
IA NP common minke: Kitakado	Working group on North Pacific common minke whales	G1
SH: Zerbini	Southern Hemisphere whale stocks other than minke and right whales	H
SD: Bravington	Stock Definition	I
BC: Perrin	Estimation of bycatch and other human-induced mortality	J
E: Rojas Bracho	Environmental Concerns	K
E Ecosystem: Gales	Working group to address multispecies and ecosystem modelling approach	K1
SM: Rogan	Small Cetaceans	L
WW: Kato	Whalewatching	M
DNA: Pastene	DNA	N
SP: DeMaster	Scientific Permits	O

As was the case last year, we have only 6 days for sub-committees. Also this year we have 14 sub-committees and working groups that need to meet. To facilitate this, the Convenors and Chair have agreed a tentative number of sessions per sub-committee, where the total number of planned sessions is 90 (see Outcome Report from SC/58, p.1).

The draft agenda developed by the Convenors at last year's meeting (IWC/58/Rep1, Item 19.2) identified priority items for each sub-committee and items that would only be discussed if time is available. Chairs will adhere closely to this. Accordingly, items in the latter category have been included as sub-items under the heading 'Other issues' where appropriate, to emphasise this.

ITEM 2: ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The order of the Agenda is based on that of last year, but amended *inter alia* to take account of our work plan and Commission mandates. The Commission accepted our priorities and initial agenda, and adopted the reduced budget as given under Items 19 and 21 of the last year's report.

I again recognise that some Contracting Governments do not believe that certain topics should be on the Commission and/or Scientific Committee agendas. The appropriate forum to discuss such views is in the Commission. It is not within my mandate as Chair to exclude items specifically requested for inclusion by the Commission (e.g. by Resolution). To facilitate plenary and sub-committee discussions, I will follow the practise of past years and **strongly request** that any objections to specific items or particular topics on the agenda be raised briefly under this agenda item and then provided in writing to the rapporteur for inclusion in our report. It is not acceptable for these objections to be repeated during discussions of the items themselves in the plenary sessions or during sub-committee meetings. A written reference in the relevant reports to the statements made here under Item 2 will be sufficient.

ITEM 3: REVIEW OF AVAILABLE DATA, DOCUMENTS AND REPORTS

Item 3.1: Documents submitted

PLEASE NOTE: the system we used last year will again be used this year for document distribution, in order to save both paper and energy. The details can be found on the IWC website (http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/2007categories.htm#advance) and in a forthcoming circular.

Item 3.2: National Progress Reports on research

The template for National Progress Reports has been updated and the **latest version must be used**. It can be downloaded from the website; http://www.iwcoffice.org/commission/sci_com/scprogress.htm

Item 3.3.4: Archiving of simulated datasets to test abundance estimation methods

It had been agreed in 2002 that such datasets be archived with the Secretariat (JCRM 5 (suppl): 5) and relevant members are asked to ensure that the most recent updates have been provided to the Secretariat.

ITEM 4: COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Most of the organisations on this list are ones that have met since our last meeting and with which we have a formal exchange of observers. Observers' reports should therefore be available. **Observers please send your reports to the Secretariat no later than 20th April**. I would like to be able to discuss these on Day 1. In order to save time, there will be no presentation of observer's reports. I will assume that Committee members have read these, and I will ask members whether there are any questions that should be addressed under this agenda item.

ITEMS: 5-15

These items have been prepared in consultation with the Convenors to take specifically into account relevant Commission resolutions and agenda items. Note that the Committee agenda here does not repeat the detailed sub-committee agenda items, but only highlights the major areas of discussion. Sub-items can more appropriately be added later (as is our usual practice).

ITEM 5: REVISED MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (RMP) – GENERAL ISSUES

Item 5.1: Further evaluate proposed “threshold” levels for the Guidelines and Requirements for *Implementation*

Last year, the Committee considered further how to define the threshold levels for defining 'acceptable' and 'borderline' performance for classifying the performance of RMP variants for *Implementation Simulation Trials* and recommended amendments to the Requirements and Guidelines for Implementation agreed in 2004.

This year, the Committee will try to finalise this and a discussion paper will be presented.

Item 5.2: MSY rates

In 2005, the Committee agreed to review MSY rates in baleen whales and complete this review by 2008. In 2006 an intersessional working group (Annex R8) was identified to continue this work and to plan the review of MSY rates. The Committee noted that the review of MSY rates may take up considerable time at the next meeting. Therefore, a pre-meeting of the RMP sub-committee is planned to allow for the extra time required. However, any item on the RMP agenda can be discussed at the pre-meeting.

