

Draft Scientific Committee Agenda

Madeira, Portugal, 31st May – 12th June 2009

[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 Conference of Parties
 - 4.1.3 Agreement on Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS)
 - 4.1.4 Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and Contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS)
 - 4.1.5 Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of the Manatees and Small Cetaceans of Western Africa and Macronesia
- 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 World Conservation Union (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 (SPA) of the Cartagena Convention for the Wider Caribbean
- 4.15 Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)
- 4.16 Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS)
- 4.17 International Maritime Organization (IMO)
- 4.18 Other

5. REVISED MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (RMP) – GENERAL ISSUES

- 5.1 Review MSY rates [N]
- 5.2 Finalise the approach for evaluating proposed amendments to the CLA [N]
- 5.3 Work plan

6. RMP – PREPARATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- 6.1 Western North Pacific Bryde's whales
 - 6.1.1 Complete Implementation

6.1.2 *Recommendations*

6.2 North Atlantic fin whales

6.2.1 *Complete Implementation*

6.2.2 *Recommendations*

6.3 North Atlantic common minke whales

6.3.1 *Complete the Implementation Review*

6.3.2 *Recommendations*

6.4 North Pacific common minke whales (RMP/NPM) [N]

6.4.1 *Develop an inventory of the new data available and review progress*

6.4.2 *Recommendations*

6.5 Work plan

7. ESTIMATION OF BYCATCH AND OTHER HUMAN-INDUCED MORTALITY (BC)

7.1 Collaboration with FAO on collation of relevant fisheries data

7.2 Progress on joining the Fisheries Resource Monitoring System (FIRMS) [N]

7.3 Estimation of bycatch mortality of large whales

7.4 Estimation of risk and rates of entanglement

7.5 Review progress on including information in National Progress Reports

7.6 Review methods to estimate mortality from ship strikes

7.7 Continue to develop global database of ship strike incidents [N]

7.8 Other issues

7.8.1 *Continue to consider methods for assessing mortality from acoustic sources*

7.8.2 *Continue to consider methods for assessing mortality from marine debris*

7.9 Work plan

8. ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE (AWMP)

8.1 Complete work on sex ratio methods for common minke whales off West Greenland

8.2 Conduct *Implementation Review* for eastern North Pacific gray whales

8.4 Continue work on developing SLAs for the Greenland fisheries [N]

8.5 Consider lessons learned from the bowhead whale *Implementation Review*

8.6 Work plan

9. ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING MANAGEMENT ADVICE [N]

9.1 Eastern Canada and West Greenland bowhead whales (BRG)

9.1.1 *Assess stock structure and abundance of Eastern Canada and West Greenland bowhead whales*

9.1.2 *Review recent catch information*

9.1.3 *Management advice*

9.2 Eastern North Pacific gray whales (BRG)

9.2.1 *Provide information to the SWG on AWMP for Implementation Review*

9.2.2 *Review of recent catch information*

9.2.3 *Management advice*

9.3 Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas Bowhead whale (BRG)

