

INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION, 54TH MEETING
SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE MEETING, SHIMONOSEKI, JAPAN
27 April – 9 May 2002[N]¹

DRAFT AGENDA

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 - 1.2 Appointment of rapporteurs
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 - 3.3.1 Catches and other statistical material
 - 3.3.2 Progress on data coding and validation projects
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 - 4.1 Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS)
 - 4.1.1 Scientific Council
 - 4.1.2 Agreement on Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS)
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 - 5.2.1 Review results of simulation trials [N]
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 - 5.3 Evaluation of abundance estimators against simulated datasets [N]
 - 5.3.1 Report of the Intersessional Working Group on Abundance Estimation [N]
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6. RMP – preparations for implementation
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 - 6.2 North Atlantic minke whale *Implementation Review* [N]
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¹ N: see Chair's annotations on pp. 5-11
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- 6.3 Western North Pacific Bryde's whales [N]
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 - 6.4.2 RMP annotations giving timetable for *Implementations (Implementation Reviews)* [N]
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 - 10.2 Southern Hemisphere minke whales – abundance estimation (IA) [N]
 - 10.2.1 Review of new data
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 - 10.2.4 Other [N]
 - 10.2.5 Plans for completion of minke review [N]

- 10.3 Southern Hemisphere blue whales – plan for assessment (IA) [N]
 - 10.3.1 Abundance estimation
 - 10.3.2 Progress on sub-species differentiation
 - 10.3.3 Other
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 - 10.4 Southern Hemisphere humpback whales – review progress on Comprehensive Assessment (H) [N]
 - 10.4.1 New estimates of abundance and rate of increase, stock structure information
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 - 10.4.3 Other
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 - 10.5 North Atlantic humpback whales – completion of Comprehensive Assessment (H) [N]
 - 10.5.1 Review of assessment model developments [N]
 - 10.5.2 Review of catch data [N]
 - 10.5.3 Additional analyses and data collection [N]
 - 10.5.4 Assessment and management advice
 - 10.6 Other small stocks – bowhead, right and gray whales (BRG) [N]
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 - 10.7 Other (IA) [N]
- 11. Stock Definition (SD)
 - 11.1 Further review of terminology
 - 11.2 Review historical responses of cetacean sub-stocks to severe depletion [N]
 - 11.3 Statistical and genetic issues pertaining to stock definition [N]
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 - 11.5 Work plan
- 12. Environmental Concerns (E)
 - 12.1 Cooperative research in the Antarctic [N]
 - 12.1.1 Results from SOWER 2000 cruise (cooperative research with CCAMLR) [N]
 - 12.1.2 Progress on development of joint research program with SO-GLOBEC [N]
 - 12.2 Steering Group report on Pollution 2000+ [N]
 - 12.3 Habitat related issues
 - 12.3.1 State of Cetacean Environment – consider form of SOCER [N]
 - 12.3.2 Review results from workshop on habitat degradation, if held [N]
 - 12.3.3 Review information regarding whalewatching activities and noise impacts [N]
 - 12.3.4 Competition between cetaceans and fisheries [N]
 - 12.3.5 Mitigation of incidental capture of large cetaceans in fishing gear [N]
 - 12.4 Work plan
- 13. Small cetaceans (SM)
 - 13.1 Review status of humpbacked dolphins (genus *Sousa*)
 - 13.2 Progress on previous recommendations [N]
 - 13.2.1 Baiji
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 - 13.2.3 Harbour porpoise
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 - 13.2.6 Dall’s porpoise [N]
 - 13.2.7 Other
 - 13.3 Takes of small cetaceans
 - 13.3.1 Review existence of directed and incidental takes in member countries, with a view to requesting data in the future
 - 13.3.2 Summarise takes in 2001
 - 13.4 Work plan

