

IWC Whale Killing Methods & Welfare Issues¹ (WG-WKM&WI) Action Plan

** Indicates text based on the 2003 Action Plan.*

Workstream 1 - Embedding welfare considerations within the IWC				
Aim: To equip the Commission and its working bodies with the necessary information to ensure cetacean welfare aspects are proactively and consistently considered across all relevant areas of work.				
Actions		Outcome	Timelines	Responsible parties
1.1	Examine the potential for a shared understanding of animal welfare in relation to non-hunting human induced threats.	Clarity on the broader goals of the IWC with respect to the promotion of sound animal welfare practices relating to non-hunting aspects of human activities. If possible, identification of shared welfare principles to help provide a collective understanding.	Ongoing	WKM&AWI WG
1.2	Establish working links with all relevant Working Groups and Sub-Committees on welfare related aspects.	Formalised information flow from and to those IWC groups already considering welfare aspects and the establishment of new linkages where necessary.	Ongoing.	WKM&AWI WG Sub-Committees Working groups on whale watching, ship strikes, entanglement, small cetaceans etc.

Workstream 2 – Research, management advice and actions to address welfare issues from non-hunting anthropogenic threats

Aim: To improve understanding of the nature and scale of non-hunting welfare threats to cetaceans, and provide both management advice and practical support to mitigate these threats.

Actions		Outcome	Timelines	Responsible parties
1.1 Data gathering and advice				
Objective: To ensure fit for purpose data are collected and made available to the Commission to help improve our understanding of the implications of key threats on the welfare of cetaceans and to support the proposal of appropriate welfare related recommendations.				
2.1.1	Identify and agree upon priority areas of work, where welfare issues are considered most relevant. Agree a detailed Action Plan and update over time as appropriate.	A focussed programme of work and detailed Action Plan which will support delivery and provide a clear steer on priorities to the Commission and the Scientific Committee.	on-going	WKM&AWI WG
2.1.2	Identify and quantify (where possible) the nature and extent of threats to cetacean welfare, gaps in our understanding, and specific data needs. Where appropriate, propose possible mitigation measures for consideration by the Commission.	A series of topic-specific welfare orientated workshops generating recommendations for the Commission to consider. Covering, for example, extent and severity of threats, research needs, and potential mitigation measures.	Ongoing	WKM&AWI WG
2.1.3	Seek to develop criteria to support standardised welfare data collection and encourage the regular submission of relevant data from the sub-groups to the WKM&AWI Working Group.	Fit for purpose, standardised data which are more easily compared and analysed across the range of welfare issues being addressed by the WKM&AWI WG.		WKM&AWI WG Sub-Committees Working groups on whale watching, ship strikes, entanglement, small cetaceans etc.

2.2 – Euthanasia

Objective: To produce specific recommendations to the Commission in relation to the euthanasia of cetaceans.

Actions		Outcomes	Timelines	Responsible parties
2.2.1	Review the information, and progress the recommendations, arising from the 2013 workshop on 'Euthanasia Protocols to Optimize Welfare Concerns for Stranded Cetaceans'.	Agreed suite of humane practices and protocols (including health and safety) applicable to stranded cetaceans and associated recommendations to be considered and adopted by IWC parties.	2016 (IWC 65)	WKM&AWI WG
2.2.2	* Organise additional topic-specific workshops to address gaps in understanding and progress key aspects relating to euthanasia (<i>Action 5, 6, & 10-2003 Action Plan</i>).	The bringing together of experts to: agree recommendations on euthanasia protocols for mass stranding events; the development of criteria for determining permanent insensibility, unconsciousness and death; and work towards developing reliable indices of stress (last two relevant to both whaling and non-whaling welfare considerations).	Ongoing	WKM&AWI WG

2.3 Disentanglement

Objective: To produce specific recommendations to the Commission in relation to the welfare implications of entanglement, in particular relating to marine debris and active fishing gear.

Actions		Outcomes	Timelines	Responsible parties
2.3.1	Support the continued growth and development of the disentanglement network and ensure that the IWC becomes the central point for capturing and disseminating relevant information and raising standards.	A sustained increase in the number of people trained to safely disentangle cetaceans. A global, publicly accessible database on cetacean entanglements, disentanglement efforts and outcomes. Training workshops held in entanglement hotspots.	Ongoing	Disentanglement network (led by David Matilla)

2.3.2	Take steps to apply the successful model of the disentanglement network to other areas, in particular in improving and standardising responses to euthanasia and strandings events (linked with sub-workstreams (i) and (iii)).	Improved and standardised responses to issues such as strandings and euthanasia. Establishment of a global strandings/euthanasia expert network, training package and stranding database. Management advice adopted by the IWC and translated into practical content.	2016 (IWC66)	WKM&AWI WG
-------	---	---	--------------	------------

2.4 Cetacean Strandings

Objective: To work through existing strandings networks to produce specific recommendations to the Commission in relation to the welfare implications of responding to cetacean stranding events.