9.3.1 *Review catch information and new scientific information*

9.3.2 *Management advice*

9.4 Common minke whale stocks off Greenland (AWMP)

9.4.1 *New information*

9.4.2 *Sex-ratio based assessment of common minke whales*

9.4.3 *Management advice*

9.5 Fin whales off West Greenland (AWMP)

9.5.1 *New information*

9.5.2 *Management advice*

9.6 Humpback whales off West Greenland (AWMP)

9.6.1 *New information and assessment*

9.6.2 *Management advice*

9.7 Humpback whales off St. Vincent and The Grenadines (AWMP)

9.7.1 *New information*

9.7.2 *Management advice*

9.8 Work plan

10. WHALE STOCKS [N]

10.1 Antarctic minke whales (IA)

10.1.1 Produce agreed abundance estimates of Antarctic minke whales using IDCR/SOWER data [N]

10.1.2 Conduct an analysis of ageing errors that could be used in catch-at-age analyses

10.1.3 Continue development of the catch-at-age models

10.1.4 Continue to examine the difference between abundance estimates from CPII and CPIII [N]

10.1.5 Work plan

10.2 Western North Pacific common minke whales (NPM) [N]

10.2.1 Conclude discussion on stock structure in the Sea of Japan

10.2.2 Consider new information on J-stock animals along the Pacific coast of Japan

10.2.3 Integrate information from abundance estimates with the assumption of $g(0)=1$ in surveyed areas

10.2.4 Work plan

10.3 Southern Hemisphere humpback whales (SH) [N]

10.3.1 Breeding stocks B and C

10.3.2 Other

10.3.3 Work plan

10.4 Continue assessment of Southern Hemisphere blue whales (SH)

10.4.1 New information

10.4.2 Work plan

10.5 Western North Pacific gray whales (BRG) [N]

10.5.1 Review any new information

10.5.2 Work plan

10.6 Southern Hemisphere right whales (BRG) [N]

10.6.1 Review any new information

10.6.2 Work plan

10.7 Other stocks of right whales and small stock of bowhead whales (BRG)

10.7.1 Review any new information

10.7.2 Work plan

10.8 SOWER cruises (IA)

10.8.1 General review of 2008/09 cruise

10.8.2 Recommendations for 2009/10 cruise and short-term objectives

10.8.3 Future of the SOWER programme

10.9 Other

10.9.1 Initiate planning of in-depth assessment of sei whales (IA) [N]

11. STOCK DEFINITION (SD)

11.1 Statistical and genetic issues related to stock definition

11.2 Progress on the TOSSM project [N]

11.3 Criteria for unit-to-serve

11.4 Work plan

12. ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS (E)

12.1 Review report from the Second Climate Change workshop [N]

12.2 Review progress in planning for the POLLUTION 2000+ Phase II [N]

12.3 Receive the State of the Cetacean Environment Report, SOCER [N]

12.4 Review report from CERD working group [N]

12.5 Other habitat related issues

12.5.1 Review any new information on anthropogenic noise and cetaceans

12.5.2 Review available new information on marine renewable energy and cetaceans

12.6 Work plan

13. ECOSYSTEM MODELLING (EM) [N]

13.1 Review report from the Joint CCAMLR/IWC Workshop on modelling Antarctic krill predators

13.2 Review models from JARPN II

13.3 Work plan

14. SMALL CETACEANS (SM)

14.1 Review taxonomy, population structure and status of common dolphins [N]

14.2 Review progress on previous recommendations [N]

14.3 Review takes of small cetaceans [N]

14.4 Work plan

15. WHALEWATCHING (WW)

15.1 Discuss the proposal for a large-scale whalewatching experiment (LaWE) [N]

15.2 Review whalewatching in Portugal (including Azores and Madeira), Canary Islands and Strait of Gibraltar

15.3 Assess the impact of whalewatching on cetaceans

15.4 Review reports of intersessional working groups

15.5 Other issues

15.5.1 Consider information from platforms of opportunity of potential value to the Scientific Committee

15.5.2 Review of whalewatching guidelines and regulations

15.5.3 Review risks to cetaceans from collisions with whalewatching vessels

15.6 Work plan

16. DNA TESTING (DNA) [N]

16.1 Review genetic methods for species, stock and individual identification

16.2 Review sequence validation and continue discussion of plans for sequence validation [N]

16.3 Collection and archiving of tissue samples from catches and bycatches

16.4 Reference databases and standards for diagnostic DNA registries

16.5 Work plan

17. SCIENTIFIC PERMITS (SP) [N]

17.1 Review of results from existing permits [N]

17.1.1 Review report from specialist workshop to evaluate results from JARPN II

17.1.2 JARPA II

17.1.3 Planning for a final review of results from Iceland – North Atlantic common minke whales

17.2 Review of new or continuing proposals [N]

17.2.1 JARPA II

17.2.2 JARPN II

17.3 Evaluate the performance of the agreed procedure for reviewing scientific permit proposals [N]

17.4 Work plan

18. WHALE SANCTUARIES (S) [N]

19. SOUTHERN OCEAN RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP [N]

20. ACTIONS ARISING FROM INTERSESSIONAL REQUESTS FROM THE COMMISSION [N]

21. RESEARCH AND WORKSHOP PROPOSALS AND RESULTS

21.1 Review results from previously funded research proposals

21.2 Review proposals for 2009/10 [N]

22. COMMITTEE PRIORITIES AND INITIAL AGENDA FOR THE 2010 MEETING [N]

23. DATA PROCESSING AND COMPUTING NEEDS FOR 2009/10 [N]

24. FUNDING REQUIREMENTS FOR 2009/10 [N]

25. WORKING METHODS OF THE COMMITTEE [N]

26. ELECTION OF OFFICERS [N]

27. PUBLICATIONS

28. OTHER BUSINESS

29. ADOPTION OF REPORT [N]

CHAIR'S ANNOTATIONS [N]

ITEM 1: INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

The Scientific Committee (SC/61) will meet in Madeira, Portugal, from Sunday 31st May to Friday 12th June 2009. It will be preceded on Friday and Saturday, 29th and 30th May by a pre-meeting of the AWMP SWG focussing on the use of the sex ratio approach for common minke whales off West Greenland, building upon the progress made at the recent workshop. There will be no pre-meeting of the RMP sub-committee given the progress made at the intersessional workshop. The workshop reports will be made available shortly on the IWC website.

