

**SOLICITATION LETTER TO POTENTIAL CONTRIBUTORS TO THE  
STATE OF THE CETACEAN ENVIRONMENT REPORT (SOCER)**

This letter is a call for submissions to enable us to produce a draft State of the Cetacean Environment Report (SOCER) for consideration by the IWC's Scientific Committee. The objective is to provide Commissioners (in response to Resolution 2000-7) and other interested parties with a non-technical periodic summary of events, developments and conditions in the marine environment that are relevant to cetaceans. Such developments might range from unusual mortalities to new legislation protecting marine habitats.

The report is compiled on an annual basis, with pre-selected regions to be treated each year. These regions include: Mediterranean and Black Seas; North and South Atlantic; North and South Pacific; Arctic and Southern Ocean; and Indian Ocean. Each report also contains a brief Global section and a glossary of technical terms.

**This year will be devoted to the Mediterranean and Black Seas**

We are asking for submissions of information that in your opinion merit inclusion in this report. This should primarily include information from 2016, 2017 and the months of 2018 before the submission deadline, although earlier data may be submitted if relevant over the long term or if representing a milestone but not included in the last treatment of the region. Please submit the information as follows:

Send an email to one of the SOCER editors (see below) and include the relevant scientific paper(s) as an attachment (e.g. pdf). With few exceptions, only information stemming from published scientific papers and reports or other authoritative sources can be accepted. If you have other forms of information please provide any supporting documentation to assist in the editorial decision-making process.

**The deadline for submissions for the 2018 SOCER is: March 15, 2018.**

The draft version will be written by the principal SOCER editors and circulated as a Scientific Committee document at the Scientific Committee meeting for comments and suggestions.

**Importantly**, based on discussions at the 2017 SC meeting and thereafter, efforts will be made to raise the profile of SOCER. These include creating a '5-year global compilation edition' as a digital publication this year. Considering the intended audience, this would be sent as a circular to all member governments and relevant NGOs/IGOs etc. A greater public impact will also be sought, for example via a new SOCER webpage in the Environmental Concerns section of the IWC website and via the IWC News Bulletin. Moreover, the editors have submitted an analysis of the SOCER since its inception in 2004 to a peer-reviewed journal and, when published, this could be attached to the digital global compilation edition for wider distribution.

Thanks for your help in keeping us updated about cetaceans and their changing environment.

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