Item 5.3: Mechanism for revision of the RMP

The Committee decided to review the specification of additional trials for testing amendments to the CLA at SC/59, and established an intersessional working group (Annex R6) to specify such additional trials.

ITEM 6: RMP – PREPARATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Item 6.1: Western North Pacific Bryde's whales

The Committee will review the outcome of the Intersessional workshop with the aim of completing the *Implementation* of western North Pacific Bryde's whales.

Item 6.2: North Atlantic fin whales

The only outstanding item to be completed before proceeding towards an *Implementation* was the development of a list of catches with associated ancillary information that would allow the development of a best and alternative catch series for use in simulation trials. Much progress has been made on this subject and the sub-committee anticipated that this work will be undertaken in time to begin an *Implementation* in 2007, following the completion of the North Pacific Bryde's whale *Implementation*. The Committee identified a number of research priorities in the interim period: (1) completion of a comprehensive list of catches; (2) refinement and extension of genetic and other analyses to discriminate between existing stock hypotheses and to estimate mixing proportions and dispersal rates.

ITEM 7: ESTIMATION OF BYCATCH AND OTHER HUMAN-INDUCED MORTALITY

Item 7.1.2: Progress on joining the Fishery Resource Monitor System (FIRMS) partnership

In 2005, the Committee recommended that the collaboration with FAO be formalised and that IWC should join the Fishery Resource Monitoring System (FIRMS). It was noted that the information flow should be a two-way process, with bycatch records held by the IWC being provided to the FAO, and FAO should provide detailed information on the nature and scale of fisheries in areas where large whale bycatch might be an issue of concern. We will review progress of this collaboration.

Item 7.1.4: Feedback on EU bycatch monitoring schemes

EU legislation requires that bycatch monitoring schemes must be set up by relevant EU countries. Members of the Committee involved in such schemes are requested to provide information on these.

Item 7.1.5: NOAA workshop on the bases for determining serious injuries in whales

The Committee noted that the US National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), was planning to hold a workshop in November 2006 to look at the basis for determining serious injuries in whales. However, we have now been informed that this meeting will now be held in August 2007.

Item 7.2.1: Progress on intersessional work related to market sampling

Last year, the Committee recommended that considerable new data will need to be available before holding a 2nd stage Workshop on market sampling. These data are unlikely to be available before the next meeting. The Committee should review progress on intersessional work in Anchorage and then decide on the need for, and if necessary the optimum timing of, a 2nd stage Workshop.

Item 7.3: Information and methods to estimate cetacean mortality caused by vessel strikes

I draw your attention to the fact that consideration of this issue has been highlighted as a priority activity of the Conservation Committee (IWC/57/Rep5, Appendix 3). One of the recommendations from the CC Ship Strikes Working Group was the development of a single international database of collisions between whales and vessels. An intersessional email group (Annex R30) was set up to develop a process by which data provided from a range of sources could be stored in a database in a standardised way that clearly identified the level of uncertainty in the data. We will review progress made by this group.

Last year, the Committee made a set of recommendations for further work including *inter alia* updating analyses of data on ship strikes of large cetaceans in Italian waters (a valuable data set for evaluating the relative risk posed by high speed vessels); applicability of histopathology techniques used to explore fat embolism in beaked whales to baleen whales; whether lesions associated with gas bubbles and fat embolism in stranded beaked whales are symptomatic of

particular events such as exposure to sonar or collisions with vessels; and studies that relate patterns of whale distribution to shipping lanes and high use shipping corridors for assessing both current collision risk and likely future risks related to new port and ferry route developments around the world. The Committee will review any progress related to these recommendations.

ITEM 8: ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

Item 8.1: Complete the *Implementation Review* of bowhead whales

Two workshops will have been held intersessionally and the Committee is scheduled to complete the *Implementation Review* at SC/59.