General information can be found at:

<http://www.iwcoffice.org/meetings/meeting2009.htm>

The website contains a list of the work agreed to be attempted during the 2008/2009 intersessional period:

http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/sctasks.htm

and the list of intersessional correspondence groups and terms of reference (Annex Q):

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

At the Scientific Committee meeting in 2008 we had 84 sessions available for sub-committee deliberations over a seven-day period, based on three concurrent subcommittee meetings for each of four work sessions per day, starting at approximately 08:30 and ending typically at 18:00. However, because of the inability to schedule certain subcommittees opposite other subcommittees only 79 of the possible sessions could be scheduled. In addition, this allowed for several *ad hoc* working groups to meet in the evening, typically from 18:15 to approximately 21:00, and for occasional longer sessions of sub-committees beyond the scheduled 18:00 finish time. This schedule proved efficient as it allowed for rapporteurs and *ad hoc* working groups to work during the evening. The Scientific Committee agreed to continue this schedule at the 2009 Annual Meeting (SC/61).

| Time schedule at SC/61 | | |
|---|---|--|
| Date | Items | Comments |
| Sunday 31 st May 09:00 | Plenary session, then read documents | Items 1-4 |
| Monday 1 st June 09:00 | Initial meetings of sub-committees and working groups (about 15 minutes each) | To elect chairs and adopt agenda, identify documents, etc |
| Tuesday 2 nd June Monday 8 th June | Predominantly sub-committees (possibly some short plenary meetings) | To complete agenda and agree report |
| Tuesday 9 th June | <i>Tentative</i> rest day | Subject to cancellation if insufficient progress is made.... |
| Wednesday 10 th Friday 12 th June | Plenary sessions. Intention to finish no later than 5pm on Friday 12 th June | To complete agenda and agree report, including work plan and draft initial agenda for 2010 |
| Saturday 13 th June | 09:00-12:00 Convenors to complete editorial work on sub-committee and plenary reports; 12:00 Convenors meeting to, if necessary, consider refinements of the draft initial agenda, priorities, and changes in organisational structure implied by the draft initial agenda or by discussions during the meeting. | |

Item 1.4: Establishment of sub-committees and working groups at SC/61

The following groups were identified by the Convenors immediately after SC/60 (see table below). Although each group has a tentative annex number, some reports may be incorporated directly into the Scientific Committee's report. PLEASE NOTE: this year you are asked to sign up for sub-committees and working groups in advance. Details can be found in circular IWC.SC.142. It is important that you consult the registration and document submission details that can be found on the website:

http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/2009categories.htm

We intend to establish 14 sub-committees (including standing Working Groups and *ad hoc* Working Groups). Also this year we have seven days available for sub-committees, and the number of sessions for sub-committees is again scheduled to 84 based on three concurrent sub-committee meetings for each of four work sessions per day, starting at approximately 08:30 and ending typically at 18:00. Because of the inability to schedule certain sub-committees opposite other sub-committees, we will, if necessary, convene some evening sessions. However, if possible, I will avoid evening sessions to allow: (1) rapporteurs to draft reports and (2) more time for small break out groups (e.g. to do simulation runs and testing) during the annual meeting.

The draft Agenda developed by the Convenors at last year's meeting (IWC/60/Rep1, Item 20.1) identified priority items for each sub-committee and items that would only be discussed if time is available. Chairs will adhere closely to this. I have included items in the latter category as sub-items under the heading 'Other issues' where appropriate, to emphasise this.

| Sub-committees, standing and <i>ad hoc</i> working groups at SC/61 | | |
|---|-----------------|--------------|
| Title | Convenor | Annex |
| Revised Management Procedure, RMP | Bannister | D |
| Aboriginal Subsistence Management Procedure, AWMP | Donovan | E |
| Bowhead, Right and Gray Whales, BRG | Walløe | F |
| In-depth Assessment, IA | Palka | G |
| Working group on North Pacific common minke whales, NPM | Kitakado | G1 |
| Southern Hemisphere whale stocks other than minke and right whales, SH | Zerbini | H |
| Stock Definition, SD | Bravington | I |
| Estimation of bycatch and other human-induced mortality, BC | Perrin | J |
| Environmental Concerns, E | Moore | K |
| Ecosystem Modelling, EM | Gales | K1 |
| Small Cetaceans, SM | Rogan | L |
| Whalewatching, WW | Kato | M |
| DNA, DNA | Pastene | N |
| Special Permits, SP | Bjørge | P |

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 20 and 22 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 practice 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/2009categories.htm

and in circular IWC.SC.142.

