

July 2015

The IWC was set up in 1946 as an international agreement to regulate whaling and to provide for conservation of whale stocks. The Commission has a membership of 88 Contracting Governments. The International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling contains an integral Schedule which sets out specific measures that the IWC has collectively decided are necessary in order to regulate whaling and conserve whale stocks. In addition, the IWC co-ordinates and funds conservation work on many species of cetacean. Through its Scientific Committee it undertakes extensive study and research on cetacean populations, develops and maintains scientific databases, and publishes its own peer reviewed scientific journal, the *Journal of Cetacean Research and Management*. IWC is mandated, on many issues, to cooperate with other intergovernmental organisations including the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the Regional Marine Fisheries Organisations (RFMOs), the Marine Council, UNEP, FAO and the biodiversity-related MEAs (CMS, CBD and CITES).

The work of the Commission and its sub-groups has increasingly considered a wide range of issues that are also addressed by UNCLOS and included in the UN General Assembly resolution 69/245. Progress on these issues (many of which overlap) has included

Capacity building – is an increasingly important aspect of IWC work and includes a wide variety of topics ranging from training to build up a global network of professionally trained and equipped responders to whale entanglements, provision of scientific advice on research projects and publication of papers, scientific and technical aspects of whalewatching, allocation of funds to priority projects on small cetacean conservation and the development of new approaches to funding.

Section II of resolution 69/245 addresses the need for capacity building to ensure that States (*inter alia*) are able to fully implement the Convention and, in this context, paragraph 25 “ *Acknowledges* the importance of capacity building for developing States, in particular the least developing countries and small island developing States, as well as coastal African states, for the protection of the marine environment and the conservation and sustainable use of marine resources”. The IWC contributes to such capacity building efforts through a number of programmes.

The IWC entanglement programme was established in 2011 to address the growing problem of whale entanglement by building a global network of professionally trained and equipped entanglement responders. Since its first training workshop in 2012 this initiative has reached

2.1 *Climate change*

Paragraph 171. *Encourages* States, individually or in collaboration with relevant international organisations and bodies to enhance their scientific activity to better understand the effects of climate change on the marine environment and marine biodiversity.

Work on climate change is primarily undertaken by the IWC's Scientific Committee. This has

3.2 Area based management

Paragraphs 224 – 232 of Resolution 69/245 address area based management including marine protected areas and the ongoing work under the CBD on the application of scientific criteria for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs).

Two Sanctuaries are currently designated by the International Whaling Commission. The Indian Ocean Sanctuary, was established in 1979 and covers the whole of the Indian Ocean south to 55°S. The second was adopted in 1994 and covers the waters of the Southern Ocean around Antarctica. An additional proposal for a Sanctuary in the South Atlantic Ocean has been repeatedly submitted to the Commission in recent years but has, to date, failed to achieve the three-quarters majority of votes needed to become designated by the IWC.

The IWC participated in the CBD workshop on EBSAs in the North West Indian Ocean Region and notes that marine mammals are significant in all of the EBSAs proposed. The IWC is exploring scope for engagement with the rest of the EBSA programme given the high correlation between EBSA identification and marine mammal occurrence.

The IWC has also engaged with aspects of the IMO Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas.

3.3 Ocean noise

Paragraph 237 notes (*inter alia*) the potential significant adverse impacts of ocean noise on living marine resources, affirms the importance of sound scientific studies in addressing this matter, and encourages further research, studies and consideration of the impacts of ocean noise on living marine resources.

The IWC Scientific Committee has been considering anthropogenic noise since 2004. Recent work has included a joint workshop with the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in 2014 entitled "Predicting Soundfields-Global Soundscape Modelling to