- 14. Whalewatching (WW)
 - 14.1 Reports of intersessional working groups
 - 14.1.1 Whalewatching data collection [N]
 - 14.1.2 Whalewatching management [N]
 - 14.2 Review information on whalewatching activities and noise impacts [N]
 - 14.3 Review research on effectiveness of national whalewatching guidelines and regulations
 - 14.4 New information on previously discussed topics [N]
 - 14.4.1 Dolphin feeding programmes
 - 14.4.2 Whale and dolphin 'swim with' programmes
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- 15. DNA testing (DNA) [N]
 - 15.1 Progress on genetic methods for species, stock, individual identification [0.5]
 - 15.2 Progress on collection and archiving of samples from catches and bycatch [0.5]
 - 15.3 Reference databases and standards for a diagnostic register of DNA profiles [0.5]
 - 15.4 Work plan [0.5]
- 16. Scientific permits
 - 16.1 Advice on effects of scientific permit catches [N]
 - 16.2 Suggestions for improving review procedures [N]
 - 16.2.1 Reviewing results from existing permits
 - 16.2.2 Reviewing new permit proposals
 - 16.3 Review of results from existing permits [N]
 - 16.3.1 Japan – Southern Hemisphere minke whales
 - 16.3.2 Japan – North Pacific minke, Bryde's and sperm whales
 - 16.4 Review of new or revised proposals [N]
 - 16.4.1 JARPA
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- 17. Whale sanctuaries
 - 17.1 Review of the Indian Ocean Sanctuary [N]
 - 17.2 Suggestions for improving the review process [N]
 - 17.3 Other [N]
- 18. Research and workshop proposals and results
 - 18.1 Review results from previously funded research proposals
 - 18.2 Review proposals for 2002/2003 [N]
 - 18.3 Workshop on Methods for Whale Research [N]
- 19. Committee priorities and initial agenda for the 2003 meeting [N]
- 20. Data processing and computing needs for 2002/2003 [N]
- 21. Funding requirements for 2002/2003 [N]
- 22. Working methods of the Committee [N]
- 23. Election of officers [N]
- 24. Publications
- 25. Other business [N]
- 26. Adoption of report [N]

Chair's annotations [N]

Numbers in square brackets after agenda items give the number of sessions expected to be devoted to those items during the seven days of sub-committee work. These are very rough estimates indicating Convenors' intentions. They will likely be adjusted during the SC meeting depending on documents submitted, progress of working groups, etc. Some Convenors have chosen not to offer these rough estimates.

Meeting venue and dates

As notified in the Secretary's Circular IWC.ALL.44, 8 November 2001, the meeting of the Scientific Committee (SC) will be held in the Kaikyo Messe conference centre, 27 April – 9 May 2002. SC54 will be preceded by a 2-day meeting of the In-depth Assessments (IA) sub-committee to address methods and results relating to the estimation of Antarctic minke whale abundance and trends, at the same venue on 25 – 26 April.

Item 1.3: Meeting procedures and time schedule

SC54 will begin on Saturday 27 April at 9am sharp. The first session will be devoted to dealing with at least items 1-3 and possibly 4. The rest of Day 1 will be for reading documents. The first part of Day 2 (Sunday 28 April) will be for initial meetings of sub-committees and working groups (no more than 15 minutes each) to elect a chair, review priorities and possibly adopt an agenda. The remainder of Day 2 will be for reading documents. Days 3-9 (Mon 29 April – Sun 5 May) will be devoted mainly to sub-committees, although a small number of sessions will be devoted to specific plenary items. The SC will be expected to work through the weekend of 4-5 May. I am tentatively scheduling a rest day on Day 10, Mon 6 May, for those sub-committees and groups that have completed their work by 5 May. This rest day is subject to cancellation or change if SC work does not proceed on schedule. The remainder (Days 11-13, Tue 7 May – Thu 9 May) will be devoted to plenary sessions. The meeting should end at ca 5 pm on Day 13. Sub-committee chairs are reminded of the need to be available on Fri 10 May for review of the SC Report and discussion of items arising from the meeting. I hope to have an initial agenda for the 2002 meeting drafted before the end of the 2001 meeting. However, as in the past, the sub-committee chairs will need to consider refinements of this agenda, priorities, and changes in organizational structure implied by the agenda or by discussions during the meeting.