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 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 15th May.** 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: 5-17

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: Review MSY rates

Based on the preparatory work of a steering group (Annex Q3) we expect that decision can be made regarding the range of plausible MSYR for use in RMP *Implementation Simulation Trials*.

Item 5.2: Finalise the approach for evaluating proposed amendments to the CLA [N]

You will recall that at SC/56, the Committee was informed that Norway intended to propose changes to the CLA for baleen whales on their feeding grounds. The scientific reasons for this proposal are given in *J. Cetacean Res. Manage.* 7 (SUPPL.):79-80. One of the reasons for undertaking the MSYR review was to assist in finalising the trial structure for the consideration of proposals to amend the CLA of the RMP. It is hoped that this can be achieved at this meeting

ITEM 6: RMP – PREPARATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Item 6.4: North Pacific common minke whales

Last year the Committee noted that the JARPN II review (January 2009, see Item 17.1) and the in-depth assessment of the western North Pacific minke whales, with emphasis on J-stock (Item 10.2), will contribute to the *Implementation* process. The Committee therefore agreed to defer further general consideration of *Implementation Review* until SC/61.

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

Item 7. 2: Progress on joining the Fisheries Resource Monitoring System (FIRMS)

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 7.7: Continue to develop global database of ship strike incidents

I again draw your attention to the activity of the Conservation Committee and its intersessional working group (SSWG/CC). The SC established an intersessional group (Annex Q22) to further develop a process by which data provided from a range of sources could be stored in a database. We will review progress made by this group.

ITEM 8: ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

Item 8.4: Continue work on developing SLAs for the Greenlandic fisheries

The Committee will review progress of an intersessional steering group (Annex Q1) as the basis for its further work.

ITEM 9: ABORIGINAL SUBSISTENCE WHALING MANAGEMENT ADVICE

In 2007 the Commission adopted new catch limits for aboriginal subsistence whaling that in several cases requires annual review, *inter alia* common minke whales and bowhead whales off West Greenland.

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 in the Draft Agenda.

Item 10.1: Antarctic minke whales

Item 10.1.1: Produce agreed abundance estimates of Antarctic minke whales using SOWER data

The data from JARPA will be considered at SC/61.

Item 10.1.4: Continue to examine the differences between abundance estimates from CPII and CPIII

Reasons for the observed differences in abundance estimated from CPII and CPIII are not yet fully understood. Three groups have been working intersessionally towards the completion of this long standing task. The intersessional work has addressed: the relationship between the abundance of Antarctic minke whales and variables related to sea ice (Annex Q9); Catch-at-age analyses (Annex Q10); and continuation of the methodological aspects of abundance estimation to: (1) select and implement further simulations, (2) specify additional variance calculations; (3) for each analysis method, prepare and document abundance estimates, diagnostics, and results from analysing simulated datasets (Annex Q11). The Committee will review intersessional progress as basis for its continued work.

Item 10.2: Western North Pacific common minke whales

The work on the population structure, with emphasis on J-stock, will be concluded in the Sea of Japan. There is yet no abundance estimate available for the whole distribution area. The Committee will *inter alia* review intersessional work (Annex Q16) on the planning of sighting surveys, survey areas and design.

Item 10.3: Southern Hemisphere humpback whales

The Committee will review progress on the assessment of breeding stocks B and C (Annex Q6). Methodology to take account for mixing or exchange between populations will be addressed (Annex Q7).

Item 10.5: Review new information on western North Pacific gray whales

The Commission is particularly concerned about the status of the endangered western North Pacific gray whale, whose feeding grounds coincide with oil and gas operations off Sakhalin Island, Russian Federation. The population numbers only about 120 animals and although there is evidence that it has been increasing at perhaps 3% per year over the last decade, any additional deaths, for example in fishing gear as has recently occurred, put the survival of the population in doubt. The Commission agreed to work together to try to mitigate anthropogenic threats to this endangered population. The Committee will review new information, e.g. on bycatch mortality and any mitigation measures to reduce risk of bycatches.

