

RESOLUTION 2018-2

RESOLUTION ON ADVANCING THE COMMISSION'S WORK ON THE ROLE OF CETACEANS IN THE ECOSYSTEM FUNCTIONING

Recalling the IWC's acknowledgement in Resolution 2016-3 of the biological contributions made by cetaceans to ecosystem functioning and their associated economic and social values;

Recalling also the IWC's recognition of the need to integrate the contribution made by live cetaceans and carcasses present in the ocean to marine ecosystem functioning into the decision-making processes of the IWC and other fora;

Recalling further the IWC's decision to increase collaboration and cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations to advance this work;

Noting the Scientific Committee recommendation and plan to conduct an expert workshop to, among other outcomes, review the current state of knowledge on the ecosystem functioning provided by cetaceans and develop a prioritized list of recommendations for scientific research to fill identified knowledge gaps, as requested from the Scientific Committee in Resolution 2016-3;

Noting also that the Conservation Committee has established a Working Group on Cetaceans and their role in Ecosystem Functioning in order to make recommendations on how the Committee could address Resolution 2016-3, including how to review the ecological, management, environmental, social and economic aspects of the contributions of cetaceans;

Aware that the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) adopted a Resolution on the Conservation and Management of Whales and their Habitats in the South Atlantic Region (UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.24.2.6) which requests the CMS Secretariat and the CMS Scientific Council to work with the Scientific and Conservation Committees of the International Whaling Commission to increase understanding of cetaceans' contribution to the functioning of marine ecosystems, including co-hosting a workshop to review the existing data and research and identify opportunities to expand this work.

Now, therefore the Commission:

Commends the Scientific and Conservation Committee for their efforts to increase understanding of the contribution of cetaceans to ecosystem functioning, and encourages them to collaborate whenever possible with CMS and other international organisations, including to identify additional opportunities to jointly advance this work;

Encourages the Scientific and Conservation Committees to seek synergies and advance co-operation and co-ordination regarding their complementary work streams on this issue;

Encourages Contracting Governments to integrate the value of cetaceans' ecological roles into local, regional and global organisations on biodiversity and environment, including climate change and conservation policies;

Requests the Secretariat to convey this resolution to the CMS Secretariat as well as other relevant fora.