Item 8.2: Review progress on the Greenland Research Programme

It is a matter of great concern to the Committee that it has never been able to provide satisfactory management advice for either the fin or common minke whales off West Greenland. This reflects the lack of information on stock structure and abundance, and the absence of appropriate assessments. This was the reason the Committee first called for the Greenland Research Programme in 1998. Due to results from this programme the Committee last year felt that it had a considerable stronger position than in previous years to provide advice. It had accepted abundance estimates for both common minke and fin whales based on aerial survey data. However, 2007 is the final year for the existing bloc quotas, and the Committee last year provided advice and recommendation for further work to be undertaken in the interim period before new assessments are scheduled to be made at SC/59. We will review progress of work done intersessionally (including time at an intersessional workshop and the report from an intersessional steering group (Annex R3)).

ITEM 9: ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING STOCK ASSESSMENTS

The current block quotas for aboriginal subsistence whaling are for the period 2003-2007 and they are scheduled for revision this year. A high priority of the Committee this year is therefore to provide updated management advice on the respective stocks as required by Schedule 13(b).

Item 9.6: Catches by non-member nations

Bowhead whales from the Hudson Bay stock have been taken in past years by Canadian subsistence hunters. Any such catches will be considered by the BRG sub-committee in the context of information about this stock.

Item 9.7: Assessments of other large whale stocks off Greenland in addition to minke and fin whales

This has been included on the agenda in response to a request made at the last Commission meeting by Denmark: "Bearing in mind that the absence of scientific knowledge on minke and fin whale stocks could lead to a reduction in quota of large whales, Denmark indicated that on behalf of Greenland, it would like to request the Scientific Committee to evaluate the situation regarding other large whales off West Greenland. In particular, it was seeking advice on the viability of obtaining the missing 220 tons of meat from catches of other species of large whale such as bowheads and humpbacks. It was noted that these two species have been caught by Greenland in the past and that there are signs that the West Greenland stocks are increasing and that they could sustain a small and well-regulated catch." I have asked the AWMP group to begin work on this issue and **I request the Greenlandic scientists** to collate and provide relevant review documents.

ITEM 10: WHALE STOCKS

The title of this item now corresponds to that in the Commission's draft agenda. Individual items will be dealt with by appropriate sub-committees, as indicated.

Item 10.1: Southern Hemisphere minke whales

It is expected that it will be able to agree final abundance estimates in Anchorage. Reasons for the observed differences in abundance estimated from CPII and CPIII are not yet fully understood. Last year, the Committee set up three intersessional groups to: examine hypotheses that could explain if, and how, a change in sea ice extent might be related to the abundance estimates (Annex R17); further develop analysis methods (Annex R16); and to continue work on catch at age data (Annex R15). The Committee will review intersessional progress as basis for its continued work.

Item 10.2: In-depth assessment of Western North Pacific common minke whales with a focus on J-stock

There is yet no abundance estimate available for the whole distribution area. Last year the Committee was informed that a workshop will be convened in Korea to facilitate closer cooperation between range states for obtaining such abundance estimate. The Committee encouraged this workshop and looks forward to receive the outcome report. Further, the Committee advised additional work to obtain more detailed information on the Korean CPUE series and looks forward to receive these results. See also my notes to Item 19.

Item 10.4: In-depth assessment of Southern Hemisphere humpback whales

Last year, the Committee considered breeding stocks A, D and G and agreed that of these stocks, the most reliable results were those for Breeding Stock A. The committee further agreed that Breeding Stocks B and C would be given the priority in Anchorage. An error discovered in one of the analyses presented last year will be discussed.

Item 10.5: Progress on the In-depth assessment of Southern Hemisphere blue whales

Last year the Committee started preparations for in-depth assessment of blue whales and this work will be continued at SC/59. An intersessional working group was set up to summarise current knowledge by population or management area; identify any major gaps in knowledge; and establish priorities for research to fill these gaps (Annex R24).

Item 10.6: Western North Pacific gray whales

This is one of the most endangered populations of large whales and the Committee last year made a number of recommendations. Progress on these will be reviewed at this meeting. IWC Resolution 2004-1 on western North Pacific gray whales, *inter alia* requested all range states to develop, begin or continue scientific research programmes. As last year, I **strongly request** the Heads of Delegations from pertinent range states to provide written reports.

Item 10.10: Future SOWER cruises

Finalising the planning of the 2006/2007 SOWER cruise was undertaken by the SOWER Steering Group. The Committee might wish to revisit the short and long-term objectives in light of the results of the recent survey carried out with one ship.

