

**Report of the
International Whaling Commission
Whale Watch Operators Workshop**

**24-25 May 2013
Working Group on Whale Watching**

**Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
Brisbane, Australia**

Table of Contents

1. Background.....	1
2. Introduction	1
2.1 <i>Welcome/Opening Comments</i>	1
2.2 <i>Whale Watching and the IWC</i>	1
2.3 <i>IWC's Working Group on Whale Watching</i>	2
2.4 <i>IWC's Five Year Strategic Plan on Whale Watching.....</i>	2
2.5 <i>Workshop Objectives</i>	3
3. Discussion of Strategic Plan Objectives 1 and 2: Research and Assessment (Monitoring).....	3
3.1 <i>Small Group Discussions</i>	3
3.2 <i>Plenary Discussions</i>	4
4. Discussion of Strategic Plan Objectives 3 and 4: Capacity Building and Development	5
4.1 <i>Small Group Discussions</i>	5
4.2 <i>Plenary Discussions</i>	6
5. Discussion of Strategic Plan Objective 5: Management	7
5.1 <i>Small Group Discussions.....</i>	7
5.2 <i>Plenary Discussions.....</i>	8
6. Summary of Workshop and Participants Recommendations for the IWC.....	9
Appendix 1: Workshop Participants	11
Appendix 2: Workshop Agenda.....	13

1. Background

The International Whaling Commission (IWC) and its Working Group on Whale Watching (WGWW) sponsored the Whale Watch Operators Workshop from May 24-25, 2013, in Brisbane, Australia. Conducting this workshop was an action identified in the WGWW's work plan for 2012-2014. Whale watch operators and industry representatives from multiple nations, representing a variety of regions and operation types from both IWC member and non-member nations, were invited to have dialogues with each other and to provide feedback to the IWC WGWW on the suite of actions in the IWC's Five-Year Strategic Plan for Whale Watching (Strategic Plan). This report provides a summary of the workshop presentations, discussions, and key recommendations identified by participating industry members for the IWC to consider as it moves forward with implementing the Strategic Plan.

2. Introduction

2.1 *Welcome/Opening Comments*

Ryan Wulff, acting IWC Commissioner for the United States (U.S.) and Chair of the IWC's WGWW, welcomed participants to the workshop and thanked the Government of Australia for hosting and providing exceptional facilities. (See Appendix 1 for a list of participants.)

Donna Petrachenko, Australia's IWC Commissioner, expressed the Australian Government's appreciation to the U.S. for its support of the workshop, thanked participants for their attendance and acknowledged the importance of whale watching globally. Petrachenko reinforced the importance of whale watching as a sustainable non-lethal use of cetaceans, a key conservation initiative for cetaceans, an economic generator, and an initiative that produces conservation benefits

Finally, the Honourable Tony Burke MP, the Australian Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and Minister for the Arts, addressed the workshop through a video presentation.

2.2 *Whale Watching and the IWC*

The IWC Executive Secretary, Simon Brockington, set the context of the workshop, providing background on the IWC including its mandate, membership, structure, function and responsibilities of the IWC Secretariat, and the Convention on the Regulation of Whaling (ICRW). Brockington presented key IWC milestones related to whale watching, including an IWC request to the U.S. and Mexico to regulate and manage whale based tourism (1976); establishment of the global moratorium on commercial whaling (1986); an IWC invitation for governments to assess the extent of the economic value of whales (1993); and the addition of whale watching on the Scientific Committee's agenda (1996). Lastly, Brockington clarified that the IWC does not serve in a regulatory role; instead, the IWC serves as an advisor and as a facilitator.

2.3 IWC's Working Group on Whale Watching

The Chair provided a presentation on the history and purpose of the WGWW. The WGWW was convened by the Conservation Committee in 2008 in response to the rapid growth of the whale watching globally and the need to promote best practice management. WGWW membership consists of Australia, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, South Africa, United Kingdom and the United States. The WGWW also includes four members of the Scientific Committee and two industry representatives with rotating 2 year terms, currently held by operators from Australia and Mexico. The role of the WGWW is to implement the Strategic Plan on behalf of the Conservation Committee, in coordination with the Scientific Committee; provide oversight of actions and products under the Strategic Plan, including development of a web-based living handbook; assist in coordinating the work of the Conservation and Scientific Committees of the IWC on the issue; and support implementation of the strategic plan through engagement with scientists, industry, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), governments, and the community.

