

RESPONSES TO GWAP-4 RECOMMENDATIONS

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 4TH MEETING OF THE GWAP 2008

Reference	Cross-Reference	GWAP Recommendation & Requests	Responsible Party	Target Completion Date	SEIC Response
ITEM 5: MMO PROGRAMME AND CARCASS DETECTION					
GWAP 4/001	GWAP 4/4 Section 5.2	The Panel requests that SEIC provide clear explanations for <i>Miss Sybil's</i> inshore movements on 6 and 21 September, 1 and 13 October and 2, 3 and 5 November 2007.	SEIC	Aug 2008	Explanations will be provided to the Panel.
GWAP 4/002	GWAP 4/4 Section 5.2	The Panel requests that SEIC continue to document vessel deviations from the navigation corridors towards a GWG feeding area and make this information available in its annual MMO reports	SEIC	Dec 2008	Known vessel deviations from the navigation corridors towards a GWG feeding area are recorded and will be included in annual MMO reports.
GWAP 4/003	GWAP 4/4 Section 5.3	The Panel recommends that SEIC arrange for section 5 of the Pugliares <i>et al.</i> (2007) necropsy manual to be translated into Russian and made available to any company staff and others in the region who are likely to be involved in response to strandings along the Sakhalin coast.	SEIC	July 2008	Translation has been completed and, pending clarification on copyright, will be made available to Russian authorities who may be involved in response to strandings.
GWAP 4/004	GWAP 4/4 Section 5.3	The Panel requests that SEIC report back at the next GWAP meeting on the outcome of its request to Russian authorities for authorisation to collect tissue samples from stranded whales.	SEIC	Dec 2008	SEIC will report back to the Panel on its relevant communications with the Russian authorities.
GWAP 4/005	GWAP 4/4 Section 5.3	The Panel recommends that SEIC obtain three necropsy kits and ensure their availability at strategic points on Sakhalin Island.	SEIC	May 2009	Prior to making a final decision, SEIC would like more information from the GWAP on the contents and costs of such kits.
ITEM 6: MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS					
GWAP 4/006	GWAP 4/4 Section 6.3	The Panel recommends (1) that analyses of the 2006 data fully consider the earlier comments made in GWAP 1/INF.2 and by the Panel (Annex 8).	SEIC	Dec 2008	MVA is currently under development and will take into consideration this recommendation.

WGWAP 4

Reference	Cross-Reference	WGWAP Recommendation & Requests	Responsible Party	Target Completion Date	SEIC Response
WGWAP 4/007	WGWAP 4/4 Section 6.3	The Panel recommends (2) that SEIC engage the assistance of the experts involved in the aforementioned independent review to work in a pro-active collaboration with Gailey and colleagues from the outset (rather than simply in a reviewer capacity), including at the variable-selection and treatment design stage as well as at the analytical modelling stage, to ensure a comprehensive analysis and interpretation of the 2006 data.	SEIC	July 2008	Appropriate reviews will be undertaken.

