

International Whaling Commission Meeting (IWC61)

This year the International Whaling Commission Meeting took place in Funchal, Madeira.

This beautiful island has impressive landscapes and numerous species of whales and dolphins come very close to the rocky shores, much to the delight and amazement of like-minded ENGO's and government reps participating in IWC61.

The plenary sessions were inaugurated with welcome speeches from His Excellency the President of the Regional Government of Madeira Dr. Alberto Joao Jardim and his Excellency, the Portuguese Minister of Environment, Spatial Planning and Regional Development Dr Francisco Nunes Correia.

Three new member countries paid their registration fees to assist this year: Estonia, Lithuania and Poland. However, only Estonia and Poland showed up. Estonia sided with the whalers, while Poland is pro-conservation. The total number of IWC member countries is now 85. **CATCA worked very hard to bring Poland to the International Whaling Commission and after launching an international campaign and working also internally, we got them there.**

Dr. William Hogarth, Chair of the Commission, said that he looked forward to the same level of co-operation for consensus from recent meetings, especially the ones regarding [the future of the IWC](#). After adopting the [Agenda](#) and a [provisional timetable](#) for the week's deliberations, the Commission then turned to the report of the Scientific Committee, which reported on its work related to the status of a number of large whale populations

Here are few extracts from the Scientific Report

SC Report 5.2 Eastern Arctic bowhead whales 5.2.1 Stock structure

The sub-committee expressed disappointment that no genetic analysis was supplied this year to test the single stock hypothesis as was promised last year. Although the sub-committee agreed at the previous two Annual Meetings to consider a single stock as the working hypothesis, it was acknowledged there is still uncertainty about the population structure of bowhead whales in Eastern Canada and Western Greenland. Wade noted that in other sub-committees, notably RMP, it is common to keep several working hypotheses of population structure when uncertainty exists.

He acknowledged that tagging data showing movements of individuals completely around Baffin Island have been taken as support for a one-stock hypothesis, but pointed to examples in other baleen whales, in which one stock is thought to migrate through an area occupied by a second stock.

He also noted that significant genetic differences between Baffin Bay locations and Hudson Bay/Foxe Basin locations in both mtDNA and microsatellite DNA have previously been presented (SC/57/BRG11) and a consensus tree (from both mtDNA and microsatellites) had all Foxe Basin/Hudson Bay samples on one side and all Baffin Bay samples on the other, consistent with a two-stock hypothesis. Given that no new genetic information has been presented to disprove the two stock hypotheses, he recommended that both one-stock and two-stock hypotheses should be considered working hypotheses by the sub-committee.

The sub-committee agreed that a working hypothesis of one stock implies that alternative hypotheses are still considered and therefore there should be consideration of both one stock and two stock hypotheses. The sub-committee strongly encouraged provision of genetic analysis to evaluate the appropriateness of the hypotheses considered.

5.2.2 Abundance

In 2008, the sub-committee agreed on a negatively biased estimate of 6,344 (95% CI = 3,119-12,906) which pertains to the Baffin Bay-Davis Strait population (IWC 2008 p.28).

Some members of the sub-committee noted that there was considerable uncertainty associated with the current estimate of the Eastern Canada/Western Greenland Bowhead population size and that it would be difficult to obtain adequate aerial survey coverage of the large and fragmented summer range to provide a more accurate and precise estimate. It is recommended that the possibility of photographic survey be investigated to obtain a capture-recapture estimate, similar to that presented for the BCB stock in SC/61/FI12.

5.2.3 Catch information

Three bowhead whales were harvested under license in the Eastern Canadian Arctic in 2008, two in Nunavut and one in Nunavik (northern Quebec) (Reeves, pers. comm.).

5.2.4 Management advice

In 2007, the Commission agreed to a quota (for the next five years) of two bowhead whales struck annually off West Greenland but the quota for each year shall only become operative when the Commission has received advice from the Scientific Committee that the strikes are unlikely to endanger the stock.