ITEM 11: STOCK DEFINITION**Item 11.2: Progress on the TOSSM project**

The main aim is to develop simulation tools that can be used to examine the performance of current and future genetic population structure techniques. Since several sub-committees and working groups are currently trying to evaluate results from the application of STRUCTURE and BayesAss, it is appropriate to give priority to obtaining results from these methods.

ITEM 12: ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS**Item 12.1: Infectious and non-infectious diseases of marine mammals and impact on cetaceans Seismic surveys and cetaceans**

At last year's Committee meeting, it was agreed to convene a pre-meeting symposium on infectious and non-infectious diseases of marine mammals and impact on cetaceans, and a steering group was set up to develop agenda, identify papers and participants for the diseases symposium (Annex R29). The symposium will be held in Anchorage on 5 and 6 May. The report of the pre-meeting symposium will be discussed in a joint session with SM.

Item 12.2: POLLUTION 2000+

An intersessional workshop will be convened in Barcelona in April to evaluating the outcome phase I of POLLUTION 2000+ and identifying the needs for a possible Phase II, and if appropriate design an outline research proposal for the continuation of the programme. We look forward to receive the recommendations from the workshop.

Item 12.3: Southern Ocean Collaboration

We will receive the recommendations from the Steering Group on planning and coordinating IWC participation with CCAMLR, SO-GLOBEC and ICCED (Annex R22).

Item 12.4: Planning and coordination of IWC's participation in the CCAMLR International Polar Year survey in 2008 [N]

We have received an invitation from CCAMLR to attend their planned "IPY Survey 2008". CCAMLR seeks cooperation with IWC scientists to carry out whale observations during this large-scale multi-vessel survey. Last year, the Committee nominated Hedley to act as liaison on this initiative. We look forward to review the progress.

Item 12.6: Other habitat related issues*Item 12.6.1: Progress on planning a possible climate change workshop*

An intersessional Steering Group was set up (Annex R18) to further develop the agenda and investigate practical arrangements for an intersessional Workshop on climate change. I look forward to receive the recommendations from this group.

Item 12.6.2: Receive the State of Cetacean Environment Report

Committee members are encouraged to make submissions to the co-convenors of the intersessional working group (Annex R20) by **March 15, 2007**. Emphasis this year is on the Mediterranean and Black Seas. Each report also contains a brief Global section. Use the standardised form for data entry, which can be downloaded from (http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/socer2007.htm).

ITEM 13: ECOSYSTEM MODELLING

Ecosystem modelling has been subject to discussion in several of the sub-committees in recent years. To further this topic, we last year convened a separate working group under E as a forum for this discussion. We decided to continue this working group with Gales as convener. At SC/59 the working group will *inter alia* review progress on a joint CCAMLR/IWC workshop on modelling Antarctic krill predators, and collaboration with FAO for a FAO Technical Consultation on ecosystem modelling of relevance to the ecosystem approach in fisheries.

ITEM 14: SMALL CETACEANS

Item 14.2: Infectious and non-infectious diseases of marine mammals and impact on cetaceans

The report of the pre-meeting symposium will be discussed in a joint session with E.

Item 14.3: Progress on previous recommendations

IWC Resolution 2001-13 urges contracting governments to respond to Scientific Committee requests for information and recommendations for action regarding conservation of small cetaceans. This resolution also instructs the Committee to continue to review progress on previous recommendations on a regular basis. In addition, the Committee has endorsed the concept of a series of regional workshop on mitigating bycatch problems (*J. Cetacean Res. Manage.* 7 (Suppl.):57).

14.4: Takes of small cetaceans

As in previous years, I request Heads of Delegation to arrange for such information to be included in the national progress reports (re. Annotations to Item 3.2)

ITEM 15: WHALEWATCHING

I was very pleased with the Committee's discussion last year on quantitative methods to examine the links between short- and long-term impacts of whalewatching activities on populations of cetaceans. An interesting follow-up this year will be the advice from the intersessional group for strategic planning of large-scale whalewatching research (Annex R28).

ITEM 16: DNA TESTING

Under this agenda item, we will provide the report to the Commission required by IWC Resolution 1999-8.

Item 16.1: Genetic methods for species, stock and individual identification

I will again refer you to the SC recommendation that sequences to be used in published reports should be deposited in GenBank, and that the GenBank accession number is included in the publication, whether or not this is required by the journal. This is incorporated in the policy of the *Journal of Cetacean Research and Management*, and its guide for authors. The Committee recommended that similar practices be established for public archiving of non-sequence genetic data, where feasible.