The Chair summarized the WGWW's Work Plan for 2012-2014, consisting of the following actions: complete and begin to populate the web-based living handbook; identify potential outside expertise for specific actions identified in the Strategic Plan; complete and test a survey tool to assist with capacity building; participate in the 2012 Whale & Dolphin Watch Operators Conference in the United Kingdom; and hold an operator-based workshop to obtain wider industry input on population of the handbook and implementation of the Strategic Plan.

2.4 IWC's Five Year Strategic Plan on Whale Watching

The Chair introduced the IWC's Five Year Strategic Plan on Whale Watching (Strategic Plan). The Chair noted that the core principles of the Strategic Plan were that the IWC should play an advisory role with management responsibility remaining with national governments or their subsidiaries; recognize that local issues require local solutions; the Strategic Plan should help facilitate responsible whale watching practices; and the Strategic Plan should be a resource for industry, governments, and stakeholders.

The key elements of the Plan are research, assessment, capacity building, development, and management. The key elements would assist countries, communities and stakeholders in building and maintaining responsible whale watching industries supported by the IWC Guiding Principles for whale watching. These general principles include managing the overall development of whale watching to minimize the risk of adverse impacts; more specifically design, maintain and operate platforms to minimize the risk of adverse effects on cetaceans; and conduct whale watching activities in such a way that the natural behaviour of the cetacean is not adversely impeded by the whale watching activities.

The Chair described the key output of the Strategic Plan an online handbook to be placed on the IWC website. The handbook will identify, on a regional basis, examples of demonstrated best practice within the whale watching sector; identify and list funding/development opportunities; share information on challenges and opportunities encountered when establishing operations; list

all current guidelines, regulations, legislation used globally; identify and share training programs and other education tools; and provide up-to-date biological information on species and stocks.

2.5 *Workshop Objectives*

The Chair concluded by outlining the workshop objective: Provide a forum for whale watch operators and industry representatives from around the globe to discuss and provide input on implementation of the Strategic Plan, such as:

- (1) The IWC's role in identifying and promoting whale watching "best practices".
- (2) Recommendations for what should be included in the online handbook.
- (3) Actions outlined in the Strategic Plan that require further engagement.
- (4) How to integrate industry expertise into other work of the IWC.

3. Discussion of Strategic Plan Objectives 1 and 2: Research and Assessment (Monitoring)

3.1 *Small Group Discussions*

During this session, the workshop participants were asked to break into small groups of 8-10 people to facilitate operator input on Objectives 1 and 2 of the Strategic Plan. Each group was facilitated by a WGWW member or IWC representative who was responsible for aiding discussion between the operators and industry members. Discussion questions were to organize dialogues (see Appendix 2), but the facilitators allowed debate on related topics if deemed relevant to Objectives 1 and 2 of the Strategic Plan.

The key points and themes raised within these small group discussions related to Objectives 1 and 2 are provided below. The bullets represent the views of one or more operators or industry representatives; they do not represent consensus of the workshop participants.

- Information collected about whale watching should include behavioural information and areas of impact.
- Type of operation and/or level of maturity of an operation will determine the degree of data gathering that takes place as a part of the operation.
- Whale watching vessels can be used as research platforms with operators and participants completing standard data collections sheets.
- The IWC and whale watching associations can actively participate in data gathering.
- There is a need for training operators to gather appropriate information.
- Photos need to be of the required standard and information should be available through a range of media.
- NGO's and Universities could be designated to coordinate research in a particular region, coordinating the involvement of operators in local research projects.
- Feedback loops are important. Data and how they are used should go back to operators so that they can see the fruits of their labour and potentially use this information to value add to their educational programs (recognizing that many of the data analysis might be long term; therefore, immediate feedback is not always possible)
- There is need for a whale watching development fund.

3.2 *Plenary Discussions*

The key points that were raised in plenary discussions related to Objectives 1 and 2 are provided below. The bullets represent the views of one or more operator or industry representative; they do not represent consensus of the workshop participants.

