

Annex O

Report of the Working Group to Review Sanctuaries and Sanctuary Proposals

Members: Zerbini (Chair), Bjørge, Butterworth, Carlson, Childerhouse, Cooke, Engel, Friday, Funahashi, Gales, Groch, Hester, Iñiguez, Kell, Last, Leaper, Mae, Mattila, Palazzo, Ridoux, Senn, Stachowitsh, Van Waerebeek, Williams.

1. OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed the participants to the meeting. The purpose of the Working Group would be to complete the review of the Southern Ocean Sanctuary (SOS) by considering the report of the intersessional meeting to review the SOS (SC/56/Rep2) held prior to this year's Scientific Committee meeting (28-29 June, 2004).

Based on advice from the Conveners' Group, the Chair of the Working Group ruled that small cetaceans would not be considered by this Working Group.

2. ELECTION OF THE CHAIR

Zerbini was elected Chair.

3. APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEURS

Williams was appointed rapporteur.

4. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The adopted agenda is given as Appendix 1.

5. COMPLETE THE REVIEW OF THE SOUTHERN OCEAN SANCTUARY (SOS)

5.1 Review of available documents

Documents relevant to the Working Group were SC/56/SOS1 and SC/56/Rep2.

SC/56/SOS1 provided a review of odontocete species in the Southern Ocean Sanctuary (SOS), but only the information specific to sperm whales was presented. Of 27 odontocete species identified as occupying sub-Antarctic and Antarctic habitat covered by the sanctuary, 21 show a regular, apparently year-round presence. Six species were regarded as vagrants with three or less records. Increases in multi-disciplinary cruises, including some initiatives in direct response to the creation of the SOS, have yielded new data on distribution of odontocete species from visual and acoustic observations. Globally, sperm whales are a deep-water species and similar distribution patterns in relation to water depth and bottom topography are seen in the Antarctic. Recent passive acoustic surveys reveal generally consistent distribution and density patterns to sightings surveys with highest densities in the Indian Ocean sector. Sperm whales are unique among the species protected by the SOS in that distribution within the SOS is largely restricted to males. Sperm whales and other odontocetes are ecologically important within the SOS and their ecology is very different to that of baleen whales. It is likely that odontocetes will respond differently than baleen whales to physical and biological factors and may be subject to different threats including higher fishing pressure on prey species such as fish and squid. There is also no equivalent to the RMP for sperm whales.

Some members of the Working Group expressed their appreciation to the authors of SC/56/SOS1 for their valuable work. They believed that the paper should have been presented in its entirety, including small cetaceans, but accepted the ruling of the Chair.

One member noted that the US Hawaiian Humpback Whale Sanctuary has applied many of the MPA concepts highlighted during the SOS review in the design of a protected area for humpbacks (SC/56/ForInfo36). It was suggested that those interested in the introduction of MPA scientific concepts could refer to this area as a case study (available from: www.hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/planreview/hihw/sanctuaryrevised.html).

5.2 Report of the Intersessional Meeting to Review the Southern Ocean Sanctuary (SOS) – SC/56/Rep2

Last year, the Working Group to Review Sanctuaries and Sanctuary Proposals had agreed that a two-day pre-meeting would be scheduled prior to the 56th Scientific Committee meeting in order to review the Southern Ocean Sanctuary. The Working Group had also suggested that non-IWC-affiliated scientists with acknowledged international expertise on developing, managing and conducting research in sanctuaries or Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) be invited to attend the pre-meeting to assist with the review process (IWC, 2004, p.370).

An intersessional Steering Group selected three invited external reviewers and gave them the following tasks:

- (1) to evaluate the SOS, given its objectives and the criteria developed by the Scientific Committee and approved by the Commission; and
- (2) to provide advice on how to introduce MPA scientific concepts into IWC Sanctuaries and Sanctuary Proposals, and on establishing monitoring programmes.

The Chair presented an overview of the report of the intersessional meeting to review the SOS and Sanctuaries (SC/56/Rep2). The review document submitted to the intersessional meeting by the independent external reviewers (IER) was SC/56/SOS5.

The intersessional meeting **agreed** upon several recommendations for the SOS and IWC Sanctuaries (SC/56/Rep2, item 5.1.2).