In 2008, the Committee was pleased to have developed an agreed approach for determining interim management advice. The sub-committee agreed that the current catch limit will not harm the stock. It was also aware that catches from the same stock have been taken by a non-member nation, Canada. It noted that should Canadian catches continue at a similar level as in recent years, this would not change the sub-committee's advice with respect to the strike limits agreed for West Greenland.

5.5 West Greenland stock of bowhead whales

5.5.1 Report of the Scientific Committee

The Chair of the SWG noted that the Committee has agreed at the previous two Annual Meetings to consider a single stock of bowhead whales in this region as the 'working hypothesis' while acknowledging that there is still some uncertainty about the population structure of bowhead whales in eastern Canada and Western Greenland. The Committee expressed disappointment that the expected genetic analyses were not supplied this year to test the single stock hypothesis. The Committee agreed that a 'working' hypothesis of one stock implies that alternative hypotheses are still considered and therefore there should be consideration of both one stock and two stock hypotheses. The Committee strongly encouraged provision of genetic analysis to evaluate the appropriateness of the hypotheses considered. In 2008, the Committee agreed on a negatively biased estimate of 6,344 (95% CI = 3,119-12,906) which pertains to the Baffin Bay-Davis Strait population i.e. that relevant to West Greenland. The Committee was informed by one of its members that three bowhead whales were harvested under license in the eastern Canadian Arctic in 2008, two in Nunavut and one in Nunavik, northern Quebec. No bowhead whales were harvested by Greenlandic whalers in 2008.

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5.5.2 Discussion and Recommendations

Back in Plenary, in response to a question from the USA, the Chair of the SWG advised that there had been no discussion relating to the derivation of meat from the Canadian catches.

Mexico asked if there had been any increase in the Canadian bowhead quota and sought any information on tendency about if they are steady or growing, and either if an increase in catches would affect the advice given by the Scientific Committee. The Chair of the SWG said that the Scientific Committee had no information on the Canadian quotas, but assumed that this could be obtained from the Canadian Government; if a representative from the Canadian Government was present at the Annual meeting they

could be asked. As to the second part of Mexico's question, the Chair of the SWG said that the answer would depend on how large any increase in catches might be. If the Scientific Committee has this information then it can provide advice based on this.

The Commission was concerned with the status of the endangered western North Pacific gray whale. These whales feeding grounds coincide with oil and gas operations off Sakhalin Island, Russian Federation. The population numbers are around 130 animals. The Committee and the Commission welcomed the results of a workshop done under the patronage of the IUCN and endorsed its recommendation, relating to the creation of a conservation plan. The Commission accepted the value of continuing to co-operate with the IUCN Western Gray Whale Advisory Committee.

The ship strikes and entanglements are a big threat to the endangered western North Atlantic right whale population that counts about 300 whales. The Commission agrees again that mortality caused by humans should be reduced to zero as soon as possible.

After these issues from the Scientific Report were discussed, the Commission welcomed the reports of several countries on animal welfare issues related to whales and whaling. Many issues arisen from information on the proper methods for euthanasia for stranded animals to information on killing methods and hunting information from a number of member countries. The Chair reminded the Working Group that a Workshop on entanglement issues had been proposed by Norway in 2007 and that an organizing committee had been formed by Australia, Denmark/Greenland, the USA and Norway. The Chair invited a member of the committee to provide an update on progress made. The Commission will hold a workshop on welfare issues associated with euthanasia and the entanglement of large whales in Maui, Hawaii, in April 2010.

New Zealand provided information on the euthanasia of sixteen distressed whales thought to be beyond hope of recovery that stranded on its coastline between the end of March 2008 and the end of February 2009. It noted that for these whales (seven pygmy sperm, one Gray's beaked whale, and eight pilot whales), the chosen method of euthanasia was a rifle, and that death was instantaneous for all with the exception of three whales. Three of the pilot whales were part of a large stranding of over one hundred whales at a remote beach in the Chatham Islands, which were not reached until almost night fall and were by then partially covered by sand. As a result of the difficult conditions, the time to death for the three pilot whales was between one and three minutes. Advice on the objective area is provided by experienced veterinarians.