- The whale watching industry is worth U.S. \$2.2 billion globally with 15 million people participating annually; therefore, whale watching needs to have a greater emphasis on educating participants on the human impacts on marine conservation values.
- There is a need to clarify the IWC's role and/or "rebrand" its image. For example, workshop participants were unclear whether the IWC's focus is the conservation of whales or whaling, and what role the IWC played in whale watching promotion and management.
- Whale watchers are too dispersed and as a consequence have no way of being heard as "one voice". The IWC could help identify an organization to advocate for the whale watch industry, or help facilitate advocating for the industry.
- The IWC could play a role in influencing governments when industry receives pushback from government departments.
- The IWC needs to advocate for the full suite of issues related to whale watching activities, not just scientific matters.
- IWC can play a role in making research findings and data available.
- The whale watching industry would benefit by clearly understanding what whale watching-related research scientists are conducting, which would also enable operators to practically assist where possible. While some operators reported joining in studies with university, and other, researchers; others reported that there seems to be a barrier between industry and scientists, with scientists seemingly not wanting to recognise sampling evidence gathered by operators. Some participants felt the IWC should serve as a central repository for data related to whale watching, including hiring a person dedicated to whale watching-related data analysis. Other workshop members felt there is too much information for a global database and coordination would be problematic if housed at the IWC. These participants urged data storage be held at regional level, but agreed the IWC can help coordinate these efforts.
- Data collection can be undertaken by crew, passengers, volunteers and professional researchers. Passenger involvement in data collection may enhance the whale watching experience. This data collection would be basic (e.g., what was observed, where it was observed, when it was observed) and passengers could be assisted by the crew or researcher to ensure accuracy in the information.
- Companies need to have incentives to assist with research. For instance, they should be able to differentiate themselves from other companies through some form of endorsement. This will give those operators that engage in research and contribute to improved conservation outcomes a potential commercial benefit. Having researchers on board allows the operator to develop high quality materials and where possible involve

guests to provide a value-added experience. Operations that engage this way could also be successfully marketed as “Research Tourism”.

The Chair specifically asked the group to provide input on how the IWC could assist operators to develop whale watching operations to preferred standards, and to identify the advantages of operators working with the IWC on these efforts. Individual operators and industry representatives suggested a series of actions that could enhance the IWC’s role in whale watching, including:

- Play a role in reviewing data and feeding information back to operators.
- Work with governments as an advocate for whale watching operators.
- Establish a webpage portal for frequently asked questions.
- Encourage the use of social media and new technology to assist with data gathering.
- Describe the benefits and incentives for operators to encourage engagement in research.
- Information on methods for measuring the impact of whale watching on whale populations, taking into account the following factors:
 - Operators seem to be an easy target for governments because they can be regulated.
 - Private vessels also have an impact on whales and the commercial whale watch industry.
 - Professionally conducted whale watching has a relatively low impact on populations compared to uncontrolled recreational interactions, ship strikes and entanglement.
 - Whale watching needs to be managed in a cycle: undertake research, use this information to educate passengers and other stakeholders and to improve conservation management, undertake more research, etc.

4. Discussion of Strategic Plan Objectives 3 and 4: Capacity Building and Development

4.1 Small Group Discussions

During this session, the workshop participants again broke into small groups of 8-10, facilitated by a WGWW member or IWC representative, to discuss questions specific to Objectives 3 and 4 (see Appendix 2).

The key points raised within these small group discussions related to Objectives 3 and 4 are provided below. The bullets represent the views of one or more operator or industry representative; they do not represent consensus of the workshop participants.

Capacity building:

- Capacity building needs to focus on improving the understanding of all parties involved in whale watching, including governments, industry, and local and regional communities.
- Capacity building needs to be tailored to suit local issues.
- Marketing programs should not create “false expectations”.

- Whale watching should be considered as a valued resource by all within the community.
- The whole region needs to be considered when building an industry. There is little point in having reliable whale population within an adjacent bay if there is only limited support services and infrastructure within the local area.
- Industry development must be based on sustainability principles and the precautionary approach.
- Safety standards and incentives for self-regulation, such as an association logo, should be considered as industry develops.

Development assistance the IWC could provide:

- Facilitate access to development funds.
- Facilitate linkages between communities, governments, NGOs and businesses with a view to enhancing funding opportunities.
- Provide information on practical asset use and maintenance, such as how to convert a fishing boat to an appropriate whale watching platform.
- Assist with establishing regional whale watching industry groups.
- Promote and update the reports on economic benefits of whale watching, including broader community benefits such as tourism infrastructure (e.g., hotels, shops).
- Provide information on encouraging domestic and foreign investment in the industry.
- Increase education for safe and responsible whale watching.

