

**PROPOSAL TO ADDRESS INDIRECT HUMAN IMPACTS
ON MARINE MAMMALS OF THE WIDER CARIBBEAN REGION**

**Submitted by
Dominican Republic, France, Mexico, Panama and the United States**

Vessel collisions and entanglement in man-made materials are known to be lethal at a rate that is impacting the growth and recovery of some marine mammal populations. The International Whaling Commission (IWC), UNEP's Caribbean Environment Program (CEP) and the Parties of the Caribbean/Stellwagen Sister Sanctuary Program all have recognized this and have expressed the need for an improved understanding of the magnitude and impacts of collision with vessels and fisheries interactions in order to assess and mitigate these threats to the recovery and health of marine mammal populations.

In accordance with the recommendations of IWC Bycatch and Ship Strike Working Groups and CEP's Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife's (SPAW) Action Plan for the Conservation of Marine Mammals in the Wider Caribbean Region (Marine Mammal Action Plan, MMAP), we propose that the IWC and CEP Secretariats partner with interested member governments in order to convene workshops on these topics for the Wider Caribbean countries as follows:

- i) An Interdisciplinary Ship Strike Workshop (2013); and**
- ii) Two Large Whale Entanglement Training Workshops (2012/2013).**

The IWC is recognized as having international technical expertise in the understanding and mitigation of these human impacts, and therefore can provide the countries of the Wider Caribbean region access to this expertise through this series of capacity building and mitigation workshops.

With regard to the ship strike issue in the region, there are two major components to address:

i) gathering data on the risk associated with particular species and areas; and ii) identifying potential mitigation actions. Currently identified partners include the IWC, UNEP-CEP, SPAW Regional Activity Center and the Parties of the Sister Sanctuary Agreement (Dominican Republic, France, the Netherlands, and the United States), but it is hoped to expand this to include other interested parties (e.g. IMO, stakeholders and other countries in the region). The terms of reference, agenda, venue and invited participants for this workshop will be determined by an IWC-led steering committee in consultation with UNEP-CEP and Sister Sanctuary Parties. The Ship Strike Workshop will likely be held in 2013.

With regard to large whale entanglement, two practical workshops on determining and responding to these two recognized human impacts are proposed. These capacity building workshops will follow the structure and curricula recently developed by the world's experts on entanglement response during the second IWC workshop on large whale entanglement and its associated animal welfare issues (2011). However, these practical workshops will also include an extra day of training in the determination of human caused mortalities, conducted by an internationally recognized expert on the topic. It is anticipated that these workshops will each take place in different venues and languages. One will be an English-French workshop in the French West Indies (e.g. Martinique, Guadeloupe), and the other will be an English-Spanish workshop, likely in Mexico.

The IWC Secretariat will work with the UNEP CEP Secretariat and appropriate member governments, including the Parties of the Sister Sanctuary Agreement and other interested Parties on developing a list of invited participants, other logistics and necessary support.