WGWAP 4

ITEM 7: MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT OF CONTINUOUS NOISE					
WGWAP 4/008	WGWAP 4/4 Section 7.1	The Panel agreed with a proposal from Gailey that a dedicated comparison of scan and count methods as well as the analytical approaches used to calculate distance for data from the two teams would be a valuable contribution to proper integration of the distribution and behaviour data sets. The Panel recommends that such an analysis be provided for its review at WGWAP-5.	SEIC	Dec 2008	SEIC is currently standardizing all distance estimations from all surveys to avoid differences between surveys. A comparison of methodological approaches and observational data between the two shore-based surveys will be presented at WGWAP5.
WGWAP 4/009	WGWAP 4/4 Section 7.1	The Panel noted that the ‘opportunistic’ observations of GWGs by MMOs (particularly near the outer edges of the Piltun feeding area) had been plotted in WGWAP 4/INF.10 but not used in the daily average estimated whale densities for the period from 21 June–24 July 2007. It recommends that such inclusion be attempted following the same principles as discussed under Item 10.2.1 and that the results be made available for Panel review at WGWAP-5.	SEIC	Dec 2008	Methods to include opportunistic data are being assessed in an attempt to include them in density analysis of GWG distributions.
WGWAP 4/010	WGWAP 4/4 Section 7.2	The Panel recommends that (i) the TL experiments be conducted as expeditiously as possible, preferably in a single year.	SEIC		TL experiments will be conducted as expeditiously as possible, but due to logistical constraints are unlikely to be completed within a single year.
WGWAP 4/011	WGWAP 4/4 Section 7.2	The Panel recommends that (ii) the vessels used to deploy and pick up receivers within the feeding areas be the smallest practicable (<i>e.g.</i> rigid-hull inflatables) and be operated slowly and cautiously in order to reduce the risk of disturbance or collisions with whales.	SEIC	July 2008	The acoustic monitoring systems are complex structures whose safe deployment and retrieval requires a larger support vessel, often aided by a small craft. SEIC has always ensured that these vessels are operated with full respect of whale protection measures

WGWAP 4

					including criteria of visibility, speed and avoidance distance.
WGWAP 4/012	WGWAP 4/4 Section 7.3	The Panel recommends that equipment with the following specifications be used: (i) recording stations with analog-to-digital (A/D) converters of ≥ 16 bits, (ii) the real-time acoustic data be transmitted at this bit-depth (<i>i.e.</i> ~ 72 dB dynamic range) in the frequency range of 1 Hz–3 kHz; and (iii) a sampling rate (F_s) of ≥ 20 kHz for the archival buoys. The $F_s \geq 20$ kHz specification applies more to continuous noise from construction and/or platform operations, which can reach 10 kHz (Richardson <i>et al.</i> 1995), although signals from seismic airguns can reach 3 kHz (Madsen <i>et al.</i> 2006).	SEIC	Dec 2008	SEIC and its Russian scientific partners are in the process of developing and rigorously testing a new generation of digital real-time monitoring buoys whose effective data rate specifications are still being finalized. The company has firmly committed to a sampling resolution of 16 bits and a sampling rate ≥ 20 kHz for archival recording to internal hard disk. The data rate for digital telemetry to be used for the 2009 survey perimeter monitoring will be sufficient to provide effective audio monitoring over a frequency range no less than 1Hz – 1kHz which encompasses over 99% of the source acoustic energy of the airgun array.

WGWAP 4

ITEM 10: 4-D SEISMIC SURVEY					
WGWAP 4/013	WGWAP 4/4 Section 10.2	In discussion, the Panel noted that for the sake of transparency, there would be value in having an independent observer nominated by the Panel present on the seismic vessel during the survey. While recognising that there may be logistical difficulties, the Panel recommends that SEIC investigate this possibility and report back to the Panel by WGWAP-5.	SEIC	Dec 2008	SEIC will investigate the possibility of having an independent observer nominated by the Panel present during the survey.
WGWAP 4/014	WGWAP 4/4 Section 10.2.3	The Panel agreed that there was merit in the idea that a small group, including Racca, Nowacek and Vedenev, would jointly consider the result of the calibration exercise during the 'window'. It was further agreed that any details of how this might be undertaken in practice could be discussed at WGWAP-5 and the Panel requested that those individuals provide a discussion document for consideration at that meeting.	SEIC/ WGWAP	Dec 2008	SEIC is open to discussion with the WGWAP on how a process of independent examination of the results of the initial sound source verification (SSV) could be undertaken in practice. In the interest of timely and effective completion of the SSV, the acquisition and processing of the data will under any circumstances be performed by SEIC appointed scientific personnel according to established and openly documented best practices.
WGWAP 4/015	WGWAP 4/4 Section 10.2.4	The Panel recommends that Constantin Avilov be asked to perform further work according to the rationale and specifications detailed in the report.	IUCN/ The Russian team	September 2008	
ITEM 11: OIL SPILL PREVENTION, PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE					
WGWAP 4/016	WGWAP 4/4 Section 11.2	The Panel recommends that it be provided with the information on aromatic hydrocarbons detailed in the report (Section 11.2).	SEIC	August 2008	SEIC will review the information and provide details to the Panel.