The IWC's online handbook could include:

- Whale conservation initiatives that support the whale watching industry (e.g., go slow zones within popular whale watching areas, educational programs, best practices)
- Short videos demonstrating how a business can be established, including challenges that have been experienced by others.
- Information on how whale watching can benefit local and regional communities more broadly, such as through the development of service infrastructure (e.g., fuel supplies, catering, vessel maintenance, accommodation, souvenirs) to support the industry.
- Education and interpretation guides for local schools and other education/interpretive centers.
- Examples of responsible marketing.
- Regional tourism offices and regional whale watching associations can assist with populating the handbook.

4.2 *Plenary Discussions*

The key points raised in plenary discussions related to Objectives 3 and 4 are provided below. The bullets represent the views of one or more operator or industry representative; they do not represent consensus of the workshop participants.

Capacity building:

- Develop and circulate a survey to assess capacity needs at the regional level through working with regional organizations.

- Hold additional workshops for operators and industry members to build on what has already been achieved. Consider a series of workshops that attracts different participants depending on the level of maturity of their whale watching programs.
- Assist in establishing networks that facilitate meaningful information exchanges between industry members and government managers.

Development assistance the IWC could provide:

- Utilize connections with governments to encourage industry development assistance.
- Information on how to start a whale watching industry for regions that do not currently have whale watching operations.
- Consider establishing buddy/partnership/mentoring programs that provide those who are developing a whale watch industry with access to advice and information from a region that is implementing a successful whale watch program.
- Facilitate whale watching partnerships between researchers, operators, government managers and NGOs.
- Identify regional and national associations and describe the operational environments that these associations function within.
- Approach the World Bank and Global Partnership for Oceans to discuss a program of small grants to assist development of responsible whale watching.

The IWC's online handbook could include:

- Information on existing best practices and guidelines.
- Lessons learnt by other whale watch programs and governments.
- Information for managing expectations through marketing.
- Regional hotspots for whale watching.
- Listing of whale watching associations with descriptions of the different roles they play.
- Examples of operator training programs.
- Descriptions of existing incentive schemes.
- Descriptions of outstanding operator and research organization partnerships.

5. Discussion of Strategic Plan Objective 5: Management

5.1 Small Group Discussions

The final small group discussion session addressed questions specific to Objective 5 (see Appendix 2). The key points raised within these small group discussions related to Objective 5 are provided below. The bullets represent the views of one or more operator or industry representative; they do not represent consensus of the workshop participants.

- There is a need for regulation with firm compliance measures including fines and imprisonment. Not everyone is capable of self-regulation, particularly when competition becomes an issue.
- Self-regulation is important for improving local and regional standards.

- The precautionary principle should be applied until evidence-based decisions can be made.
- Advocates such as NGOs can be problematic when involved in developing operational standards relating to harassment and approach distances. Operators must be involved as they are on the water with the animals and understand whale behaviour.
- Permits are required to regulate operators and can be used to require standards of operation across the industry. This, in turn, can provide improved conservation outcomes, particularly if a requirement of a permit is to provide interpretive/education services to passengers.
- Need to place a cap on the number of permits/licenses issued to prevent speculators from impacting on established operations. Price cutting can impact operational standards and subsequently impact whale welfare.
- Permits for vessel-based whale watching and swim-with operations should apply different conditions.
- Management is much more than applying regulations. It must be progressive, adaptive and importantly, be seen as a service provider to the industry.
- Need to manage other factors that have the potential to impact whale watching and the whales themselves (e.g., recreation vessel impacts, entanglement).
- Relationships between the science community, government agencies and operators need to be established in the early phase of adopting a management scheme.
- Whale watching guidelines are acceptable in the short term but need to transition into regulation or become a key component of a permit system as regional programs develop.
- Operators need to acknowledge that a primary role of management is to protect the whales.
- “No-go” zones and other protective measures can be necessary management measures in calving grounds. Partial access rules can also be effective.
- Emphasis must be placed on education, but stronger compliance measures must be applied where education fails.
- Enforcement must be funded. As an example, a levy collected from each operator can be utilized to support compliance monitoring and other management activities.
- Education is fundamental to assisting awareness and appreciation which underpins responsible whale watching. This must be complimentary to regulations.