- (1) The purpose(s) of the SOS (and other IWC Sanctuaries) should be better articulated through a set of refined overall objectives (e.g. preserving species biodiversity; promoting recovery of depleted stocks; increasing whaling yield). In particular, the relationships between the RMP and the Sanctuary program should be articulated.
- (2) Appropriate performance measures (e.g. recovering stock x to abundance n with $y\%$ certainty) both for Sanctuaries in general, and the SOS in particular, should be developed. These performance measures should link the refined objectives of the SOS with the monitoring programs in the field.
- (3) Systematic inventory and research programs should be established or further developed so as to build the required information base for a Sanctuary management plan and subsequent monitoring programs.
- (4) A Sanctuary management plan should clearly outline the broad strategies and specific actions needed to achieve Sanctuary objectives (e.g. how to protect $x\%$ of a given feeding area for stock y).
- (5) A monitoring strategy that measures progress toward achieving the Sanctuary objectives should be undertaken. A key component of this monitoring strategy would be the development of tangible indicators to monitor progress.
- (6) Review criteria that reflect the goals and objectives of the Sanctuary (as described above) should be established.
- (7) The Sanctuary management plan should be refined periodically to account for ecological, oceanographic and possible other changes in an adaptive fashion.

The Working Group **endorsed** the recommendations.

The Chair presented the recommendation agreed by the intersessional meeting on the incorporation of MPA scientific concepts into IWC Sanctuaries and Sanctuary proposals (SC/56/Rep2, item 6.2).

Marine sanctuaries and reserves are a subset of marine protected areas (MPAs). While marine reserves aim to provide protection from removal and disturbance, IWC Sanctuaries are waters closed to commercial whaling. The Working Group recognises the value of exploring the rapidly developing theory and application of MPAs in relation to the review of the IWC Sanctuaries. However, the application of MPA scientific concepts to IWC Sanctuaries requires further investigation. The Working Group further recognised that MPAs and IWC Sanctuaries can vary widely in their goals, objectives, scales and management implications. The Working Group **recommended** that the goals of IWC Sanctuaries should be clearly articulated in Sanctuary proposals and that Sanctuary adoption should include measurable criteria that can be evaluated and monitored using systematic inventory (as described in SC/56/SOS5) and research programmes that will be refined at periodic intervals. Finally, the Working Group seeks clarification from the Commission on more clearly measurable objectives for IWC Sanctuaries.

The Working Group **endorsed** the recommendation.

5.3 Complete the SOS review according to the Guidelines provided by the Commission

The Chair reviewed the Instructions from the Commission to the Scientific Committee for Reviews of Sanctuaries (IWC, 2002, p.65). He noted that these had been included in the general review criteria provided to the IER. However, one issue not addressed during the review was the Commission's instruction for advice on the status and trends of whale stocks in the sanctuary in so far as these are known. Table 1 provides this information for the stocks within the SOS, however not all estimates and information have been reviewed or accepted by the SC. Values for pygmy blue, fin and sperm whales are underestimates, because the surveys did not cover the complete range of the species.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS TO FACILITATE THE REVIEW OF FUTURE PROPOSALS AND FUTURE SANCTUARY REVIEWS

The Working Group **agreed** that the involvement of independent external reviewers in the review of the SOS had been largely positive. However, some members felt that in future, the reviewers should be provided with more information on the workings of the IWC, its Schedule, and the Scientific Committee and its procedures, prior to their review. It was also noted that the instructions given to the external reviewers should be much more specific.

Some members questioned whether the Scientific Committee should involve external experts in reviews of future sanctuary proposals, or just future Sanctuary reviews. The Working Group **agreed** that involvement of external reviewers should continue, both for future reviews and reviews of future Sanctuary proposals. Some suggestions were made to improve the partnership between the Scientific Committee and independent reviewers:

- (1) such partnerships should benefit from the discussion in different organisations (including, but not limited to, those affiliated with IUCN) on high-seas conservation;
- (2) the independent reviewers should represent a broad geographic coverage in expertise;
- (3) the review would benefit from experts independent from one another as well as independent from the Scientific Committee.

The Chair noted that for the SOS review, 15 names were initially proposed for membership of the IER. Of these, many were not available for the meeting. Of those who were available, the three reviewers elected by the intersessional Steering Group were offered the choice of producing independent reviews, but in the interest of time, had decided to complete a joint review.

Recommendations for future reviews are encompassed within the agreed recommendation under Item 5.2, point (6).

7. OTHER

There were no other items.

8. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

The workshop participants thanked the Chair and the rapporteur for their work. The report was adopted at 18h30 on 4 July 2004.

REFERENCES

Complete list to follow.

Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary Management Plan. 2002. Available from: Manager: Hawaiian Island Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary, 6700 Kalaniana'ole Highway, Honolulu HI 96825 USA or www.hawaiihumpbackwhale.noaa.gov/planreview/hihw/sanctuaryrevised.html.

International Whaling Commission. 2004. Report of the Scientific Committee. Annex P. Report of the Working Group to review Sanctuaries and Sanctuary Proposals. *J. Cetacean Res. Manage. (Suppl.)* 6:367-374.

International Whaling Commission. 2002. Chairman's Report of the Fifty-Third Annual Meeting. Annex E. Instructions from the Commission to the Scientific Committee for Reviews of Sanctuaries. *Ann. Rep. Int. Whaling Comm.* 2001:65.

Appendix 1

AGENDA

1. Opening Remarks
2. Election of Chair
3. Appointment of rapporteurs
4. Adoption of the agenda
5. Complete the review of the Southern Ocean Sanctuary (SOS)
 - 5.1. Review of available documents
 - 5.2 Report of the Intersessional Meeting to Review the Southern Ocean Sanctuary (SOS) – SC/56/Rep2
 - 5.3 Complete the SOS review according to the Guidelines provided by the Commission
6. Recommendations to facilitate the review of future proposals and future Sanctuary Reviews
7. Other
8. Adoption of the report

Table 1
Large whale species and stocks inhabiting the Southern Ocean Sanctuary

Species	Stocks	Trends in Abundance (period)	Population Estimates	References
Blue whale	Areas I-IV	4-7.3% ¹	Years 1991/92 to 1997/98 ² : 1,100 (CV=0.45)	Branch <i>et al.</i> (accepted); Branch and Butterworth (2001)
Pygmy blue whale	Areas I-VI	N.A.	Area III: 478 (CV = 0.48) ³	Best <i>et al.</i> (2003)
Fin whale	Areas I-VI	N.A.	Years 1991/92 to 1997/98 ² : 5,500 (CV=0.53)	Branch and Butterworth (2001)
Sei whale	Areas I-VI	N.A.	N.A.	
Antarctic minke whale	Areas I-VI	Under review by the SC	Years 1982/83-1988/89 ⁴ : 761,000 Estimates for the 3 rd set of circumpolar surveys are currently in review by the SC	IWC (1991)
Common minke whale	Areas I-VI	N.A.	N.A.	
Humpback whale	Breeding Stocks A B C D E1 (Eastern Australia) E2 (North Caledonia, Fiji, and Tonga) F G	10.9% (1995-1999) N.A. 7.89% (1991-2003) 10.1% (1982-1994) 10.9% (1984-1999) N.A. N.A.	Year 2002: 4500 (CV=0.27) N.A. Year 2003: 10880 (CV = 0.23) Year 1999: 8000-14000 Year 1999: 3600 (CV = 0.12) Year 2000: 730 (CV=0.15) Several estimates have been provided in various years (IWC, 2004, p. 265)	SC/56/SH17, SC/56/SH20 SC/56/SH20, SC/56/SH12 Bannister and Hedley (2001) Paterson <i>et al.</i> (2001) Baker <i>et al.</i> (2001)
Right whale,	Areas I - VI	6.9-8.3% (1983-1997 for Australia; 1969-2003 for South Africa; 1971-1990 for Argentina)	7500	IWC (2001), SC/56/SH5
Pygmy right whale,	Areas I - VI	N.A.	N.A.	
Sperm whale,	Divisions 1-9	N.A.	Years 1991/92 to 1997/98 ² : 8,300 (CV=0.16) ⁵ 28,100	Butterworth and Branch (2001) Kasamatsu and Joyce (1995)

N.A. – not available

¹ These are rates of increase reported by Branch *et al.* (accepted), which have yet to be considered by the Scientific Committee.

² 3rd set of the IDCR/SOWER circumpolar surveys.

³ This estimate was obtained outside the SOS and corresponds to the only estimate of abundance available for pygmy blue whales.

⁴ 2nd set of the IDCR/SOWER circumpolar surveys

⁵ This estimate corresponds only to mature males feeding in Antarctic waters south of 60°S and is not corrected for whales missed on the trackline.