



International
Whaling
Commission

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CIRCULAR COMMUNICATION TO MEMBERS OF THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE
IWC.SC.162

Outcome and follow-up to SC/63 in Tromsø, Norway

Debra Palka, Chair of the Scientific Committee, has requested that the attached information be circulated to the Scientific Committee.

Simon Brockington
Secretary to the Commission

c.c. Intergovernmental Organisation observers to the IWC

Secretary: Dr. Simon Brockington

Outcome and Follow-up to IWC/63

DEBRA PALKA

SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE REPORT

The complete Report and Annexes can be found on the IWC website:

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

Items 21-23 of our report (IWC/63/Rep 1, pp. 66-74) describe Committee priorities and initial agenda for the 2012 meeting, data processing, computing needs and funding requirements for 2011/12 intersessional time period.

E-mail correspondence groups

Annex R gives e-mail correspondence groups and their terms of reference. **Please check it** to make sure that your name is included under those Working Groups that you wish to participate in. If you wish to join any of the Working Groups, contact the Secretariat directly (secretariat@iwcoffice.org). Remember, if your e-mail address changes then let the Secretariat know. Convenors of all groups will be notified of their members and the e-mail addresses you used when you registered. The Secretariat will be creating e-mail lists for each of the groups to facilitate communication.

INTERSESSIONAL WORK

Budget

We are pleased to note that despite the financial climate, the Commission accepted our reduced budget request (Table 13 under Item 23 of the Report, p. 70) for the 2011/12 intersessional activities (as well as for Invited Participants to the 2012 Annual Meeting, SC/64). We owe special thanks to Simon Brockington, Sean Moran and Greg Donovan for their help in supporting our request.

Task table for the intersessional period

The Secretariat is working hard to pull out all of the tasks identified in the Committee's report and who should complete them. This will soon be placed on the Scientific Committee website and if at all possible, follow it!! **Please check** http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/scmain.htm **periodically**. We will also send out direct notification to you when it becomes available.

Intersessional workshops

The latest information on dates and venues is given below. As more information becomes available it will be sent to you and put on the website. Terms of reference, actual or likely dates, venues and steering groups can be found on the website (http://www.iwcoffice.org/sci_com/workshops/workshops.htm). Each workshop will be eventually given a dedicated web page (check the website periodically).

| Topic | SC report | Venue | Dates | Steering Group |
|---|-----------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|
| WNP common minke whale <i>Implementation Review</i> | 6.3.2 | Tokyo, Japan | 12-16 December 2011 | R5 |
| AWMP gray whale <i>Implementation Review</i> and Greenland hunt SLA development | 8.2-8.4 | La Jolla USA or Copenhagen Denmark | Last 2 weeks in March 2012 | R10 |
| Antarctic minke whale abundance | 10.1.1 | Bergen, Norway | February 2012 | R12 |
| Arabian Sea humpback whales | 10.2.2.2 | In the region | Not yet decided | R16 |
| Southern Hemisphere right whales | 10.5.1 | Puerto Madryn, Argentina | 13-16 September 2011 | |
| IWC-POWER | 10.7.4 | Tokyo, Japan | 26-30 September 2011 | R18/R19 |
| Genetic guidelines | 11.1 | Cambridge, UK | Spring 2012 | R21 |
| Marine Renewable Energy Developments and Cetaceans | 12.6 | Panama City, Panama | Pre-meeting | R29 |
| JARPN II Expert Panel (if required) | 17.2.2 | Tokyo, Japan | February 2012 | |
| SORP non-lethal research techniques | 19.2.6 | Puerto Varas, Chile | March 2012 | R37 |

Revised Management Procedure (RMP)

The following issues are high priority topics:

General Issues

- (1) refine the data and assumptions on which the meta-analyses of environmental impacts on growth rate and of increase rates at low population size are based;
- (2) complete the MSYR review;
- (3) specify and run additional trials for testing amendments to the *CLA*;
- (4) finalise the approach for evaluating proposed amendments to the *CLA*;
- (5) evaluate the Norwegian proposal for amending the RMP;
- (6) modify the Norwegian 'CatchLimit' program to allow variance-covariance matrices to be specified for the abundance estimates. Compare the results from the modified program with those from the 'accurate' version of the Cooke program for some cases; and
- (7) run the full set of revised results for the North Atlantic fin whales, the Western North Pacific Bryde's whales, and the North Atlantic minke whales using the Norwegian 'CatchLimit' program and place the results on the IWC website (carry over from the 2010 work plan).

Preparations for Implementations

The Committee is concerned over the feasibility of its future timetable of work, particularly given the delay in the western North Pacific common minke whale *Implementation Review*. It has previously noted that it was not possible to undertake two major *Implementations* or *Implementation Reviews* simultaneously (IWC, 2011e, p.65). This will be taken into account when discussing Items 1, 3, 4 and 5 below next year.

- (1) prepare for the 2013 *Implementation Review* for the western North Pacific Bryde's whales;
- (2) examine whether and when the optimization method used when conditioning trials fails to find the actual minimum of the objective function and any implications of this for previous results of *Implementation Simulation Trials*;
- (3) review a revised research proposal for North Atlantic fin whales for the 'variant with research' to be submitted to the 2012 meeting;
- (4) prepare for the 2014 *Implementation Review* for North Atlantic minke whales¹;
- (5) prepare for the 2014 *Implementation Review* for North Atlantic fin whales; and
- (6) review a proposal for a pre-implementation assessment of North Atlantic sei whales.