5.2 *Plenary Discussions*

The final plenary discussion session addressed Objective 5. The key points raised in the plenary discussions related to Objective 5 are provided below. The bullets represent the views of one or more operator or industry representative; they do not represent consensus of the workshop participants.

- Management programs need to work for governments and animals, not just operators.
- Guidelines are limited as they are not compulsory.

- One approach to this issue is to bring all involved parties together before and after the whale watching season (and during, if necessary and desired) to discuss current and emerging issues. This has proved to be very effective in certain countries.
- Existing approach distances are not based on science. Guidelines need to be reviewed and adapted to the best science available.
- IWC has an extensive compendium of regulations from around the world. An assessment of the success of these regulations, and sharing this assessment with operators, would be useful.
- Swim-with operations should be regulated similar to on-vessel operations. Limited access permits and limited numbers of such permits have a positive impact.
- Governments need to adapt and update regulations as new science becomes available.
- Enforcement is very difficult and costly; therefore, self-regulation is very important.
- Management must be location-specific, based on site-specific variables.

6. Summary of Workshop Participants' Recommendations for the IWC

The Chair concluded the workshop with a summary of the key recommendations identified by the workshop participants:

- IWC should communicate to nations that its advisory role extends to issues related to whale watching, since most people do not associate the IWC with whale watching research and management.
- IWC should play a facilitative role by steering operators towards regional organizations that can provide financial and advisory assistance.
- IWC should consider creating a voluntary fund to be used to assist industries and operators in developing countries.
- IWC should develop templates for data collection, capacity building, and market research surveys for operator use.
- IWC's online living Handbook should include:
 - Case studies, including successes and failures.
 - Biological and ecological information on cetaceans.
 - Lists of relevant regional organizations.
 - Examples of best practices.
 - Assessment of the compendium of whale watching regulations from around the world.
- IWC could facilitate feedback to operators and governments on:
 - Research needs to fulfil management requirements.
 - Research results.
 - How operators can provide input into research priorities.
- IWC should facilitate regional workshops and networking opportunities.
- IWC should advise nations to address regional factors in any best practice management regimes, or include such factors in any best practices developed by the IWC.

- IWC should encourage countries to implement an adaptive management approach, regardless of the management method used by the nation.
- IWC should encourage nations to reference the IWC's existing collection of worldwide regulations and guidelines when developing and/or reviewing management practices for their nation.

Appendix 1: Workshop Participants

Whale Watch Operators, Industry members, Local Community representatives			
Acosta	Marta	Marine Research and Education Fund of Andenes (MAREFA) / Whalesafari	Norway
Anciaes	Andre	Turmares Tarifa - Whale Watching Company	Spain
Ardern	Anthony	Whales in Paradise	Australia
Beets	Karel	Ecotours de Mexico	Mexico
Benegas	Rafael	HydroSport	Argentina
Bess	Gaston	St Vincent and the Grenadines community	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Bowe	Allan	Whale Watch Vava'u	Tonga
Cohan	Casey	Pacific Whale Foundation	U.S.
Espada	Rocio	Dolphin Adventure / Dive Charters	Gibraltar
Ewalt	Doug	Hawaii Nautical	U.S.
Fifita	Ma'ata	Whale Watch Vava'u	Tonga
Flipse	Gene	Conscious Breath Adventures	Dominican Republic
Ford	Will	Whale Watching Sydney	Australia
Frisch	Astrid	Ecologia y Conservacion de Ballenas, AC; WGWW industry member	Mexico
Future	Frank	Imagine Cruises	Australia
Gordon De Barrigon	Anne	Whale Watching Panama	Panama
Kaufman	Greg	Pacific Whale Foundation	U.S.
King	Stuart	Dolphin Watch Cruises – Jervis Bay Pty Ltd	Australia
Kumari	Deepika	Mirissa Water Sports (PVT) LTD	Sri Lanka
Lynch	Peter	Blue Dolphin Marine Tours	Australia
McInnis	Cynde	Cape Ann Whale Watch	U.S.
Miliken	Steve	Dolphin Fleet Whalewatch	U.S.
Mitchell	Steve	Seafari Eco-cruises	Australia
Mitchell	Terri	Seafari Eco-cruises	Australia
Ngapora	Kauahi	Whale Watch Kaikaoura Ltd	New Zealand
Olivierre	Orson	St Vincent and the Grenadines community	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Palacios	Gerardo	Osa Conservation Area, Conservation Areas National System, Costa Rica	Costa Rica
Paton	David	Blue Planet Marine	Australia
Perry	Brian	Hervey Bay Whale Watch	Australia
Rex	Fiafia	Palau	Palau
Rowlands	Ian	Planet Whale	UK
Rumney	John	Eye to Eye Marine Encounters	Australia
Schaffar	Aline	Opération Cétacés	New Caledonia
Slocum	Nic	Whale Watch West Cork	Ireland
Tatafu	Samuel	Deep Blue Cruises	Tonga
IWC Staff, WGWW members, Government and Intergovernmental Organizations members			
Andersen Garcia	Melissa	U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); WGWW member	U.S.
Bartlett	Fiona	DSEWPac	Australia
Brockington	Simon	International Whaling Commission	U.K.
Carlson	Carole	IWC Scientific Committee and WWWG member	U.S.