Item 1.4: Establishment of sub-committees and working groups

The following were identified by the then sub-committee chairs meeting immediately after SC53. Acronyms and Convenors are given in parentheses. These are the same as last year except as noted in Circular IWC.SC.73.

- i. Revised Management Procedure (RMP: Bannister)
- ii. Estimation of bycatch and other human-induced mortality (BC: Berggren)
- iii. Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling Management Procedure (AWMP: Donovan)
- iv. Humpback whales (H: Hammond)
- v. Bowhead, Right and Gray Whales (BRG: Walløe)
- vi. In-depth Assessments (IA: Palka)
- vii. Stock Definition (SD: Bravington)
- viii. Environmental Concerns (E: DeMaster)
- ix. DNA testing (DNA: Zeh)
- x. Small Cetaceans (SM: Read)
- xi. Whalewatching (WW: Kato)

Item 2. Adoption of agenda

The order of the agenda is based on that of last year, but amended *inter alia* to take account of our work plan and Commission mandates. The Commission accepted our priorities, initial agenda, and reduced budget as given under items 19 and 21 of the Report of the SC (IWC/53/4). Items 19-21, along with other information relevant to our work, were circulated 24 September 2001 as part of Circular IWC.SC.73. Further notes, below, provide more details regarding some of the agenda items.

To save time during SC plenary and sub-committee discussions, I request that any objections to specific items in agenda adopted at SC54 be raised under this agenda item and provided in writing to the rapporteur for inclusion in the report of SC54.

Items 3.1: Documents submitted

Participants are reminded that documents must be submitted to the Secretariat on or before 27 April 2002 and must have a number assigned by the Secretariat. Further information will be provided in a subsequent circular.

Item 3.2: National progress reports on research

Information on this is given in circular IWC.ALL.42 of 3 May 2001.

Item 4: Cooperation with other organisations

Most of the organisations on this list are ones that have met since SC53 and with which we have a formal exchange of observers, so observers' reports should be available. Those reports should be provided before Day 1 so they can be circulated and discussed on Day 1.

Items 5-15

These items have been prepared in consultation with the Convenors to take specifically into account relevant Commission resolutions and agenda items. It should be borne in mind that the main SC agenda is not intended to repeat the detailed sub-committee agenda items, but only to highlight the major areas of discussion. Sub-items can more appropriately be added later (as is in fact our usual practice).

Item 5.1: Adjustment of the convergence criteria for the CATCHLIMIT program

See Item 5.1 of IWC/53/4.

Item 5.2: Population component to which MSYR, MSYL, density dependence should apply

This item will be considered in a joint meeting of the RMP and AWMP sub-committees; it applies to both RMP and AWMP.

Item 5.2.1: Review results of simulation trials

See Item 5.2 of IWC/53/4.

Item 5.3: Evaluation of abundance estimators against simulated datasets

See Item 5.3.3 of IWC/53/4.

Item 5.3.1: Report of the Intersessional Working Group on Abundance Estimation

This is E-mail Correspondence Group 6, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Palka. In so far as the focus is on stocks considered under Item 6, its report is appropriately dealt with by the RMP sub-committee. However, if parts of the report appear to be of more general interest, I may ask that they be presented in plenary or in an RMP sub-committee session that does not conflict with IA, AWMP, or E sessions.

Item 6.1: Complete North Pacific minke whale Implementation

See items 6.2.1.2 and 6.5 of IWC/53/4.

Item 6.1.1: Report of Implementation Simulation Trials group

This is E-mail Correspondence Group 7, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Butterworth. Its report will include a report on the intersessional meeting discussed under Item 6.2.1.2 of IWC/53/4.