The Russian Federation provided information on the time to death and killing method (including the number of shots), for all 127 gray whales and 2 bowheads taken in its 2008 hunt. Ten of the gray whales were reported as 'stinky' and three gray whales had been struck and lost. With respect to killing method, harpoons and floats were used for all whales in addition to either the darting gun or rifle or, in most cases both – a rifle being used to guarantee death.

The average time to death for the two bowhead whales was one hour and five minutes. The Commission then went on to discuss co-operation with other international organizations. It sees such co-operation as an important part of its work, especially in the scientific ground on matters relevant to the conservation status of cetaceans and the management of activities that may affect their status. The Commission is pleased to announce that it has provisional observer status at the International Maritime Organization which will allow the co-operation on matters relevant to the conservation of whales.

Denmark/Greenland provided summary information for the 2008 subsistence hunt that involved the taking of 152 minke whales (including five struck and lost) and 14 fin whales (including three struck and lost). For the West Greenland minke whale hunt, the penthrite grenade and rifle were used as the primary and secondary killing methods respectively. There were changes in the figures in the report from previous years, namely an increase in the mean time to death, due to an increase in the use of rifles over harpoons, and a decrease in the overall catch. With respect to the changes, Denmark/Greenland

indicated that there was severe weather during the hunting season, which accounts for the increase in use of rifles and time to death, and decrease in numbers taken.

Norway (IWC/61/WKM&AWI 8) provided information for 2008 that included the take of 535 whales by 27 vessels. Four whales (0.7 %) were reported lost after they were dead. No whales were reported to have escaped wounded. During the season one inspector from the Directorate of Fisheries was present at sea and on land and no violations of national regulations for hunting methods was reported.

USA (IWC/61/WKM&AWI 4) presented information on the 2008 Alaskan aboriginal whaling hunt. It noted that 38 bowheads were struck and landed, and 12 bowheads were struck and lost, resulting in an efficiency rate of 76%. The USA explained that weather and ice conditions play a significant role in determining the efficiency of the spring aboriginal bowhead hunt. The USA also noted that the efficiency is in line with the 79% average over the last ten years and is an improvement from the 65% rate in 2007. Of the whales struck, 35 were taken using traditional hand thrown darting gun harpoon with the traditional shoulder gun used as the secondary method. Three whales were taken using the penthrite projectile. This is a decrease from 2007 where 7 out of 41 were taken using penthrite.

Norway noted that its interest in this workshop was the euthanasia of entangled whales that could not be released or were too exhausted to recover if disentangled and that this should be the main focus of the workshop.

Germany noted that several countries provided reports that far exceeded the requirements and in particular wished to thank the Russian Federation. Germany notes that Iceland and Japan had not provided reports and asked if those countries intended to submit reports to the IWC. Japan indicated that this issue had been raised in the past, and it reiterated its position expressed before. Japan shares the position of Norway and the Russian Federation that animal welfare is outside the mandate of the IWC, and that the reports are provided on a voluntary basis. Japan noted that it took the issue seriously and has been continuing to improve its whale killing methods. Japan then recalled that up until a few years ago it had provided extensive data on killing methods and welfare data to the Commission, data that had shown a steady reduction in TTD (time to death), and that the discussion had been hostile. Since its data had been used in what it considered to be a non-constructive manner from data provided by other governments, Japan had decided to submit its welfare data to NAMMCO for the time being, where more productive discussions occurred. Japan also wished to reiterate its position that Article 8 was not subject to any other provision of the Convention, so there was no obligation on its part to provide reports.

DAY 2

The morning started with discussions about the future of the IWC. Ambassador Alvaro de Soto was supposed to be there already as the Chair of the Small Working Group on the Future of IWC, but he was stuck in Geneva because he had already crossed the Schengen border and was unable to get back to any EU country without a visa. He showed up later that day.

The SWG met three times: once in Florida, USA in September 2008; once in Cambridge, UK in December 2008 and once in Rome in March 2009 immediately following the intercessional meeting of the Commission.

During the first meeting, the SWG divided the 33 elements/issues of importance into two categories: (a) controversial issues that need to be addressed in the short term, e.g. 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, provided that a mechanism exists or can be established to address them. These are primarily but not exclusively scientific and administrative issues.