ITEM 17: SCIENTIFIC PERMITS

Item 17.1: Review of results from JARPA

An intersessional expert workshop was held in Tokyo 4-8 December 2006, to review the results of the 16-year JARPA programme. The agenda for the workshop is given in *J. Cetacean Res. Manage.* 8 (Suppl.):267. The Committee had agreed that the workshop should focus on agenda items 1-8, and that the overview of results in context of IWC resolutions and discussions (including utility of lethal versus non-lethal research techniques, other mandates regarding SC reviews of special permit research, resolutions on the Antarctic marine ecosystem, on pollution and on environmental change and cetacean response) will be discussed by the full Committee at the subsequent meeting.

Item 17.2: Review of results from existing permits

Note that results of scientific permit research relevant to the deliberations of sub-committees such as RMP, IA and E will be presented in those sub-committees.

Item 17.3: Review of new or continuing proposals

17.3.1 JARPAII

The SC Chair was informed that, at present, there are no changes planned for JARPAII when it enters into the full-scale phase following completion of the feasibility phase. The full-scale programme was detailed in the original proposal (SC/57/01). Therefore, Japan does not intend to submit a revised proposal for consideration by the Committee at its Anchorage meeting. The report of the feasibility study will be submitted at the beginning of the Anchorage meeting because the second cruise of the feasibility study is now being conducted and research vessels will not return until April.

17.3.2: JARPNII

You will recall that the report of the SC/54 (page 66 *J. Cetacean Res. Manage.* 5 (Suppl.), 2003 under the heading "*Proposal (summary of SC/54/02)*" says: "To monitor these processes, the programme will be continued without specifying the duration of the research. However, the research will be comprehensively reviewed every six years by the IWC Scientific Committee and/or other organizations." The Committee may therefore decide if it wishes to review the results of the programme following completion of the first 6-year period, and when and in what form such a review will be undertaken. I anticipate that the Japanese delegation will inform the Committee in Anchorage when the results from the first six-year period will become available for a comprehensive review.

Item 17.3.3: Iceland

I understand that Iceland plans to complete her special permit research programme during the forthcoming season. The Committee might wish to start planning for a comprehensive review of the overall results of the programme following the completion of the programme. I anticipate that the Icelandic delegation will inform the Committee in Anchorage when the results from the completed programme will become available for a comprehensive review.

17.4: Improving the Committee's procedures for reviewing scientific permit proposals

Last year, the Committee agreed that there is a need to improve on the process currently in use to review special permit proposals. The discussion was focused on a suggested process (Annex P of the Report from SC/58) including a *pro forma* for future special permit proposals. The Committee agreed with and recommended the *pro forma* for proposals given in Annex P. Further, the Committee agreed that the approach reported in Annex P will serve as a starting point for the Committee's discussion at next year's Annual Meeting, and that the following points will be a priority in the discussion: (1) the level to which the suggested process will lead to an improvement to the existing process, if at all; and (2) if a specialist review group is set up and an intersessional workshop held, (i) what would the composition of participants be and how would they be selected, (ii) what should the Terms of Reference be, (iii) how would the process be funded, and (iv) what is the role of proponents at the workshop and what is their role at the Annual Meeting of the Committee.

At last year's meeting we established an intersessional email working group (Annex R12) to address the issue of improving the Committee's procedures for reviewing scientific permit proposals. I have asked DeMaster, as chair of this working group, to provide a written report regarding progress on this agenda item.

ITEM 18: SANCTUARIES

In the major discussion about sanctuaries in 2004, the Committee recommended procedures to facilitate the review of future proposals and future sanctuary reviews (*J. Cetacean Res. Manage.* 7 (Suppl.):50-1). I have not been informed about any new proposals for Sanctuaries that we have not already thoroughly reviewed. Therefore, I do not foresee any major discussion regarding this agenda item. Nonetheless, I have left the item on our draft agenda for final consideration at the time of our meeting.

ITEM 19: REQUEST FROM THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT WITH RESPECT TO WESTERN NORTH PACIFIC COMMON MINKE WHALES

I have been informed that Japan intends to submit a proposal to IWC/59 for a western North Pacific common minke whale quota to the Commission and that it will request that the Committee, at its meeting in Anchorage, examines the impact of the proposed take on the O and J stocks of North Pacific common minke whales. I have been informed that the full proposal to go to the Commission will be provided to the Committee well before our meeting.