Chilvers	Louise	Department of Conservation, New Zealand	New Zealand
Da Silva	Kari	Ministry of Agriculture, Rural Transformation, Forestry, Fisheries and Industry, St. Vincent and the Grenadines	St. Vincent and the Grenadines
Donovan	Greg	International Whaling Commission	U.K.
Double	Mike	Australian Antarctic Division	Australia
Evans	Michelle	DSEWPaC	Australia
Luna	Fabia	IWC Scientific Committee; WGWW member	Brazil
Gray	James	Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA); WGWW member	U.K.
Hermosilla-Silva	Kathy	Chilean Consulate - Brisbane	Australia
Ilyashenko	Valentin	Institute of Ecology and Evolution Russian Academy of Science; IWC Commissioner for the Russian Federation	Russian Federation
Ilyashenko	Elena	Institute of Ecology and Evolution Russian Academy of Science	Russian Federation
Jacobson	Artie	DSEWPaC	Australia
Komidar	Peter	DSEWPaC	Australia
Maas	Sylvana	DSEWPaC	Australia
McCormack	Sarah	DSEWPaC	Australia
Iniguez	Miguel	Foreign Affairs Ministry of Argentina; WGWW member	Argentina
Onken	Bec	DSEWPaC	Australia
Petrachenko	Donna	DSEWPaC; IWC Commissioner for Australia	Australia
Richardson	Geoff	DSEWPaC	Australia
Rojas-Bracho	Lorenzo	National Institute of Ecology and Climate Change; IWC Commissioner for Mexico; WGWW member	Mexico
Schweizer	Chris	DSEWPaC; WGWW member	Australia
Sharma-Goundar	Saras	Ministry of Fisheries, Fiji	Fiji
Skinner	Tristan	DSEWPaC	Australia
Siota-Manu	Catherine	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	Samoa
Solomona	Penina	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)	Samoa
Wulff	Ryan	U.S National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); Acting IWC Commissioner for U.S.; WGWW Chair	U.S.
Non-Governmental Environmental Organizations Representatives			
Andrews	Olive	Whales Alive	Australia
Rose	Naomi	Humane Society International; IWC Scientific Committee	U.S.

Appendix 2: Workshop Agenda

International Whaling Commission Whale Watch Operators Workshop

Brisbane, Australia, May 24-26, 2013

Room A2 Arbour level - Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, Merivale St, South Brisbane, Australia

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre Area Map

<http://bcec.com.au/index.php/rooms-spaces/arbour-level>

DAY 1 (Friday May 24)

Welcome & Introduction

09:00 – 09:15 Welcome (Donna Petrachenko, IWC Commissioner from Australia)
Welcome video message from Australia's Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, the Hon Tony Burke MP

Whale Watching at the IWC

09:15 – 09:45 Whale Watching and the IWC (Simon Brockington, IWC Executive Secretary and/or Greg Donovan, IWC Head of Science)

History of the WWGW, whale watching-related work under the IWC (SC and Commission)

