

REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE ON INSPECTION AND OBSERVATION

The Committee on Inspection and Observation met at Hotel Odinsve in Reykjavik 23 April 2009. Present were Ole Heinrich, Chair and Helga Jakobsen (Greenland), Egil Ole Øen and Hild Ynnesdal (Norway), Jústines Olsen (Faroe Islands), Christina Lockyer and Charlotte Winsnes from the Secretariat. Kristjan Loftsson (Iceland) did not attend the meeting,

1. OPENING PROCEDURE

The Chair of the Committee, Ole Heinrich, welcomed the Committee members to the meeting. The draft agenda was adopted and Charlotte Winsnes acted as rapporteur.

2. THE 2009 SEASON

The Secretariat reported on the ongoing implementation process for the 2009 season. The Committee strongly emphasised the need for member countries to adhere to deadlines as defined in the guidelines of the International Observation Scheme and to give stronger emphasis to the implementation of the Observer Scheme.

3 REVISION OF THE TEXT OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE INSPECTION AND OBSERVATION SCHEME

At its last meeting in September 2008 Council requested the Committee to finalise its revision of the provisions of the Joint NAMMCO Control Scheme to ensure that the provisions are fully up-to-date.

Before 2002 only land-based observations were carried out. However the tendency during the recent years has been to have observers out at sea. Council had previously tasked the Committee to investigate what kinds of safety measures, if any, was needed when operating out at sea. The Committee had looked into safety issues and requirements in member countries with respect to scientists at fieldwork at sea and observers and inspectors related to fishing activities. These investigations made it clear that there is a distinct difference between an observer and a crewmember. The observer is more akin to a passenger on a boat and hence he/she must have information/knowledge on how to take care of themselves in an emergency situation i.e. where the survival suits are, how to get dressed, how they work, where to evacuate, emergency exits, life boats, etc. Although it may be the responsibility of the captain of a vessel to ensure that this kind of information is given to the observer, the observer is never the less required to make sure that he/she receives the necessary information. An amendment to the text of the provisions will therefore be made that clearly states that for the observer information on safety related issues is mandatory and that the observer must, if needed, actively request this information.

Furthermore the introduction of the newly developed automated monitoring system for whale hunting in Norway must be reflected in the Provisions.

The Committee went through the text of the Provisions incorporating the above and also requested the Secretariat to review Section B with respect to the overall structuring of the various paragraphs. The revised draft of the Provisions is appended to this report. The finalised text of the Provisions should be distributed to Council well in advance of the next Council meeting.

4. EXPERIENCES WITH USING AUTOMATED MONITORING OF WHALE HUNTING IN NORWAY

In 2007 Council had asked the Committee to provide a report on experiences in using automated monitoring in whale hunting in Norway. However the Committee chose to postpone this request one year in anticipation of an evaluation that Norway had planned after the 2008 season.

Norway has finalised its evaluation of the system and Ynnesdal will provide a summary of this evaluation that will be sent to the Secretariat for distribution to the Committee. Based on the summary report, the Committee will compile a report to be presented to Council at its next meeting in September 2009. Ynnesdal informed the Committee that the main conclusion in the Norwegian evaluation is that the system is a success; it collects all the prescribed data and functions according to the intentions.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Ole Heinrich (Greenland) and Jústines Olsen (Faroe Islands) were both re-elected for the period 2009 and 2010.

6. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

The final report of the meeting was approved by correspondence on 12 June 2009.