At the opening plenary, the Committee will have to decide on the procedure by which it will assess the impact on stocks and thus which sub-committee will deal primarily with this issue. The Committee has agreed that the RMP is the most appropriate way to provide advice on commercial whaling although to date we have not been asked by the Commission to calculate any actual catch limits. If it is agreed that the use of the RMP is appropriate here then the examination of the impact on stocks can be based on the *Implementation* of 2003 and the current work towards an In-depth Assessment of western North Pacific common minke whales.

When undertaking the *Implementation* in 2003, although the choices of RMP variants had been discussed, it was noted that further agreement on e.g. final abundance estimates, final past and future anthropogenic removals would be needed to apply the RMP. An *Implementation Review* would normally be expected in 2008 (i.e. 5 years later).

After completion of the *Implementation*, the Committee began to work towards an in-depth Assessment of the western North Pacific minke whales with emphasis on 'J' stock. Last year, the Committee made substantial progress towards this. Remaining questions to be addressed include *inter alia*: allocation of anthropogenic removals (e.g. in static gear) to the J and O stocks, proportion of J and O stocks in the Sea of Okhotsk and an abundance estimate based on data from a larger proportion of the distribution area.

Should the Commission request that the CLA be applied to the western North Pacific common minke whales, the RMP sub-committee will need to work in liaison with the Working group on North Pacific common minke whales to consider outstanding issues that have to be completed before the CLA can be applied. The Committee may also wish to consider whether it can provide interim advice at the present meeting.

ITEM 20: RESEARCH AND WORKSHOP PROPOSALS AND RESULTS

Item 20.2: Review proposals for 2007/2008

This item will be handled, as usual, by a review group chaired by the Vice Chair and appointed from the sub-committee chairs. However, we have been informed by the Secretariat that it is unlikely that we will be able to support any outside proposals and none have been received thus far. I also draw your attention to the discussion of appropriate procedures for funding research discussed under Item 22 of last year's Committee report (IWC/58/Rep1).

ITEM 21: COMMITTEE PRIORITIES AND INITIAL AGENDA FOR THE 2008 MEETING

Our priorities are largely determined by the Commission and should not require a great deal of discussion. The work plan specified by each sub-committee/working group will provide a basis for the draft agenda for the next meeting. I will prepare a draft initial agenda for review before the end of the meeting so that it can appear in our report and will reflect our view of priorities for 2007/2008. This agenda will, of course, be subject to revision as a result of Commission decisions. Any revisions will be sent to you in an Outcome Report shortly after the Commission meeting.

ITEM 22: DATA PROCESSING AND COMPUTING NEEDS FOR 2007/2008

To facilitate discussion of this item, which necessarily occurs relatively late in the meeting, sub-committee chairs will, as usual, be asked to keep a running tally of needs arising in their sub-committee deliberations.

ITEM 23: FUNDING REQUIREMENTS FOR 2007/2008

To facilitate discussion of this item, which necessarily occurs relatively late in the meeting, sub-committee chairs will, as usual, be asked to keep a running tally of requirements arising in their sub-committee deliberations. Sub-committee chairs will try to ensure that a summary document is available as soon as possible after the sub-committees have completed their business. Where necessary, small groups will be appointed by sub-committee chairs to work out details for presentation in the plenary sessions under this item. As was done last year, we will use a standard form that should help in ensuring that the appropriate information is easily available.

ITEM 24: WORKING METHODS OF THE COMMITTEE

There was no substantial discussion of this topic last year. However, the Committee agreed to keep this item on the agenda to allow for discussion of possible proposals to improve the working methods of the Committee. At the Commission meeting last year, the Commissioner from Brazil requested that we re-examine our policy that Working Papers 'disappear' at the end of the meeting unless they are agreed to be appended to the report or its annexes. The Head of Science will develop a working paper explaining the history and rationale for the present system as background for our discussions.

ITEM 25: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The elected officers (Chair Bjørge and Vice Chair Palka) of the SC are in their second year of their three year terms. Unless one decides to step down, there is no election scheduled until 2008. However, this agenda item traditionally remains on our agenda each year. Our Rules of Procedure can be found on the website (<http://www.iwcoffice.org/commission/procedure.htm#scientific>).

ITEM 28: ADOPTION OF REPORT

I will do my best to ensure that we finish before 5pm on the final day with a completed report.