

International Whaling Commission

Sustainable development of marine resources – conservation and management ·
Monitoring, control and surveillance of commercial whaling - the Revised Management Scheme (RMS). Although IWC has agreed a scientifically robust method for calculating safe catch limits for whale stocks (the Revised Management Procedure – RMP), it has also agreed that before this method is implemented and the current moratorium on commercial whaling lifted, an inspection and observation scheme must be in place to ensure that agreed catch limits are not exceeded. It is this combination of scientific and non-scientific factors that comprises the RMS. The Commission is currently putting significant effort into trying to reach agreement on an improved inspection and observation scheme and a number of meetings were held during 2002 on this matter. More are planned for 2003. Currently discussions are focused on the need for catch verification in addition to that provided by national inspectors and international observers (e.g. DNA registers and market monitoring, and catch document schemes), compliance reviews, costs, and the need to collect animal welfare data (see Attachment 3 for further details). ·
Development of an Aboriginal Whaling Management Procedure – the Scientific Committee has continued to make progress towards developing new management regimes for aboriginal subsistence whaling; this work has been given high priority by the Commission. At its Annual Meeting in 2002, the Commission endorsed and adopted a new long-term approach to providing advice on strike limits for bowhead whales. (See Attachment 4 for further details.)

Marine Environment ·
Protection of specific marine areas – The Commission has established two whale sanctuaries, one in the Indian Ocean and the other in the Southern Ocean. The Indian Ocean Sanctuary was subject to review at the 2002 Annual Meeting, and despite strongly held views both in support and against the need for sanctuaries, the IOS remains in place. The Southern Ocean Sanctuary will be reviewed in 2004. Proposals to establish whale sanctuaries in the South Pacific and in the South Atlantic were not adopted. At the Annual Meeting this year, the Commission adopted by majority voting Resolution 2002-1 on Guidance to the Scientific Committee on the Sanctuary Review Process that makes reference to the application of a precautionary approach (see Attachment 5). ·
Environmental research – In recent years, the Commission has strengthened its commitment to research on environmental changes and the effects on cetaceans. In particular, last year, it has provided some ‘seed funding’ for two major collaborative research initiatives made by its Scientific Committee with respect to (1) chemical pollutants (POLLUTION 2000+) and (2) baleen whale habitat and prey studies in co-operation with CCAMLR and Southern Ocean GLOBEC (SOWER 2000). IWC’s Scientific Committee has begun to look at the interactions between fisheries and cetaceans. A workshop to address modelling-related issues was held in July 2002. (See Attachment 4 for further details). The Scientific Committee has also begun work on a State of the Cetacean Environment Report (SOCER) that would be produced on an annual basis. The idea is that a regional approach would be taken for each annual report (e.g. Mediterranean and Black Seas, Indian, Pacific, Arctic, Southern and Atlantic Oceans) with each region being covered on a rolling basis every 3 to 5 years but with scope for inclusion of significant events on a global scale or repeat events from particular regions to be updated on an annual basis.

Co-operation with other organisations · IWC continues to co-operate with other organisations, particularly at the scientific level, e.g. with: CMS (Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species); ASCOBANS (Agreement on Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas); ACCOBAMS (Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area); ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea); CCAMLR (Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources); Southern Ocean GLOBEC; NAMMCO (North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission); FAO – Committee on Fisheries; PICES (North Pacific Marine Science Organisation); CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora); IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources); and ECCO (Eastern Caribbean Cetacean Commission).

With respect to paragraph 35 of the resolution on oceans and law of the sea, while IWC does not have any specific capacity-building activities, it might be of interest for you to learn of a recent development concerning IWC's financial contributions scheme. For the last few years, the Commission has been working to develop a more equitable scheme for financial contributions, i.e. to take into account for the first time, Contracting Governments' capacity to pay. Although agreement has not yet been reached on a final scheme, an 'interim measure' was adopted by the Commission at its Annual Meeting in 2002 that reduces significantly the financial burden of membership for developing countries.

IWC has no specific proposals to make at this time with respect to paragraph 45 of the resolution concerning a regular process under the UN for the global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, but we would be pleased to contribute information to a reporting process once developed.