

Guidelines/suggestions for sub-committee report writing

AIM: to produce sub-committee reports that (1) are concise and comprehensible both to people who attended the meeting and people who didn't; and (2) are as complete as possible (including references and artwork) by the end of the meeting. This will have the additional benefit of allowing the published version to be completed more quickly and accurately.

1. GENERAL STYLE

- (a) Use the agenda to form the outline of the report – but feel free to insert additional sub-items if this helps the reader – even if the sub-item was not included in the agreed agenda.
- (b) **Writing should be well-documented summaries of discussions rather than verbatim or quasi-verbatim records.** As a general approach, try to write a good, logically structured 'essay' on the topic of the agenda item, based on the discussions, irrespective of the order in which comments were made. **Individuals' names should be avoided** unless someone specifies that they would like a particular statement attributed to them or there is no general agreement (but **don't** just substitute names with 'someone' 'a member' etc!). Please see the attached text for guidance.
- (c) Paper numbers from the *current* meeting should be used instead of author names e.g. SC/59/BRG2 reported the The exception is For Info papers, which should be referred to in the usual way, e.g. Donovan *et al.* (2006). Paper numbers from previous meetings should not be used but author's names used in the usual way.
- (d) Sub-committees should be referred to in the past tense, including their recommendations and agreements.
- (e) Use bold when the sub-committee has **agreed** on, or **recommended** something.
- (f) You can ask authors to provide brief summaries of their papers, but then edit them for consistency and style, to keep the balance correct. Make it clear where an author's summary ends and the sub-committee discussion begins.
- (g) Where there are complex or controversial discussions, show the relevant drafts to the 'protagonists' before putting it out as draft report.
- (h) Please include a table of any intersessional email group established during sub-committee discussions (including continuation of old groups) under the agenda item 'Work Plan' (please include group name, terms of reference and membership). For example,

Group	Terms of Reference	Membership
(1) Catch data (Working Group)	Finalise catch series for Southern Hemisphere operations.	Allison (Convenor), Bannister, Best, Brownell, Clapham, Cooke, Donovan, Findlay, Reeves, Smith.
(2) Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling Management Procedure (Steering Group)	Continue progress towards development of an AWMP.	Donovan (Convenor), Allison, Breiwick, Butterworth, Cooke, DeMaster, Dereksdóttir, George, Givens, Holloway, Punt, Schweder, Walløe, Witting, Zeh.

- (i) Please **do not** use auto-numbering in Word for agenda items.

2. WORKING PAPERS/APPENDICES

- (a) Remember that Working Papers spontaneously combust after the meeting (i.e. reports and appendices must not refer to 'WP2' etc). If the information they contain is important, it should either be contained in the body of the report or made an Appendix. Convenors should: (1) make sure appendices are essential for inclusion and, if so, (2) also indicate whether the Appendix needs to appear in the published version of the report or can be placed on the website with an appropriate footnote in the published report.
- (b) Follow style guidelines as appropriate.

3. ARTWORK

- (a) All tables and figures should contain a legend and be clearly referenced in the text.
- (b) Artwork should be compatible with our style and format (e.g. no colour).
- (c) Please supply high resolution images.

4. REFERENCE LISTS

- (a) References should be given in full i.e. there should be no instances of '(REF)' within the text. Please use author + year; for IWC publications include page numbers e.g. IWC (2003 p.75). Please provide Jemma with authors + year + title before the draft report is distributed; a full list can then be created using EndNote saving a lot of time and typing.

5. ADDITIONAL

- (a) Have at least one glass of red wine each evening.
- (b) If in doubt, ask Jemma for help! She is happy to read through any draft text before circulation (including Chair's reports).

Example text:

SC/60/AWMP2 provided an extended and updated version of Witting (2008). It evaluated simple *Strike Limit Algorithms (SLAs)* using trial simulations for fin whales and humpback whales off West Greenland, and bowhead whales off West Greenland and Eastern Canada, to assess the safety of *ad hoc* interim management advice. SC/60/AWMP2 simulated long-term management using the type of advice that has recently been applied to West Greenland fin and bowhead whales by the Committee, by setting strike limits equal to 1% of the lower 90% confidence limit, or 2% of the lower 95% confidence limit, of the most recent abundance estimate, or of the average of the last three or five abundance estimates. The trial structure on which the analyses were based was conservative relative to stock status based on the current assessments and abundance estimates, and nearly all trials incorporated demographic stochasticity to account for random processes at low abundance. The author of SC/60/AWMP2 was not proposing that these *SLAs* represent the best approach to providing management advice, but nevertheless showed that the *SLAs* examined performed fairly well at satisfying low annual needs of 20 fin whales, 10 humpback whales, and 5 to 25 bowhead whales, while at the same time imposing almost no risk to the stocks.

The SWG thanked the author for this work, noting its importance in relation to addressing an issue which has given the Committee considerable difficulty in the past. Whilst recognising that the analyses were not sufficient (nor designed) to allow decisions to be made regarding *SLAs* for use over a long period (this will require more careful consideration of scenarios and uncertainties) the SWG **agreed** that it provided an excellent basis to move forward to evaluate methods for providing interim *ad hoc* advice.

SC/60/AWMP2 used the Bayes factor to assign plausibility to trial scenarios and weight outcomes from different trials. This issue was the subject of considerable discussion at the Workshop. It was agreed that while Bayes factors were of interest, it was not appropriate to rely heavily on them when evaluating the results of trials; only limited use of integrated results was made during the development of the bowhead and gray whale *SLAs*. The Workshop also agreed that performance evaluation should be based on the examination of the results for individual trials, although the results of weighted trials would also prove useful. SC/60/AWMP2 included both integrated results as well as the detailed results for all of the individual trials.

The SWG discussed the selection of trial scenarios. The SWG **agreed** that SC/60/AWMP2 tested a wide range of scenarios regarding current abundance and that the combination of a low current abundance in combination with current levels of need represented a major challenge for any methods for providing *ad hoc* advice.

It was noted that the trials did not account for possible bias in the survey estimates of abundance. There was no evidence for positive survey bias in the surveys for fin, humpback and bowhead whales off West Greenland which were considered to be if anything negatively biased. In trials for the *Bowhead* and *Gray Whale SLAs*, trends in survey bias were included to reconcile the survey estimates of abundance with assumptions regarding $MSYR_{1+}$ even though there was no evidence for any such trends. This had primarily been to ensure that a sufficiently wide range of scenarios was considered. In discussing the implications of those trials, the SWG implicitly assigned low plausibility ranks to trials in which biases were based on speculation rather than on data.