

**PAME II-2013 Agenda Item 4.6**  
**AMSA Recommendation II(G)**  
**AOR Final Report Recommendation 11**  
**INFORMATIONAL PAPER**  
**International Whaling Committee Workshop on the Impacts of**  
**Increasing Arctic Activities on Cetaceans**

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**BACKGROUND**

AMSA Recommendation II(G) states, in relevant part:

*“That the Arctic states decide to engage with relevant international organizations to further assess the effects on marine mammals due to ship noise, disturbance and strikes in Arctic waters....”*

AOR Final Report Recommendation 11 states:

*“The Arctic Council should increase collaboration with IMO, IWC and NAMMCO for information sharing and cooperation between their respective working groups and sub-groups on cetacean-related issues such as ocean noise and ship strikes and consider Ecosystem-based Management (EBM). Additionally, Arctic states should consider taking more proactive efforts in the IMO, IWC and NAMMCO on these issues such as by contributing to the IWC ship strike database.”*

**SUMMARY**

The USA presents the information in this paper for informational purposes only in support of AMSA Recommendation II(G) and AOR Final Report Recommendation 11.

In 2010, the International Whaling Commission (IWC) endorsed a proposal to hold a workshop to discuss the impacts of increasing activities in the Arctic on cetaceans. In 2012, the IWC Scientific Committee reviewed the proposal and provided several recommendations. Since that time, the USA has been leading efforts to plan this workshop, which is currently planned for early March 2014 in Anchorage, Alaska.

As the retreating ice provides new opportunities for transport and access to resources, interest in the region for shipping, tourism, oil and gas, and other industries continues to grow. This workshop will discuss increasing shipping and oil and gas activities specific to their potential impacts on cetaceans and the ecosystem on which they depend. This workshop will facilitate an open dialogue on these impacts, including: what research has been/is being conducted; what management measures have been/are being implemented;

what knowledge gaps and concerns exist; and what information the IWC can provide to assist managers in preparing for these impacts. The objectives of the workshop are to:

- 1) Identify knowledge gaps and concerns of International Governmental Organizations, National Governments, Environmental Organizations, Native Governments and communities, and industry related to the shipping and oil and gas-related activities;
- 2) Obtain input from International Governmental Organizations, National Governments, Environmental Organizations, Native Governments and communities, and industry on how the IWC should prioritize its future work related to the Arctic (i.e., scientific focus; policy effort; timing; funding) to assist sustainable development in the Arctic that conserves the ecosystem, cetacean populations and native cultural traditions; and
- 3) Discuss how current initiatives of one group/nation could be utilized by the IWC or its members, with the objective of coordinating efforts across international boundaries and increasing international collaboration.

Workshop organizers hope to have the final workshop dates settled soon and will then send out invitations to priority participants/panelists, as early as the end of September or early October. Attendance at the workshop by PAME member government representatives would be welcome. Those interested in attending are encouraged to provide their contact information to Melissa Andersen Garcia.

For more information, and to request an invitation to the workshop, please contact:

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