Item 6.2: North Atlantic minke whale Implementation Review

See Item 6.4.3 of IWC/53/4.

Item 6.2.1: Report of steering group

This is E-mail Correspondence Group 5, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Smith.

Item 6.3: Western North Pacific Bryde's whales

See items 6.3 and 19 of IWC/53/4. This is not a priority topic for SC54.

Item 6.3.1: Report of Implementation Simulation Trials group

This is E-mail Correspondence Group 8, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Butterworth.

Item 6.4.1: Initial planning for in-depth assessment of North Pacific minke whales

This is not a priority topic for SC54. However, the SC recommended that such an assessment be conducted immediately after completion of the current *Implementation Simulation Trials*. It is therefore likely that a planning group will be appointed during SC54 and may begin its work.

Item 6.4.2: RMP annotations giving timetable for Implementations (Implementation Reviews)

This is not a priority topic for SC54. However, the SC indicated that it should be considered. It is therefore likely that a group will be appointed to begin drafting such annotations.

Item 7: Estimation of bycatch and other human-induced mortality (BC)

See Item 7.4 of IWC/53/4.

Item 7.1.1: Report of Working Group on Collation of Information from Fisheries

This is E-mail Correspondence Group 18, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Northridge.

Item 7.2.1: Report of Bycatch Workshop Feasibility Steering Group

This is E-mail Correspondence Group 19, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Berggren.

Item 7.4: Methods for estimating additional human-induced mortalities

This is not a priority topic for SC54.

Item 8.1: Review intersessional progress

This includes reviewing the report of the AWMP intersessional workshop held in Seattle in January 2002.

This workshop will review available results of revisions to bowhead whale Strike Limit Algorithms (*SLAs*), review statistics and graphs to be used for presentation of results to the SC and Commission, and review available results for gray whale *SLAs* to see whether modifications to the gray whale trial structure are required.

Item 9: Aboriginal subsistence whaling stock assessments (AS)

There will be no AS sub-committee meetings during SC54. Instead, annual reviews of catches and catch limits will be conducted within other appropriate sub-committees and working groups as indicated for each sub-item under Item 9.1. These groups, and the Convenor group, will also be responsible for specifying work plans. At IWC54, the Commission must establish quotas for subsistence harvests of all stocks listed under Item 9.1 in 2003 and subsequent years.

Item 9.1.1: Bering-Chukchi-Beaufort Seas stock of bowhead whales (AWMP, BRG)

The SC will likely provide management advice using the *SLA* selected for this stock during SC54 (Item 8.2.1), taking into account the abundance estimate obtained from the 2002 shore-based count. This abundance estimate will be reviewed in the BRG sub-committee and, if determined acceptable, used by the AWMP sub-committee in the selected *SLA*.

Item 9.1.2: Eastern North Pacific stock of gray whales (BRG)

The SC will provide management advice based on the in-depth assessment conducted by the BRG sub-committee during SC54. E-mail Correspondence Group 2, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Brownell, has been preparing for the in-depth assessment of this stock and, in parallel, the western North Pacific stock of gray whales (Item 10.6.5).

Item 9.2: Catches by non-member nations (BRG)

Bowhead whales from the Hudson Bay stock have been taken in past years by Canadian subsistence hunters. Any such catches will be considered by the BRG sub-committee in the context of information about this stock (Item 10.6.1).

Item 9.3: Contaminated gray whales from the eastern North Pacific stock (BRG)

As noted in circular IWC.SC.59, the Russian Federation requested that the SC conduct research on harvested gray whales that were not fit for human consumption because of a strong smell and medicinal taste. The Commission's Aboriginal Subsistence Whaling Sub-committee agreed that the SC should study this problem.

Item 10: Whale stocks

The title of this item now corresponds to that in the Commission's draft agenda. The SC sub-committee that will deal with each sub-item of this agenda item is indicated in parentheses after the item.

