

Intersessional Meeting of the Commission on the Future of IWC FAO Headquarters, Rome, Italy, 9-11 March 2009

DRAFT AGENDA and annotations

The intersessional meeting will start at 11.00 on Monday 9 March.
It will be preceded by a private meeting of Commissioners at 10.00.

1. INTRODUCTORY ITEMS

1.1 Introductory remarks and objectives of the meeting

The Chair of the Commission, Bill Hogarth, will make some introductory remarks, including a summary of the process, embarked upon at the 2007 Annual Meeting, toward determining the future of the IWC that has led to the present meeting. He will outline his objectives for the meeting.

1.2 Management and reporting

The Chair will indicate that:

- Ambassador Alvaro de Soto, Chair of the Small Working Group on the Future of IWC, will be given speaking rights during the meeting in a similar manner to the Chair of the Scientific Committee;
- in the same way as was done at last year's Annual Meeting, NGOs will be allowed to address the meeting. This will be done on Tuesday afternoon. Up to six NGOs broadly representing the range of views will be allowed to address the meeting for up to 5 minutes each. Only one individual per organization will be allowed to speak;
- Nicky Grandy and Greg Donovan (Secretariat) are proposed as rapporteurs;
- he will prepare a Chair's report to be circulated after the meeting.

1.3 Review of documents

The Chair will note briefly the documents prepared and distributed for the meeting.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

3. REPORT ON THE SMALL WORKING GROUP ON THE FUTURE OF IWC

The mandate of the SWG is to *'make every effort to develop a package or packages for review by the Commission'* in order to assist it *'to arrive at a consensus solution to the main issues it faces'* (i.e. the 33 elements/issues identified of importance). It was to report on its initial deliberations to the 2009 Intersessional Meeting of the Commission on the Future of IWC.

The Chair of the Commission appointed Ambassador Alvaro de Soto, one of the outside experts involved in the March 2008 intersessional and annual meetings, to chair the SWG under his supervision. The SWG has met twice, once in Florida, USA in September 2008 and again in Cambridge, UK in December 2008. Ambassador de Soto's report on the SWG is available as IWC/M09/4. It includes, as Appendix 1, ***Chairs' Suggestions on the Future of the International Whaling Commission***, prepared by both SWG and IWC Chairs.

At its first meeting, the SWG divided the 33 elements/issues into two categories: (a) controversial issues that need to be addressed in the short term, i.e. those that if not addressed in the short term may fail to alter the *status quo* or even result in an irreparable break in the system via the withdrawal of governments from the Convention; and (b) issues which are non controversial or less controversial and which, if left unresolved, would not prevent a package being agreed concerning category (a), provided that a mechanism exists or can be established to address them. These are primarily but not exclusively scientific and administrative issues. Category (a) issues have been the focus of the Chairs' 'suggestions'.

3.1 Presentation of the SWG Chair's Report

Ambassador de Soto will present his report.

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 The Chairs' Suggestions on the Future of the IWC (Appendix 1 of IWC/M09/4)

3.2.2 Handling of category (b) elements/issues

At its first meeting, for each category (b) element, the SWG provided an indication of some of the issues that have been raised and how they are either already being addressed or how they could be addressed in the future (see Appendix 2, Annex 7 of IWC/M09/4). It was suggested that quite a number of these be assigned to the Scientific Committee. To facilitate discussions and any recommendations at the intersessional meeting, a report will be available from the Chair of the Scientific Committee and Head of Science on progress to date and future plans to address these matters within the Scientific Committee.

4. REPORT OF THE INTERSESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE GROUP (ICG) ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The objective of the ICG, established at IWC/60, is to develop a discussion document (and if it deems appropriate, recommendations) on the following issues, recognising the inter-relationship of a number of aspects of the issues:

- (1) consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of separating the annual meeting of the Scientific Committee from that of the Commission;
- (2) consideration of ways to increase participation in the Scientific Committee of scientists from developing countries in the work of the Scientific Committee;
- (3) consideration of ways in which the Scientific Committee can assist in improving the knowledge and technical capability of scientists from countries where cetacean research is in its infancy so that they can better contribute to the work of the Scientific Committee and to conservation and management issues within their region; and
- (4) review the process for inviting participants to the Scientific Committee.

Drafts of the discussion document were submitted to the SWG as required by the ICG's Terms of Reference. The final discussion document will be available as IWC/M09/5.

4.1 Presentation of the Discussion Document

4.2 Discussion

The meeting will be invited to comment on the document and in particular on the options presented in it for a way forward with this work.

5. DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER WORK OF THE SWG

Based on discussions on earlier agenda items, the intersessional meeting is required to develop directions to the SWG regarding further work on developing a possible package or packages that it should do prior to the Annual Meeting in Madeira in June 2009.

The SWG will meet immediately following the intersessional meeting of the Commission (i.e. on 12 and 13 March). Its report must be distributed at least 5 weeks before the Annual Meeting (i.e. by 18 May 2009).

6. OTHER MATTERS

7. CONCLUSIONS AND PRESS RELEASE

The Chair will make some concluding remarks.

A draft press release will have been developed by the Secretariat for review by the meeting.