The first stage consisted of short-term solutions which would last for a 5-year period, referred to as the 'interim period'. During the interim period, the Chair proposed that long-term solutions relating to the governance and future functioning of the organization were to be developed to be put in place at the end of the interim period, when the second stage would begin.

As indicated in its SWG report to the Commission (Document IWC/61/6), the SWG was not able to agree a package to put forward to the Commission at IWC/61. It did however agree to request from the Scientific Committee information in relation to Japanese small-type coastal whaling and proposals for work in relation to activities during the interim period and the handling of category (b) issues.

Although the SWG recognized that it had fallen short of the stated goal of agreeing on a package or packages on the future of the IWC for the Commission's review within the time chosen to do it (e.g. for IWC/61), it considered that the Commission at its meeting in Madeira should direct that the efforts underway should be continued for a further year and decisions taken at IWC/62. Recognizing the greatly improved atmosphere and the spirit of respectful dialogue which has prevailed in recent discussions, it worried that this diplomatic method of doing the Commission's business must be retained. After some discussion, the Commission adopted the proposal by consensus.

The next item of business was the report of the sub-committee on aboriginal subsistence whaling.

The Sub-Committee noted the report of the Scientific Committee and its recommendations.

9.1 Eastern Canada and West Greenland bowhead whales

9.1.1 Assess stock structure and abundance of Eastern Canadian and West Greenland bowhead whales.

The Committee has agreed at the previous two Annual Meetings to consider a single stock of bowhead whales in this region as the 'working hypothesis' while acknowledging that there is still some uncertainty about the population structure of bowhead whales in eastern Canada and Western Greenland (IWC, 2009h). The Committee expresses disappointment that the expected genetic analyses were not supplied this year to test the single stock hypothesis. The Committee agrees that a 'working' hypothesis of one stock implies that alternative hypotheses are still considered and therefore there should be consideration of both one stock and two stock hypotheses. The Committee strongly encourages provision of genetic analysis to evaluate the appropriateness of the hypotheses considered.

In 2008, the Committee agreed on a negatively biased estimate of 6,344 (95% CI = 3,119-12,906) which pertains to the Baffin Bay-Davis Strait population (IWC, 2008e, p.28) i.e. that relevant to West Greenland. Some members of the Committee noted that there was considerable uncertainty associated with treating the current estimate as an estimate of the total Eastern Canada/Western Greenland bowhead population size and that it would be difficult to obtain adequate aerial survey coverage of the large and fragmented summer range to provide a more accurate and precise estimate. These members recommended that the possibility of photographic survey be investigated to obtain a capture-recapture estimate, similar to that presented for the BCB stock in Koski et al. (2009) and discussed under Item 9.3.1

The need for a global database of incidents involving collisions between vessels and whales has been recognized by the Scientific Committee and the Conservation Committee, as well as other bodies such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and ACCOBAMS. The format and structure of the database was agreed by the Committee in 2007, and subsequently the database was populated with data, mainly from published sources. As of April 2008, there were 763 records in the database.

This year, the Scientific Committee had received new information that enabled it to provide advice on West Greenland common minke whales for the first time. That advice was that annual catches of 178 would not harm the stock. The advice from the Scientific Committee with respect to the other aboriginal subsistence catch limits was that the present limits will not harm the stocks.

As last year, the prime focus of the discussions within the Commission was the Greenland's request to catch 10 humpback whales. The Scientific Committee confirmed that such catches will not harm the stock. The discussions were whether Greenland had adequately shown that it 'needed' to catch these

whales (in the IWC system, countries representing aboriginal subsistence whaling must periodically demonstrate their need to catch whales to the Commission). The Commission received a document and Greenland had a Power Point presentation. Many member countries spoke on this issue, but this item in the agenda remains open and discussions behind doors are still taking place. Apparently the Greenlandic proposal continues to be revised. Quotas would be permitted to have ten whales for each of the three years; some six humpbacks with and without conditions. Rumors also say that 15 humpbacks are being demanded by Greenland now.