Item 10.1.1: DESS: progress with data entry and analysis options

The SC strongly recommended validation and entry of data from the 1999/2000 and 2000/2001 SOWER Circumpolar cruises (Item 10.1.1 of IWC/53/4). See Appendix 10 of Annex G, IWC/53/4, for other recommended DESS work.

Item 10.1.2.1: SOWER 2001/02

The report of the planning meeting and the cruise report will be considered under this agenda item.

Item 10.1.2.2: Plans for future cruises

The 2002/2003 cruise will complete the third circumpolar. An ad-hoc working group will be convened during SC54 to begin the detailed planning for this cruise.

Item 10.2: Southern Hemisphere minke whales – abundance estimation (IA)

This will be the major focus of the IA sub-committee at SC54. As noted above, work on this item will begin on 25-26 April. Abundance estimation for other species within the same datasets will also be considered where relevant. See Appendix 10 of Annex G, IWC/53/4, and Item 10.2.4.2 of IWC/53/4 for details.

Item 10.2.3: Inter-year comparisons and trend

The information requested by the Commission in IWC Resolution 2001-7 will be considered under this agenda item to the extent practical. See Circular IWC.SC.73 for further comments regarding this Commission request.

Item 10.2.4: Other

Genetics work on stock identity will be dealt with under this item. Papers dealing with this topic have relatively low priority at SC54.

Item 10.2.5: Plans for completion of minke review

The relevance of biological information and population dynamics models will be considered under this item.

Item 10.3: Southern Hemisphere blue whales – plan for assessment (IA)

This is not a priority topic for SC54, but limited time will be devoted to it, particularly to any new information on sub-species differentiation.

Item 10.4: Southern Hemisphere humpback whales – review progress on Comprehensive Assessment (H)

Consideration of Southern Hemisphere humpback whales was moved from the IA sub-committee to a new Humpback (H) sub-committee to better balance work loads, now that the Comprehensive Assessment of North Atlantic humpback whales is near completion. A special working group will undertake this review during SC54. See Item 10.4.4 of SC/53/4 for details concerning matters to be addressed under Item 10.4.

Item 10.5: North Atlantic humpback whales – completion of Comprehensive Assessment (H)

Intersessional work to enable completion of the Comprehensive Assessment is being overseen by E-mail Correspondence Group 3, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Hammond.

Item 10.5.1: Review of assessment model developments

See Item 10.6.7.1 of IWC/53/4.

Item 10.5.2: Review of catch data

See Item 10.6.7.2 of IWC/53/4.

Item 10.5.3: Additional analyses and data collection

See Item 10.6.7.3 of IWC/53/4.

Item 10.6: Other small stocks – bowhead, right and gray whales (BRG)

IWC Resolution 2001-3 endorsed all SC conclusions and recommendations regarding the western North Pacific gray whale stock. It requested range states for this and other small populations of highly endangered whales to report to the SC annually on progress made on conservation and management recommendations. These progress reports will be taken under the appropriate sub-items of Item 10.6. Assessment of western North Pacific gray whales in parallel with the assessment of the eastern North Pacific stock is a priority for the BRG sub-committee at SC54; see note to Item 9.1.2.

Item 10.7: Other (IA)

This agenda item matches a corresponding one in the Commission's draft agenda. Under it, important information about other whale stocks, if any, can be considered. However, the SC agreed that proposals for assessment of such stocks as Southern Hemisphere fin and sei whales would be considered only if accompanied by thorough written reviews of the available information and an outline of work that would need to be undertaken to complete an assessment. If any such proposals are submitted to SC54, they will likely be assigned to *ad hoc* working groups, with detailed consideration by the SC deferred till a subsequent year. See items 10.8 and 19 of SC/53/4.

Item 11.2: Review historical responses of cetacean sub-stocks to severe depletion

Bravington has arranged for a review to be presented under this item.

Item 11.3: Statistical and genetic issues pertaining to stock definition

This will include a review of the work of E-mail Correspondence Group 4, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Taylor.