Implementation for the western North Pacific minke whales

- (1) review results of intersessional workshop;
- (2) complete the work assigned to the 'First Annual Meeting' in accordance with our guidelines.

Aboriginal Whaling Management Procedure (AWMP)

The following issues are high priority topics:

- (1) continue work on the development of *SLAs* for the Greenlandic hunts with a focus on common minke whales and fin whales;
- (2) complete the *Implementation Review* for eastern gray whales with a focus on the PCFG;
- (3) complete an *Implementation Review* for B-C-B bowhead whales;
- (4) develop guidelines for *Implementations* and *Implementation Reviews*;
- (5) provide management advice for the appropriate subsistence hunts; and
- (6) review the Greenlandic programme to provide information on conversion factors.

¹ As the original *Implementation* was undertaken in 1993 before the Requirements and Guidelines for *Implementations* were developed, a fuller *Implementation Review* is appropriate.

Bowhead, Right and Gray whales (BRG)

The following issues are high priority topics:

- (1) review any new information on North Pacific gray whale stock structure and movements, and if necessary, provide information to the SWG of AWMP relevant to the *Implementation Review*;
- (3) review stock structure and abundance in a more comprehensive manner for Eastern Canada and West Greenland bowhead whales, if appropriate data and analyses are provided;
- (4) review report of southern right whale workshop to be held in Argentina during September 2011; and
- (5) review new information on all stocks of right whales, western North Pacific gray whales, and small stocks of bowhead whales.

In-depth assessment (IA)

The following issues are high priority topics:

- (1) further resolve the reasons for the differences between estimates of abundance of Antarctic minke whales between the OK and (hazard-probability and trackline conditional independence) SPLINTR models, and thus provide agreed estimates of abundance at next year's meeting;
- (2) apply the statistical catch-at-age models using the full suite of available data so that the results may be considered at next year's meeting; and
- (3) continue the examination of the differences between minke whale abundance in CP11 and CP111, by further investigation of the relationship between sea ice and minke whale abundance.
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Environmental Concerns (E)

The following issues are high priority topics:

- (1) review SOCER;
- (2) review progress on POLLUTION 2000+ Phase II;
- (3) review progress of CERD working group;
- (4) review new information on effects of anthropogenic sound on cetaceans and approaches to mitigate these effects;
- (5) review progress on recommendations from Climate Change Workshops;
- (6) update plans for an Arctic Anthropogenic Impacts on Cetaceans Workshop; and
- (7) review marine renewable energy development premeeting.

Ecosystem modelling (EM)

The following issues are high priority topics:

- (1) explore how ecosystem models might contribute to developing scenarios for simulation testing of the RMP;
- (2) review other issues relevant to ecosystem modelling within the Committee;
- (3) review ecosystem modelling efforts undertaken outside the IWC; and
- (4) review any new information on ecosystem model skill assessment.

Southern Hemisphere whales other than Antarctic minke whales (SH)

The following issues are high priority topics:

- (1) Southern Hemisphere humpback whales:
 - a. begin assessment of breeding stocks E and F;
 - b. review new information from the Arabian Sea;
 - c. review new information from other breeding stocks; and
- (2) review new information on Southern Hemisphere blue whales in preparation for assessment.

Small cetaceans (SM)

The following issues are high priority topics:

- (1) status of Ziphiids in the North Pacific;
- (2) voluntary funds for small cetacean conservation research;
- (3) review progress on previous recommendations; and
- (4) review takes of small cetaceans.

Whalewatching (WW)

The following issues are high priority topics:

- (1) assess the impacts of whalewatching on cetaceans;

Additional items:

- (2) review reports from Intersessional Working Groups:
 - (i) Large-Scale Whalewatching Experiment (LaWE) steering group;
 - (ii) LaWE budget development group;
 - (iii) online database for world-wide tracking of commercial whalewatching and associated data collection;
 - (iv) swim-with-whale operations; and
 - (v) in-water interactions;
- (3) review the scientific aspects of the report from the Conservation Commission;
- (4) review whalewatching in the region of the next meeting;
- (5) consider information from platforms of opportunity of potential value to the Scientific Committee;
- (6) review of whalewatching guidelines and regulations; and
- (7) review of collision risks to cetaceans from whalewatching vessels.

Scientific Permits

The following issues are high-priority topics:

- (1) review of activities under existing permits;
- (2) review of new or continuing proposals;
- (3) review results of specialist meeting to review the modified JARPN II special permit, if submitted; and
- (4) plan for final review of results from Iceland's scientific take of North Atlantic common minke whales.

SUMMARY OF COMMISSION DECISIONS

You can find a summary of the Commission's discussions via the press release on the website:

<http://www.iwcoffice.org/meetings/meeting2011.htm>

There were two resolutions passed during the 2011 Commission meeting. Resolution 2011-1 is on improving the effectiveness of operations within the International Whaling Commission and Resolution 2011-2 is on safety at sea. They are detailed at:

<http://www.iwcoffice.org/meetings/resolutions/resolution2011.htm>