Item 10.6: Southern Hemisphere right whales

An intersessional working group has been set up to plan the assessment of Southern Hemisphere right whale populations (Annex Q5). The Committee will review progress and decide on further steps.

Item 10.9.2: Initiate planning of in-depth assessment of sei whales

An intersessional group has worked towards compiling data inventories for in-depth assessment of North Pacific sei whales as specified in Appendix 5, Annex G. The Committee will review progress and decide on further steps.

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 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: Review report from the second climate change workshop

A second workshop was convened in Siena 21st – 25th February to review effects on climate change on cetacean. A number of recommendations for research were made and the Committee will review the workshop report.

Item 12.2: Planning for Phase II of POLLUTION 2000+

A steering group (Annex Q25) was set up to (1) produce a framework for modelling the effects of pollutants on cetacean populations; (2) identify cetacean populations to be studied under Phase II; and (3) develop a protocol for validating biopsy samples and applying this protocol to any large whale species selected for Phase II studies. The Committee will review progress in this work.

Item 12.3: Receive the State of Cetacean Environment Report, SOCER

Committee members are encouraged to make submissions to the co-Convenors of the intersessional working group (Annex R21). Use the standardised form for data entry, which can be downloaded from:

http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/socer2009.htm

Item 12.4: Review report from CERD working group

A working group (Appendix Q26) has been set up to *inter alia* develop a table listing diagnostic laboratories and experts that are participating in marine mammal disease surveillance. The Committee will review progress.

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 have established a separate working group under E as a forum for this discussion. At SC/61 the working group will *inter alia* review the report from the joint CCAMLR/IWC Workshop on modelling Antarctic krill predators. It will also discuss ecosystem models from JARPN II.

ITEM 14: SMALL CETACEANS

Item 14.1: Review taxonomy, population structure and status of common dolphins

The Committee noted last year that there was a considerable need for a review of the *Delphinus* spp. Given that SC/61 will be held in Madeira, and considering the large and recent research efforts and the availability of new data on stock structure, abundance estimates, life history data and bycatch estimates, the small cetacean sub-committee agreed to adopt a review of the systematics, population structure and status of common dolphins as its priority topic for next year. I encourage scientists involved in research on *Delphinus* spp, in particular in the Atlantic to submit documents to the regional review this year.

Item 14.2: Review 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.

Item 14.3: Review 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

Item 15.1: Discuss the proposal for a large-scale whalewatching experiment (LaWE)

A Workshop was held in Bunbury, Australia, 30 March – 3 April, 2008 developed the outline of a large-scale whalewatching experiment (LaWE). At SC/60 the report was reviewed and established two intersessional groups (Appendix Q30; Q31) to further develop the research proposal. SC/61 will review progress in this work.

ITEM 16: DNA TESTING

Under this Agenda Item, we will provide the report to the Commission required by IWC Resolution 1999-8. 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 16.2: Review sequence validation and continue discussion of plans for sequence validation

We will review the progress of an intersessional working group (Annex Q17) to address this topic.

ITEM 17: SPECIAL PERMITS

At SC/61 we will establish a working group (SP) to entertain the discussion of special permit programmes and associated procedural questions. The scientific results of the special permit programmes will be discussed in the relevant sub-committees and standing working groups (*inter alia* IA, NPM, E and EM).

Item 17.1: Review of results from existing permits

There are two existing ongoing Special Permit programmes (JARPN II on North Pacific common minke, sei, Bryde's and sperm whales and JARPA II on fin and Antarctic minke whales). In addition, there is one existing programme where the scientific whaling operations have finished, but final review of results is pending (the Icelandic programme on North Atlantic common minke whales).

A specialist workshop was convened 26-30th January to review the JARPN II programme. The report of the specialist workshop will be discussed but not amended by the Scientific Committee. The comments of the Scientific Committee will be included in the Scientific Committee report. The original proposal and any revised proposal, the specialist workshop report (and subsequent comments on any revised proposal), and the Scientific Committee report will then be submitted to the Commission and become publicly available at the opening of the IWC Annual Meeting.

Item 17.2: Review of new or continuing proposals

I have not been informed about any new proposal, and I do not anticipate any discussion of new Special Permit proposals at SC/61.