Item 12.1: Cooperative research in the Antarctic

This is the priority topic for E at SC54.

Item 12.1.1: Results from SOWER 2000 cruise (cooperative research with CCAMLR)

E-mail Correspondence Group 15, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Moore, is coordinating this work.

Item 12.1.2: Progress on development of joint research program with SO-GLOBEC

E-mail Correspondence Group 12, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Thiele, is coordinating this work.

Item 12.2: Steering Group report on Pollution 2000+

This is E-mail Correspondence Group 11, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Reijnders. This will be a brief report since Pollution 2000+ is not a priority topic for SC54.

Item 12.3.1: State of Cetacean Environment – consider form of SOCER

E-mail Correspondence Group 13, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Perry and Stachowitsch, is tasked with developing suggestions on the structure, editorial process, frequency, etc., of this report.

Item 12.3.2: Review results from workshop on habitat degradation, if held

E-mail Correspondence Group 14, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Simmonds, is continuing the planning process for this workshop.

Item 12.3.3: Review information regarding whalewatching activities and noise impacts

E and WW will carry out this review jointly.

Item 12.3.4: Competition between cetaceans and fisheries

E-mail Correspondence Group 10, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Northridge, will report on progress in planning the symposium and workshop on this topic. IWC Resolution 2001-9 supported our plan to conduct such a workshop before SC54, and review of the results was to have been a priority topic at SC54. However, it proved impossible to schedule the workshop before SC54. It is scheduled instead for 25-27 June 2002 in St. Lucia, and results will be reviewed during SC55.

Item 12.3.5: Mitigation of incidental capture of large cetaceans in fishing gear

IWC Resolution 2001-4 instructed the SC to provide to the Commission at its 2002 meeting a summary of SC work on the most feasible methods to mitigate incidental capture of large cetaceans, and ways in which entangled large cetaceans can be released with minimal risk to rescuers. Phil Clapham is chairing an intersessional group to respond to this request from the Commission. The information he obtains is likely to be of interest to several sub-committees, particularly BRG, but this was the most logical place I could find for it in the agenda.

Item 13.2: Progress on previous recommendations

IWC Resolution 2001-13 urges contracting governments to respond to SC requests for information and recommendations for action regarding conservation of small cetaceans. This resolution also instructs the SC to continue to review progress on previous recommendations on a regular basis.

Item 13.2.6: Dall's porpoise

IWC Resolution 2001-12 directs the SC to complete an assessment of exploited Dall's porpoise stocks as soon as sufficient information becomes available. It is not clear at this time whether this can be done at SC54 given that Japanese government scientists do not plan to participate in the SM sub-committee during SC54.

Item 14.1.1: Whalewatching data collection

This is E-mail Correspondence Group 16, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Simmonds.

Item 14.1.2: Whalewatching management

This is E-mail Correspondence Group 17, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Oosthuizen.

Item 14.2: Review information on whalewatching activities and noise impacts

E and WW will carry out this review jointly.

Item 14.4: New information on previously discussed topics
Only Item 14.4.2 is a priority topic for SC54.

Item 15: DNA testing (DNA)

Under this agenda item we will provide the report to the Commission required by IWC Resolution 1999-8.

Item 16.1: Advice on effects of scientific permit catches

The SC agreed (Item 15.1 of IWC/53/4) that it could not provide specific advice on the effect of JARPA catches on Antarctic minke whale stocks until further modelling approaches are examined and new abundance estimates agreed. Papers presenting modelling approaches can be considered under this agenda item. In addition, E-mail Correspondence Group 23, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Givens, may report on approaches for quantifying the scientific benefit of research catches under this item.

Item 16.2: Suggestions for improving review procedures

E-mail Correspondence Group 22, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Walløe, was tasked with developing a proposal to improve the procedure for SC review of both results and new or revised proposals. The suggestions of this group will be discussed under this item and the suggestions and discussion taken into account under items 16.3 and 16.4.

