

REPORT OF ADVISORY PANEL ON MARINE BIRDS AND MAMMALS



The fifth meeting of the Advisory Panel on *Marine birds and mammals* (MBM-AP) was held from 16:00 – 18:00 hours on October 5, 2005. The Panel Co-Chairman, Dr. William J. Sydeman, called the meeting to order and welcomed the members and observers (*MBM-AP Endnote 1*). The Panel reviewed the terms of reference to orient the new observers. It was reiterated that MBM-AP serves to generate interest in PICES from the marine bird and mammal research communities, and to coordinate multi-disciplinary investigations and symposia within the PICES community. The proposed agenda was approved without additions (*MBM-AP Endnote 2*).

MBM-AP membership (Agenda Item 3)

MBM-AP urges PICES member countries to increase participation in general for scientists to attend PICES Annual Meetings. The PICES community would benefit greatly from this effort.

Dr. Sydeman pointed out that work of MBM-AP has been hindered by the lack of national participation. In fact, only Japanese and U.S. members attended all meetings of the Panel.

MBM-AP encourages Canada to designate a seabird expert to serve on the Panel. Canada has many active marine bird research programs, yet the Canadian seabird position on the Advisory Panel has been vacant for 3 years.

MBM-AP requests China to assign experts on marine birds (*e.g.*, from the Forest Service Administration) and marine mammals (*e.g.*, from the State Oceanic Administration) to the Panel.

MBM-AP would benefit from more Korean (specifically KORDI and NFRDI) involvement. Korea has an expanding interest in marine birds and mammals. The Yellow Sea Large Marine Ecosystem project offers new opportunities.

MBM-AP requests that Korea nominate an expert on seabirds to the Panel. In particular, Dr. “Sunny” Pae may be a suitable candidate for this position.

MBM-AP is concerned with lack of participation by Russian marine bird and mammal scientists. The Panel and PICES would benefit greatly by their active participation.

MBM-AP Topic Session at PICES XIV (Agenda Items 4)

The BIO (MBM-AP) Topic Session (S3) at PICES XIV on “*Factors affecting distribution, foraging ecology, and life histories of top predators in the northwestern Pacific Ocean and its marginal seas*” was convened on October 4, 2005. The summary of the session is included elsewhere in this Annual Report.

Topic Session proposal for PICES XV (Agenda Item 5)

A 1-day BIO (MBM-AP) Topic Session entitled “*Synchrony in responses of marine top predators to large-scale climate variability: Mechanisms of environmental forcing*” is proposed for PICES XV (*MBM-AP Endnote 3*).

PICES website (Agenda Item 6)

It is recognized by MBM-AP that attention should be paid to updating the PICES website with new material. Dr. Rolf Ream is the point of contact between the Panel and the PICES web master.

Cooperation with the International Whaling Commission (Agenda Item 7)

Dr. Hidehiro Kato is the IWC representative to PICES, and *vice versa*. He submitted a report to MBM-AP on IWC-PICES interactions (*MBM-AP Endnote 4*). MBM-AP thanks Dr. Kato for his significant efforts to date.

MBM-AP-2005

MBM-AP Endnote 1

Participation list

Members

William J. Sydeman (U.S.A., Co-Chairman)
Yutaka Watanuki (Japan)

* first AP-MBM meeting attended

Observers

John Bengsten (U.S.A.)*
Edward Gregr (Canada)*
George L. Hunt, Jr. (U.S.A.)
Jaime Jahncke (U.S.A.)*
“Sunny” Pae (Korea)*

MBM Endnote 2

MBM-AP meeting agenda

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Adoption of agenda
3. MBM-AP membership
4. Review of BIO (MBM-AP) Topic Session (S3) at PICES XIV on “*Factors affecting distribution, foraging ecology, and life*

histories of top predators in the northwestern Pacific Ocean and its marginal seas”

5. Topic Session proposal for PICES XV
6. PICES website: MBM-AP contribution
7. Cooperation with IWC

MBM-AP Endnote 3

Proposal for a 1-day BIO/MBM-AP Topic Session at PICES XV on “*Synchrony in responses of marine top predators to large-scale climate variability: Mechanisms of environmental forcing*”

Distribution and abundance, diets, and breeding performance of marine mammals and seabirds reflect local marine environments. A number of studies from the western and eastern North Pacific indicate interannual to interdecadal changes of environmental parameters. In particular, low-frequency climate changes sometimes result in profound effects on marine ecosystems, yet the influence on top predators has not been adequately quantified. In the North Atlantic breeding performance and population dynamics of top predators has been related to changes in the NAO. Papers that examine synchrony in responses of top predators to interannual to interdecadal climate variability in the North Pacific are solicited. Studies describing and testing mechanisms of environmental forcing on top predators, from physics to prey, are of particular interest. It is intended that selected papers (oral and poster)

from this session will be published in a special issue of *Deep Sea Research II*.

Potential collaborating PICES Committees: BIO and POC.

Potential sponsor: Hokkaido University, Center of Excellence (COE).

Recommended convenors: Shoshiro Minobe (Japan), R. Ian Perry (Canada), Rolf Ream (U.S.A.) and Yutaka Watanuki (Japan).

Recommended invited speakers: R. Furness (UK), S. Wanless (UK), R. Crawford (RSA), S. Emslie (U.S.A.), W. Trivelpiece (U.S.A.), I. Boyd (UK).

Travel support is requested for 2 invited speakers from PICES and 2 invited speakers from COE.

MBM-AP Endnote 4**PICES Observer Report on the 57th IWC Scientific Committee meeting**

The 57th Scientific Committee (SC) meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) was held from May 30 to June 10, 2005, at Ulsan, Republic of Korea. A total of 201 participants from 31 countries including 44 invited experts participated in this year's annual meeting, and a total of 5 international organizations (CCAMLR, ACCOBAMS, ECCO, IUCN and PICES) sent their observers. PICES was especially welcomed by the IWC/SC.

There are 7 sub-committees (*Revised management procedure; Bowhead, right and gray whales; In-depth assessment; Southern Hemisphere whales; Small cetaceans; Whale-watching*) and 5 working groups (*Aboriginal whaling management procedure; Stock definition; By catch and other human induced mortality; Environmental concerns; Special permit*) under the Scientific Committee. Every substantial issue has to be discussed by the sub-committee or the working group, and then forwarded to plenary of the Scientific Committee. The Scientific Committee has worked mainly on comprehensive assessments of whale stocks (CA), implementation trials of Revised Management Procedure (RMP) after cessation of commercial whaling, and agreed the scientific base of RMP in 1996.

This year, the Scientific Committee focused especially on review of stock status of Southern Hemisphere humpback whales under the CA, as well as North Atlantic right whales and Western North Pacific gray whales with some concerns of their recent entanglement. There were relatively long discussions on stock structure of Bowhead whales which were harvested by Alaskan Inuits. Also a new Japanese scientific permit program in the Antarctic (JARPA II) was highlighted. The Scientific Committee also continued work on general RMP issues including work towards finalizing the guidelines and requirements for implementing RMP.

Cetacean habitat and environment issues (including conflict fisheries and cetaceans) have been mainly dealt with by the working group on *Environmental concerns*. This year the group focused on the relationship between sea ice and cetaceans, habitat degradation progress on two established programs (POLLUTION 2000+, and Southern Ocean collaborative studies) and SOCER (Status of Cetacean Environment Report).

The next annual meeting will be held at St. Kitts and Nevis in May 2006.