During the Aboriginal Whaling Sub-Committee sessions, Austria commented on the agenda item "Catches by non-member countries" mentioning the issue of the increased bowhead quota in Canada. Greg Donovan (head of the SC) replied that the Commission had not received official notification from the Canadian government. Curiously, Donovan then said that the IWC SC "is fine" with this new quota as long as it does not increase again.

We were surprised because Canada is not supposed to issue any quotas whatsoever, so how can the SC be "fine" with this is a mystery that we hope to resolve. We have contacted Donovan to request clarification of this issue.

The EU Commissioners were in constant meetings regarding the Greenland Proposal since early Sunday 21st

The EU countries had different positions regarding this proposal and there was not much coordination during the EU Commissioners meetings, which led to a never ending chain of meetings going nowhere. Germany was leading the opposition after the UK stopped supporting Germany when the US, Australia and New Zealand backed off as well. Sweden joined Norway, Iceland, Finland and the new member country Estonia, to support the Greenland Proposal. Also the like-minded EU countries were taking their own positions regarding this issue, supporting the idea of allowing Greenland to kill 6 humpbacks. There are also the countries that go either way. This resulted in EU Commissioners having meetings day and night every day all the way to the very last day of plenary.

More facts about the Greenland Proposal are at the end of this report.

The Committee then received presentations on socio-economic implications and small-type whaling from communities in Japan and Korea.

The last issue was the Revised Management Scheme, which only current activity undertaken is the Scientific Committee's work on the Revised Management Procedure. This year, the Committee completed its work on the Implementation for North Atlantic fin whales. The Commission work on the RMS ceased in 2007 but the issue has been raised in regards to discussions on the "Future of the IWC".

Day 3

The day started with the consideration of sanctuaries. Sanctuaries are part of three discussions on the [Future of the IWC](#). While those discussions are continuing, countries that favor new sanctuaries have agreed not to pursue them at this meeting. Today was the big day when six NGO's (three like-minded and three on the pro-whaling side), spoke to the assembled delegates. The pro-whaling speeches, were a mixture of their own history, culture, science and their concerns.. The speakers for the like-minded NGO's were: Susan Milliard from the AWI (on behalf of the WDCC since Mark Simmons could not speak as a NGO been part of the UK Delegation), Patty Forkan from the HSI and Dr. Sidney Holt, who has spent the last 50 years attending IWC's meetings. In his brief speech, Dr. Holt said that the only possible way to keep going forward is to phase out and close down commercial and "scientific" whaling, forever; that moratoriums or limited opportunities should stop within 3 years of the decision being made. Dr. Holt is an ardent advocate of setting in place a system that would provide limited opportunity for whaling, while protecting vulnerable whale populations,

The three pro-whaling NGO's were from the International Transport Workers Federation of Japan; the Association of Traditional Marine Mammal Hunters of Chukotka; and Te Ohu Kaimoana.

The Commission proceeded to consider the environmental and health issues. They received the report of the Scientific Committee workshop on climate change and cetaceans. The Commission received reports on several other issues including an ecosystem modeling for the possible Phase II of the IWC's POLLUTION 2000+ program, marine renewable energy projects which could have adverse effects on cetaceans.

Whale watching became the next issue and the CC had a discussion regarding the careful management of this industry not to create adverse effects on the cetaceans. The Commission agreed to form a CC standing working group to prepare a 5 year strategy plan on the management of whale watching. They will meet in an intercessional meeting.

As an interesting point, I will add that IFAW reported a dramatic increase in whale watching activities in 2008 worldwide. This NGO states that last year 13 million people went on whale watching tours in 119 countries and generated a revenue of \$2.1 billion dollars, which is over a billion dollars more compared to the profit received ten years ago when the last evaluation of the last earnings of whale watching was prepared.

There are an estimated 3,300 operators worldwide that employ an estimated 13,200 people. This represents a growth rate of 3.7 percent annually worldwide. Monaco and other countries suggested that parts of the profits of whale watching in rich countries should help poorer countries develop the industry, but the proposal didn't go anywhere.

Sea Shepherds Conservation Society's anti whaling activities in the Antarctic were brought up as an issue of safety at sea. Angry "puppet countries" Commissioners following Japan's protest about the "pirate of the seas", complained for a very long hour.