9:45 – 10:15 Need for Workshop, Introduction of the IWC's 5-year Strategic Plan on Whale Watching & IWC Working Group on Whale Watching – WGWW (Ryan Wulff, Chair of the WGWW)

How it was developed; What the Plan includes/covers; Work Plan of WGWW and Goals of the workshop

10:15 – 10:45 Question and Answer Session

10:45 – 11:15 Coffee Break

Operator Input on the implementation of the 5-Year Strategic Plan for Whale Watching

11:15 – 11:30 Introduce Objective 1 of the Strategic Plan: **Onboard Science** (Ryan Wulff and/or WGWW member)

Objective 1: The necessary principles and tools are developed to assist in ensuring that whale watching does not significantly adversely impact on the behaviours and fitness of individual cetaceans or populations, or on their habitats.

11:30 – 12:30 Small Group discussion: operator input on Objective 1 of the Strategic Plan

Break in to small groups of 10+ people. WGWW members to facilitate small group discussions.

[POTENTIAL] Questions for discussion:

- 1) *How can we increase whale watch operators as data-gathering platforms?*
- 2) *How should operators be included in whale watching research?*
- 3) *How can we improve industry and public access to data?*

12:30 – 13:45 **Lunch**

13:45 – 14:00 Introduce Objective 2 of the Strategic Plan: **Assessment (Monitoring)** (Ryan Wulff and/or WGWW member)

Strategic Plan Objective 2: Appropriately scaled monitoring programs will be developed that maximise the chance of detecting potential adverse impacts on individual cetaceans and on populations.

14:00 – 15:00 Small Group discussion: operator input on Objective 2 of the Strategic Plan

Break in to small groups of 10+ people. WGWW members to facilitate small group discussions.

[POTENTIAL] Questions for discussion:

- 1) *How should operators be included in whale watching monitoring?*
- 2) *How can the IWC WGWW facilitate the development of common metrics for impact assessments?*
- 3) *How can we improve industry and public access to data?*

15:00 – 16:00 Plenary discussion on Objectives 1 & 2

Reports from the small groups, discussion and recommendations

16:00 **Welcoming Event –‘Networking and Nibbles’**

Who – IWC Whale Watch Workshop delegates and Australia’s Cetacean NGOs

Where – **Arbour Level Reception Foyer** Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre

Arbour Level Map – <http://bcec.com.au/index.php/rooms-spaces/arbours-level>

Dress code – smart casual / informal business attire

International Whaling Commission Whale Watch Operators Workshop

Brisbane, Australia, May 24-26, 2013

DAY 2 (Saturday May 25)

Welcome & Reconvene

08:30 - 08:45 Recap of Day 1 & Plan for Day 2 (Ryan Wulff, Chair of the WGWW)

The plan for day two is to continue obtaining operator input on the implementation of the 5-year Strategic Plan

Operator Input on the implementation of the 5-Year Strategic Plan for Whale Watching (Continued)

08:45 – 09:00 Introduce Objective 3 of the Strategic Plan: **Capacity Building** (Ryan Wulff and/or WGWW member)

Strategic Plan Objective 3: Identify methods to facilitate cooperation and information/expertise sharing between Contracting Parties and others to support the development of a responsible whale watching sector and the provision of benefits to local communities. Within two years of commencing work on actions to support this objective, undertake a comprehensive review of outputs to allow for activities to be refocused, if required

09:00 – 10:00 Small Group discussion: operator input on Objective 3 of the Strategic Plan

Break in to small groups of 10+ people. WGWW members to facilitate small group discussions.

[POTENTIAL] Questions for discussion:

- 4) *Would an online or paper survey be the best means for the IWC to identify capacity building needs in your region?*
- 5) *What are capacity building needs in your region? How can the IWC identify capacity building needs in regions not represented at this workshop?*
- 6) *How can the IWC facilitate the transfer and/or development of best practices to meet capacity building needs?*
- 7) *What are some mechanisms the IWC WGWW can use to disseminate products developed under the strategic plan?*
- 8) *How would you encourage community participation and ownership of the whale watching industry?*
- 9) *Other questions or topics raised by participants*

10:00 – 10:30 Plenary discussion on Objective 3

Reports from the small groups, discussion and recommendations

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee Break

11:00 – 11:15 Introduce Objective 4 of the Strategic Plan: **Developing and/or Enhancing a Responsible Whale Watch Operation** (Ryan Wulff and/or WGWW member)

Strategic Plan Objective 4: Recognising that the responsibility for economic, business and social development lies with industry and national governments, facilitate access to funding and development organizations and to information on economic and social cost/benefit analyses required to support the establishment of whale watching operations.