Item 16.3: Review of results from existing permits

Here we must provide advice to the Commission as requested in IWC Resolution 1999-2. Note that results of scientific permit research relevant to the deliberations of sub-committees such as RMP, IA and E will be presented in those sub-committees.

Item 16.4: Review of new or revised proposals

Present guidelines for SC reviews are provided in Annex Y of the report of the 2000 SC meeting (IWC, 2001, *J. Cetacean Res. Manage.* 3 (Suppl.):371-2). I expect a major new JARPN II proposal that will require careful review.

Item 17.1: Review of the Indian Ocean Sanctuary

The review of this existing sanctuary will use the Commission guidelines circulated with IWC.SC.73 and procedures suggested by E-mail Correspondence Group 21, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Zerbini.

Item 17.2: Suggestions for improving the review process

This item will be discussed after Item 17.1 and, if there are new sanctuary proposals to review, 17.3.

Item 17.3: Other

Any new sanctuary proposals of which I am not yet aware will be discussed under Item 17.3.

Item 18.2: Review proposals for 2002/2003

This item will be handled, as usual, by a review group chaired by the Vice Chair and appointed from the sub-committee chairs (DeMaster, Kato, Read, and Walløe).

Item 18.3: Workshop on Methods for Whale Research

This workshop is being planned by E-mail Correspondence Group 20, Annex U of IWC/53/4, chaired by Read. It was scheduled to take place in Toyko from 4 to 8 February 2002 but has had to be postponed until after the 54th Annual Meeting in Shimonoseki. Of the eight outside experts invited to participate in the workshop because of their particular expertise, six were unable to attend because of conflicts with other meetings. Despite making considerable efforts to try to find alternative experts, the Steering Group reluctantly had to agree that it is not possible to hold the meeting before the 54th Annual Meeting. Plans are being made for the workshop to be held as soon as possible after the 54th meeting and they will be finalised under this agenda item.

Item 19: Committee priorities and initial agenda for the 2003 meeting

In my view, our priorities are largely determined by the Commission and should not require a great deal of discussion. The work plan specified by each sub-committee and working group will provide a basis for the initial agenda, and I shall be prepared to accept the procedure of the past few years where details have been left to the sub-committee chairs to handle immediately after the meeting. However, I will attempt to prepare a draft initial agenda for review before the end of the meeting so that it can appear in our report and will reflect our view of priorities for 2002/2003. This initial agenda will, of course, be subject to revision as a result of Commission decisions.

Item 20: Data processing and computing needs for 2002/2003

To facilitate discussion of this item, which necessarily occurs relatively late in the meeting, sub-committee chairs will, as usual, be asked to keep a running tally of needs arising in their sub-committee deliberations. This item will include any discussions of DESS that do not fall under RMP, IA, E or other sub-committees.

Item 21: Funding requirements for 2002/2003

To facilitate discussion of this item, which necessarily occurs relatively late in the meeting, sub-committee chairs will, as usual, be asked to keep a running tally of requirements arising in their sub-committee deliberations. Sub-committee chairs will try to ensure that a summary document is available as soon as possible after the sub-committees have completed their business. Where necessary, small groups will be appointed by sub-committee chairs to work out details for presentation to plenary under this item.

Item 22: Working methods of the Committee

I am not aware of major topics for discussion under this item, but it is the appropriate place for consideration of such matters as increasing participation of scientists from developing countries.

Item 23: Election of officers

A new Chair and Vice Chair must be elected during SC54.

Item 25: Other business

This is reserved for any items agreed for discussion that do not obviously come within another item.

Item 26: Adoption of Report

We have not always managed to complete this in the past, sometimes leaving large elements for the Convenor group to deal with after the meeting. I'll do my best to be sure that text for important items is approved here, assuming that items 5-15 have been covered by the respective sub-committee and working group chairs' reports to plenary.