Another issue that was considered was whaling under special permits. The Commission received a report of an expert panel that had review the ongoing Japanese program in the North Pacific (JARPN II).

The Commission criticized the dangerous activity in the Southern Ocean and this lead to a long discussion. This Special-permit whaling item is always one of the major discordant issues among the Commissioners and should be an element of the discussions regarding the Future of the IWC.

The Commission postponed discussion of two matters: the Southern Ocean Research Partnership (SORP) and a revised proposal from Denmark with respect to its aboriginal subsistence whaling.

Day 4

The Commission decided to make this the last day of the plenary and leave open the decision on catch limits for Greenland until an intercessional meeting takes place because the EU Commissioners could not reach an agreement on the Greenland Proposal to hunt humpback whales. So the Chairman left agenda item 5 (ASW) open and Greg Donovan will meet later with Greenland, Denmark and others to organize the continuation of this discussion.

A scientific group will look at conversion factors from tones of edible products to the number of whales to present the results at the intercessional meeting. Denmark requested that this meeting needs to take place by the end of this year and the decision taken before the Greenland hunt next year.

The Commission then discussed the Southern Ocean Research Program (SORP) and thanked several countries lead by Australia for taking on the initiative of this ambitious research program in the Southern Ocean.

The Scientific Committee paid special attention to its discussion of [small cetaceans](#) such as the Common dolphin. Concerns were expressed over their population status in the Mediterranean, off Peru and some parts of the northeastern Atlantic. Australia expressed concern on the take of bottlenose dolphins off the Solomon Islands and offered again to give 500,000 Australian dollars to the IWC small cetacean fund to help work in this area.

Great concerns were expressed over the status of the critically endangered vaquita. Mexico thanked the Scientific Committee for their help with the vaquita (the highly endangered porpoise in the Gulf of California). Regardless of economic difficulties, the Mexican Commissioner felt we still need to address the bycatch of this little porpoise.

After considering the Scientific Committee report, the Commission complimented the work of its outgoing Chair, Dr Arne Bjørge. The new Chair will be Dr Debra Palka from the USA and the new Vice-Chair will be Dr Toshihide Kitakado of Japan.

The Conservation Committee in collaboration with the Scientific Committee is making progress on the problem of collisions between ships and whales. An [online database](#) for reporting collisions is now up and running, which will help keep track and record this kind of incidents worldwide. The Commission also discussed Sanctuaries, southern right whales and conservation management plans. The Commission offered collaboration with the conservation plan for the western gray whale being developed under the auspices of IUCN.

The Resolution on Climate Change and Cetaceans was adopted by consensus after a presentation by Doug Demaster, the retiring US Commissioner.

Even though three bowhead whales were shot and killed in the Canadian Eastern Arctic last year, under agenda item 'catches from non-member nations', there were no comments.

There is a report of the infractions committee about a accidental and illegal take of a bowhead calf by the Alaskan Inupiat, but it also came and went without a comment.

France made an NGO related comment and encourages IWC to think about their 'practical installation'. They should be given proper speaking rights and tables, but unfortunately nobody associates with France. NGOs are allowed to sit in rows of chairs usually at the very back of the room or sometimes in other rooms with video screens showing the proceedings.

There were many administrative and financial issues discussed. One of them was to establish a support group to assist the Chair in discussions on the [Future of the IWC](#). It was decided that the next IWC Annual Meeting would be held in Agadir, Morocco from the end of May to June 2010. Then the Commission turned to the election of the officers. Portugal becomes chair of the IWC Advisory Committee

The retiring Chair of the Commission, Dr William Hogarth, received a standing ovation for his "job done" at the IWC, when in reality he just created more division and polemic in the already controversial IWC. Dr Hogarth is now Dean of the College of Marine Science, University of South Florida, Dr Hogarth is succeeded by the Ambassador Cristian Maquieira from Chile. Anthony Liverpool of Antigua and Barbuda is the new Vice-Chair.