Actions		Outcomes	Timelines	Responsible parties
2.4.1	Organise a mass strandings workshop to progress the development of shared best practice and guidance in responding to such events (linked with Action 7).	The bringing together of experts and existing strandings networks to share experiences, agree guidance, and help raise welfare standards when dealing with mass stranding events. The IWC established as a central repository for shared guidance and best practice.	2016 (IWC66)	WKM&AWI WG

Workstream 3 – Management advice and actions to address welfare issues in relation to hunting

Aim: To deliver practical improvements in welfare aspects associated with cetacean hunts, including Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling (ASW).

Actions		Outcomes	Timelines	Responsible parties
3.1	* Encourage increased collection and submission of fit for purpose, standardised time to death data from member states in relation to primary and secondary killing methods in commercial and ASW hunts. (<i>Action 7 - 2003 Action Plan</i>).	Fit for purpose and consistent data from across different hunts will allow for an evidenced comparison of the effectiveness of different killing methods. Data presented with appropriate statistical analysis will allow for comprehensive independent appraisal.	On- going	IWC Contracting Parties
3.2	* Encourage the collection and presentation of fit for purpose, standardised struck and lost rates in all commercial and ASW hunts, including information on weaponry and techniques used. (<i>Action 8 & 9 - 2003 Action Plan</i>).	Data will allow for evidenced considerations of the effectiveness of different weaponry and techniques.	On- going	IWC Contracting Parties
3.3	<p>Encourage continued co-operation amongst Contracting Governments to review and improve weaponry and methods used for hunting whales.</p> <p>This may include but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) * Refining the design of penthrite grenades to take into consideration necessary species-specific modifications of charge and depth or timing after impact at which detonation is triggered (<i>Action 1 & 9 - 2003 Action Plan</i>) 	The implementation of practical improvements to existing practices which will improve the welfare aspects associated with the hunting of whales, including time to death and struck and lost rates.	On-going	IWC Contracting Parties

	<p>b) Encouragement and support for the replacement of cold harpoons and other weaponry of lower efficiency with penthrite grenades in ASW hunts.</p> <p>c) * Refining the design of sighting equipment suitable for rapid action under conditions at sea, in order to improve accuracy of delivery of penthrite grenades (<i>Action 2 & 9 - 2003 Action Plan</i>).</p> <p>d) * Supporting and encouraging the development and implementation of training programmes on safe handling and effective use of weaponry including the penthrite grenade and other aspects of hunts (<i>Action 2 & 9 - 2003 Action Plan</i>).</p> <p>e) * Seeking updated information and review of constraints on shooting distance and relative orientation of vessel and whale in order to promote measures to reduce times to death (<i>Action 3 - 2003 Action Plan</i>).</p>			
--	--	--	--	--

	<p>f) * Reviewing the use and effectiveness of secondary killing methods on different species including analysis of all currently used methods and promotion of most effective methods for reducing time to death of whales (<i>Action 4 - 2003 Action Plan</i>).</p> <p>g) Collection of information on age and wear of the weaponry currently being used, and the impact of such on welfare aspects of hunts. Encouragement of the development of mechanisms to address concerns such as regular inspections of whaling gear.</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;">Workstream 4 - Communications and Outreach</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Aim: To engage external experts in, and promote more widely, the IWC's welfare agenda.</p>				
Actions		Outcome	Timelines	Responsible parties
4.1	Establish and maintain appropriate and constructive links with organisations considering animal welfare, including the hunting of terrestrial animals.	Secures input of additional and valuable expertise into IWC discussions. Ensures cross-fertilisation between organisations dealing with cross-cutting issues such as the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) and the World Organisation for Animal Health and Welfare (OIE),	Ongoing	WKM&AWI WG Secretariat
4.2	Request that contracting governments provide information on animal welfare science experts for inclusion in the IWC external contacts database.	A fully populated database of external national contacts which can be drawn upon to help progress relevant work being undertaken by the Commission.	2016 (IWC66)	WKM&AWI WG Secretariat IWC Contracting Parties