11:15-12:15 Small Group discussion: operator input on Objective 4 of the Strategic Plan

Break in to small groups of 10+ people. WGWW members to facilitate small group discussions.

[POTENTIAL] Questions for discussion:

- 1) *What recommendations do you have for responsible marketing of the whale watch industry in your region and/or globally?*
- 2) *Do you have any suggestions for organizations that may be able to offer whale watching development assistance in your region?*
- 3) *What advice do you have for the development of a “community of practice” in your community, one which can help operators share information on challenges and opportunities in the region?*
- 4) *What guidance or tools would you include to address occupational health and safety of whale watching operations?*
- 5) *Other questions or topics raised by participants*

12:15 – 12:45 Plenary discussion on Objective 4

Reports from the small groups, discussion and recommendations

12:45 – 14:00 **Lunch**

14:00- 14:15 Introduce Objective 5 of the Strategic Plan: **Management Aspects** (Ryan Wulff and/or WGWW member)

Strategic Plan Objective 5: Develop an adaptive management framework for whale watching, based on best available science, which addresses the needs of management and the industry.

14:15 – 15:15 Small Group discussion: operator input on Objective 5 of the Strategic Plan

Break in to small groups of 10+ people. WGWW members to facilitate small group discussions.

[POTENTIAL] Questions for discussion:

- 1) *Of the various types of management methods used internationally, which do you think have worked or could work in your region? What has not worked?*
 - a. *Licensing or permitting schemes to regulate the number, type and size of vessels*
 - b. *Measures to regulate approaches, frequency, length and type of exposure in 1. encounters with wildlife*
 - c. *Closed seasons, ‘no go’ areas, and ‘no approach times’*
 - d. *Guidelines in place of regulations*
 - e. *Enforcement framework to ensure compliance with management provisions*
- 2) *How would you develop and implement training and education tools for operators and their staff?*

- 3) *What methods do you think would work to monitor the effectiveness of management provisions and modify them, as needed, to reflect new information and circumstances?*
- 4) *Other questions or topics raised by participants*

15:15 – 15:45 Plenary discussion on Objective 5

Reports from the small groups, discussion and recommendations

15:45 – 16:15 Coffee Break

Workshop Summary, Recommendations & Next Steps

16:15 – 16:45 Workshop summary & next steps (Ryan Wulff, Chair of WGWW)

Recap of the workshop and any recommendations, plan for developing products and implementing actions related to the 5-Year plan

16:45 – 17:15 Final Thoughts from Operators & Discussion

17:15 – 17:30 Closing Remarks & Details on Tomorrow's Optional Field Training/Whale Watch Tour (Ryan Wulff, Chair of WGWW)

17:30 Adjourn

NOTE: Day 3 was cancelled due to inclement weather.

International Whaling Commission Whale Watch Operators Workshop

Brisbane, Australia, May 24-26, 2013

DAY 3 (Sunday May 26)

DAY 3 (Sunday May 26): Whale Watch Tour *Optional

A special whale watching package tour for Whale Watch Operators Workshop participants has been arranged for Sunday 26 May. The tour will be conducted off the Gold Coast (Surfers Paradise) which is around one hour's drive from Brisbane. The whale watching tour will pick up by bus participants and depart Brisbane hotels (Rydges and Mantra on Queen) around 7.30am and return to Brisbane around 2pm.

Refreshments and lunch will be provided on the boat.

*Participants will be asked to indicate their interest in the whale watch tour on the registration form to be sent separately from the Australia hosts so that booking numbers can be confirmed.

Operator: Whales in Paradise (Gold Coast Whale watching Pty Ltd)

Website: <http://www.whalesinparadise.com.au/>

Itinerary Whale Watch Tour

Depart approx (Brisbane) bus: 7.30am

Boarding approx (Gold Coast): 8.40am

Boat departure whale watching approx: 9.00am

Return wharf approx (Gold Coast): 12.30pm

Return approx (Brisbane) bus: 2.00pm