Additional information from the Scientific Committee Report

4 COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

4.1 Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) 4.1.1 Scientific Council

The report of the IWC observer at the Scientific Council meeting held in Rome, Italy from 27-28 November 2008 is given as IWC/61/4D. Progress was noted on development of a work plan to comply with a COP resolution on adverse human impacts on cetaceans. The following proposals for listing species and regional populations on Appendices were reviewed and endorsed:

Appendix I (complete protection):

- (1) Black Sea bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus ponticus*) - proposed by Monaco;
- (2) Irrawaddy dolphin (*Orcaella brevirostris*) – proposed by Philippines;
- (3) Atlantic humpback dolphin (*Sousa teuszii*) – proposed by Senegal.

Appendix II (would benefit from international cooperative research; appropriate for inclusion in regional agreements):

- (1) Harbour porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*) Northwest African population – proposed by Mauritania; IWC/61/Rep 1 IWC/61/REP 1 7
- (2) Risso's dolphin (*Grampus griseus*) Mediterranean population – proposed by Monaco;
- (3) Bottlenose dolphin (*Tursiops truncatus*), change of listing from western Mediterranean population to Mediterranean population;
- (4) Clymene dolphin (*Stenella clymene*) West African population – proposed by Guinea-Bissau.

The Council reviewed and endorsed resolutions proposed for the COP on: (1) the impacts of climate change on migratory species (including cetaceans); (2) adverse anthropogenic impacts of noise on cetaceans; and (3) bycatch. Progress in implementing a programme of work on bycatch was reviewed. The taxonomic split of *Orcaella brevirostris* into *O. brevirostris* and *O. heinsohni* was noted.

4.7 North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO) Scientific Committee

The report of the IWC observer at the 15th meeting of the NAMMCO Scientific Committee held in Greenland, 11-14 April 2008 is given as IWC/61/4L.

The report of the IWC observer at the 17th Annual Meeting of NAMMCO held in Greenland in September 2008 is given as IWC/61/4K. In the light of interest expressed by Greenland in resuming a catch of humpback whales in its waters, NAMMCO recommended that the total quota of humpback whales in West Greenland in 2009 (including bycatch) should not exceed 10 animals. This recommendation was based on the 2006 advice from the NAMMCO Scientific Committee that such a level of catch is well within sustainable limits. The recommendation is in conformity with the 2008 recommendation from IWC's Scientific Committee on the same subject (IWC, 2009e, p.23).

4.8 International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

IUCN held its 4th Quadrennial World Conservation Congress in Barcelona 5-14 October 2008. The Member's assembly 11-14 October was preceded by the World Conservation Forum 5-9 October consisting of over 500 separate symposia. The following three Forum events related specifically to cetaceans:

- (1) ship strikes with cetaceans: solutions for a global issue;
- (2) whales and fisheries interactions: are the great whales a threat to fisheries; and
- (3) Whales of the Mediterranean Sea.

In addition there were several events related to the management of Marine Protected Areas in which cetaceans were also mentioned. The following three cetacean-related Resolutions were passed by the Members' Assembly:

- (1) 4.027 Relationship between fisheries and the great whales;
- (2) 4.115 Non-lethal utilization of whales; and
- (3) 4.025 Avoiding the extinction of the vaquita *Phocoena sinus*.

Revised Red List entries for Cetaceans

The Red List entries for mammals have been subject to a major overhaul as part of the Global Mammal Assessment (GMA). The new entries for cetaceans were released in August 2008 and are available on www.redlist.org. The criteria for the categories of threat were last reviewed in 2011.