WGWAP 4

WGWAP 4/017	WGWAP 4/4 Section 11.2	The Panel recommends that updated information on aromatic content, emulsification properties, wave tank or at-sea experiments, in-situ burning and biodegradability, as well as updates on any relevant ongoing studies and their expected completion times, be provided for review at WGWAP-5.	SEIC	August 2008	SEIC will review and provide available information to the Panel.
WGWAP 4/018	WGWAP 4/4 Section 11.2	The Panel recommends that SEIC provide for WGWAP-5 an update on: modelling of spills in the Aniva Bay area (including by vessels approaching from the east) in relation to (a) the WGW feeding areas and (b) plausible WGW migration routes, and (c) the potential for increased risks associated with any predicted changes in ship traffic patterns.	SEIC	April 2009	Scope and cost estimate for additional modelling will be developed by SEIC and agreed with Panel prior to proceeding.
WGWAP 4/019	WGWAP 4/4 Section 11.2	The Panel therefore recommends that formal arrangements to use other vessels and provide relevant training for their crews be put in place by SEIC.	SEIC	Dec 2008	Formal arrangements and training will be further developed.
WGWAP 4/020	WGWAP 4/4 Section 11.2	The Panel requested that further information on exercises be provided prior to WGWAP-5, including a list of those remaining in 2008 and planned for 2009 along with brief written reports on the completed exercises identifying lessons learned.	SEIC	Dec 2008	Offshore exercises carried out between WGWAP 4 & 5 will be reported.
WGWAP 4/021	WGWAP 4/4 Section 11.2	Revised versions of the plans had been provided for comment recently to the advisers for potential lenders (PCCI) and the Panel recommends that these be provided to the Panel for its review and comment.	SEIC	August 2008	Revised versions will be provided to WGWAP.
WGWAP 4/022	WGWAP 4/4 Section 11.2	SEIC reported that waste-disposal issues were being negotiated with Sakhalin Oblast. The proposed site at Smyrnik has been established; it is designed to accommodate 50,000m ³ of oily waste. The site is located between Yuzhno and Nogliki. A second site in the southern part of the island is currently under negotiation with Sakhalin Oblast. The Panel welcomed these developments and requests that regular updates be provided at future Panel meetings.	SEIC		SEIC is managing waste through onshore facilities and this will not impact WGW.
ITEM 12: FUTURE SEIC PLANS FOR WGW MONITORING AND RESEARCH					
WGWAP 4/023	WGWAP 4/4 Section 12.1	The Panel recommends that more programme resources be devoted to the development and completion of integrated multi-year analyses.	SEIC	Dec 2009	This is part of the Scientific Committee. A full scope and costing needs to be developed to assess this recommendation.

WGWAP 4

WGWAP 4/024	WGWAP 4/4 Section 12.1	The Panel recommends that Larsen, in cooperation with the Panel and SEIC, co-ordinates the development of a proposal as to how such a review can be undertaken, to be presented at WGWAP-5.	SEIC		All technical details are available in the final reports, and SEIC will further contribute where resources allow.
WGWAP 4/025	WGWAP 4/4 Section 12.2	The Panel therefore recommends that SEIC provide support (<i>e.g.</i> financial, logistical), through a well-established program such as the JIP, for one or more CEEs involving airgun noise and eastern gray whales in a feeding area.	SEIC		SEIC has for several years contributed substantial financial resources to JIP, but has no authority to direct the allocation of JIP funds.