Item 17.3: Evaluate the performance of the agreed procedure for reviewing scientific permit proposals

You will recall that the Scientific Committee last year agreed on a new procedure for review of new proposals for Special Permit whaling, and for periodic and final review of existing Special Permit programmes (Rep. SC/60 Annex P). The new procedure included an independent review by a specialist workshop. The JARPN II programme on North Pacific common minke, sei, Bryde's and sperm whales was the first programme to be reviewed following the new procedure. Fourteen experts (members and non-members of the SC) selected from a list of experts nominated by the Standing Steering Group (SSG) met in Yokohama, Japan, 26th – 30th January 2009. The workshop report will be available for discussion at the SC Annual Meeting. I also invite the Committee to evaluate the performance of the new procedure. The SC Chair, Vice Chair and Head of Science have provided their views on how the new procedure performed in a document that will be submitted to the Committee.

The question about admission of observers to the expert workshop arose intersessionally. This question was not addressed in Annex P. Based on my interpretation of the intention of Annex P, and after consultations with the SC Vice Chair and Head of Science, I decided not to allow observers. The Committee may wish to provide advice on this question for future review workshops.

The next programme to be scheduled for review following the new procedure is likely to be the Icelandic Special Permit programme on North Atlantic common minke whales, where the expert workshop will review the final results.

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.

The Secretariat has received a letter from Nicaragua requesting guidance from the Scientific Committee in relation to the establishment of a whaling sanctuary along Nicaragua's Pacific coast. The Committee may wish to discuss information required from the proponent should scientific advice be generated.

ITEM 19: SOUTHERN OCEAN RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

The Government of Australia hosted a workshop in Sydney 23 – 26 March to discuss plans for a five-year non-lethal research effort in the Southern Ocean. The workshop used IWC Scientific Committee research recommendations as a starting point for its deliberations. A workshop report will be submitted to SC/61. At the Annual Meeting we will convene an evening plenary session to review and discuss the workshop report. This evening session will preferably be early in the sub-committee week, allowing the respective sub-committees to incorporate the research plans into their work plans and priorities.

ITEM 20: ACTIONS ARISING FROM INTERSESSIONAL REQUESTS FROM THE COMMISSION

At the intersessional meeting in Rome, 9-11 March, the Commission discussed issues that may require actions by the Scientific Committee at SC/61. In particular: *"the Commission asked the Small Working Group to resume its work building on progress achieved so far and taking into account views expressed during the intersessional meeting. The SWG is also hereby authorized to request advice on issues, as required, from the Scientific Committee. The Scientific Committee is requested to make provision for urgent consideration of any request from the SWG and to report to IWC61."*

Any requests will possibly best be handled by the respective sub-committees and working groups, but the outcome will be presented under this agenda item.

ITEM 21: RESEARCH AND WORKSHOP PROPOSALS AND RESULTS

Item 21.2: Review proposals for 2009/10

This item will be handled, as usual, by a review group chaired by the Vice Chair and appointed from the sub-committee chairs. However, I 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 Items 19 and 22 of last year's Committee report.

ITEM 22: COMMITTEE PRIORITIES AND INITIAL AGENDA FOR THE 2010 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 2009/10. 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 23: DATA PROCESSING AND COMPUTING NEEDS FOR 2009/10

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 24: FUNDING REQUIREMENTS FOR 2009/10

To facilitate discussion of this item, which necessarily occurs relatively late in the meeting, sub-committee Convenors 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 25: WORKING METHODS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee has agreed to keep this item on the Agenda to allow for discussion of possible proposals to improve the working methods of the Committee. At last year's meeting the Commission agreed changes to the Rules of Procedure regarding observers from international organisations. At the opening session, I will point you to the subsequent changes in the SC Rules of Procedure.

The ongoing discussion within the Commission regarding the future of IWC may entail changes in the structure, timing and agenda of the Committee. I will keep you informed on any developments when appropriate.

ITEM 26: ELECTION OF OFFICERS

2008 was the final year of three years terms of the elected officers (Chair Bjørge and Vice-chair Palka) of the SC. Because of unforeseen circumstances, the Committee advised that the election be postponed one year and that the current officers should remain in their positions for one additional year. Unless the Vice-chair decides otherwise, she will replace the current SC Chair after the closure of the 2009 Commission meeting. Therefore, the SC is scheduled to elect a new Vice Chair this year. Rules of Procedure can be found on the website:

<http://www.iwcoffice.org/commission/procedure.htm#scientific>

I will call upon the Heads of Delegations for a meeting during the first part of the SC meeting to initiate this process.

ITEM 29: ADOPTION OF REPORT

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