6.2 Estimation of bycatch from genetic data

Baker presented SC/61/BC8, which reports on species identification of whale meat products purchased directly and via the Internet from commercial markets of Japan from early July 2008 to early April 2009. A total of 59 products included six species of baleen whale (humpback (1), fin (27), Bryde's (1), sei (3), common minke (18) and Antarctic minke (6)) and one species of beaked whale, Baird's (1). The individual identity of the fin whales was considered by comparison to products purchased since scientific hunting of fin whales in the Antarctic was initiated in the austral season of 2005/06 as part of the JARPA II program. Although only 13 fin whales have been reported in the JARPA II program since its initiation (excluding the 2008/09 season) with a further 2 North Pacific fin whales reported as coastal bycatch (Japanese progress reports), a minimum of 20 individual fin whales were represented by products on the market. Only one of the 2008/09 products matched those purchased before 2005/06. The importation of fin whales from Iceland, released from Japanese customs in October 2008, was considered an unlikely source of products in the survey but could not be excluded with certainty in the absence of access to the Icelandic DNA register. The 20 individual fin whales observed on the market in the years 2006-2009 cannot be accounted for by the total of 15 individuals reported by JARPA II and as Japanese coastal bycatch. However, it was not possible to identify which of the 20 individuals were likely to have originated from illegal, unreported or undocumented (IUU) exploitation, or the likely geographic source of these takes.

Progress in developing global database of ship strike incidents:

The need for a global database of incidents involving collisions between vessels and whales has been recognized by both the Scientific Committee and the Conservation Committee, as well as other bodies such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and ACCOBAMS. The format and structure of the database was agreed by the Committee in 2007, and subsequently the database was populated with data, mainly from published sources. As of April 2008, there were 763 records in the database.

The Humane Society International had some very interesting information about the "scientific" whaling conducted by Japan in the Southern Ocean whale sanctuary, showing that a third of the whales harpooned during the controversial "science program" were pregnant females! Of the 679 whales killed under JARPA, 304 were females, 192 were pregnant, about 4 were lactating, so their calves were left to starve. The HSI said these figures show the "true, disgusting nature" of the whale hunt.

I represented CMEPS as principal observer, and Dr. Kepel of Poland as an alternate observer, due to the fact that Dr. Kepel was scheduled to go as Alternate Commissioner, but then it seemed Poland may not go at all to the IWC61. Last October Dr. Kepel and **CATCA** had successfully convinced the Polish Ministry of Environment to join the IWC as a member country and participate in the upcoming IWC61. However, on June 19th, the Ministry of Environment of Poland announced that they were not going to send a delegation, even though their membership fees were already paid.

CATCA immediately contacted all IWC NGO's and NGO's that collaborate with us all over to the world, to push their governments to complain to the Polish Ministry of Environment. I requested to several EU and other member countries Commissioners, to ask their ambassadors and Ministries to add pressure for Poland to send a delegation. Dr. Kepel also spoke to the Polish media. Two days later and after lots of international pressure created by **CATCA** and internally by Dr. Kepel, although the government had already decided that nobody from the Ministry would go to Madeira (due to "economical reasons"), they appointed Dr. Kepel as the Alternate Commissioner to the IWC meeting.

On Tuesday, June 23th, Dr. Kepel spoke to the EU Commissioners against the Greenland Proposal, and then spoke to his Ministry for the importance for Poland to have voting rights. That's when Dr. Kepel was appointed the first Commissioner of Poland. He also spoke in favor of adopting CMEPS proposed IWC Resolution on Canadian bowhead hunts, as well as the IWC Resolution on toxic whale meat and small cetaceans.

Both of us received many congratulations from Commissioners and ENGO's alike regarding bringing Poland to the IWC. However, despite Dr. Kepel's very active participation on the pro-conservation side and my intense lobbying to get a Resolution on Canadian bowhead whales and a Resolution on toxic whale meat, we were not successful due to the fact that the IWC Commissioners had already agreed that they didn't want any Resolutions this year. As well hindering our efforts was the fact that the DFO didn't bother to send an official letter or e-mail to the Commission, informing them of the increase of the bowhead quota.

The observer from the DFO was Susan Waters. I asked her when the DFO intended to submit the new quota to the IWC Commission, and she said that after hearing the issue arise during plenary, that she sent an informal e-mail to the Secretariat. I explained her that Greg Donovan told me that the IWC SC requires a formal letter from the Canadian government announcing the new quota. But this year, without that proper official information in the Commission, our attempt to get a Resolution just hit the wall.

Regardless of this, many NGO's and Commissioners congratulated me for the job I did.

This year our ENGO leader was again D.J. Schubert from the Animal Welfare Institute. He mentioned a few times at our ENGO meetings the Bowhead Resolution, and I spoke many times about it as well.

Ericka Ceballos
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