

**NAMMCO**



**COMMITTEE ON INSPECTION AND OBSERVATION**

**REPORT**

**21 FEBRUARY 2017**

@ North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission

Please cite this report as:  
Report of the NAMMCO Committee on Inspection and Observation 21 February 2017

The Committee on Inspection and Observation (CIO) held a telephone meeting 21 February 2017 from 15:30 to 17:00 hrs. Online were: Ulla Svarrer Wang, Chair (Faroe Islands), Amalie Jessen (Greenland), Guðni Magnus Eriksson (Iceland), Kathrine Ryeng (Norway) and Charlotte Winsnes from the NAMMCO Secretariat.

## **1. OPENING PROCEDURE**

The Chair, Ulla S Wang, welcomed the Committee members to the meeting. The draft agenda was adopted and the list of documents reviewed – appendix 1.

## **2. THE 2016 SEASON**

Presented under this agenda item were documents NAMMCO/CIO-February/2016/2 containing the report from the Secretariat of the implementation of the NAMMCO International Observation Scheme for 2016 and NAMMCO/CIO-February/2017/3 containing the reports from the NAMMCO observers active in 2016.

Minke whaling in Norway had been the focus of the observation scheme in 2016. The total hunting season starts 1 April with varying ending dates. In 2015 it closed 28 September and in 2016 the closing date was 7 September, with most the boats being active in the beginning of the season April - June. The whaling fleet in Norway can be divided into three main categories based on the length of the vessels.

The 2016 season was scheduled with three observers preferably observing on all vessel categories picked at random. Total maximum coverage would be 10 weeks. Due to various factors only two observers were active. They covered the period from 8 – 31 May and 18 April – 13 May respectively. Both observers followed one hunting vessel each during their entire period. During the total observation period 20 whale hunts were observed of which 18 whales were landed and two were struck and lost. Both struck and lost whales were hit in the optimal target area and were considered dead on impact. In both instances the line broke so that the whales sank and could not be retrieved.

The total number of active vessels was 16 in the 2016 hunting season in Norway, and the catch including struck and lost was 591 minke whales. The NAMMCO observation scheme in the 2016 season therefore had a vessel coverage of 12,5 % and the observation of hunted whales was 3,4% of the catch.

The observers carried out the observations in accordance with the provisions of the Scheme. No violations were reported, and reports have been submitted to the Secretariat.

The Committee noted the reports and reiterated its recommendation to include as much as possible information on effort in the reporting of the implementation of the observation, so that the coverage could be assessed.

### **3. THE 2017 SEASON**

Presented under this agenda item was document NAMMCO/CIO-February/2017/4 containing the scope of observation activities of the NAMMCO International Observation Scheme for 2017.

The suggested scope for observation activities in 2017 is whaling in Iceland contracting two observers. The Committee had previously advised that plans for coming seasons preferably should give information on geographical area, planned effort compared to the total fleet/hunt when applicable and a more detailed budget. Minke and fin whaling in Iceland represents a very transparent and relatively small activity with one fin whale operator and 2 – 3 minke whale vessels, making the implementation of the scheme less complicated as compared to other member countries.

Eriksson informed that Iceland planned to complete the collection of TTD data in 2017.

The Committee noted that it had not been presented with the proposal for scope and range as recommended prior to presenting it to Council. The Secretary reassured the Committee that in the future they would be consulted to give their input and advice.

### **4. UPDATE ON NATIONAL MONITORING DATA**

The Faroe Islands reiterated the information submitted last year that they do not have national inspectors to monitor whaling. However, the way the pilot whale hunt is regulated by law ensures the control and monitoring of the pilot whale drive hunts through the district administrator (“Sysselman”) and the whaling foremen leading each hunt.

Greenland informed that the wildlife officers as part of the regular national control have followed and controlled large whale hunts, beluga and narwhale hunts, seal and walrus hunts. The controls have been carried out randomly at sea. On land the control consists of checking hunting permits and products when coming to the harbour and later when the hunter is selling the products. No infractions were reported for 2016.

Norway informed that monitoring is carried out by the Electronic trip Recorder (Blue Box). In addition, inspectors from the Directorate of Fisheries are conducting periodic and random checks of hunting activities. No inspectors have been active on the whaling vessels in 2016.

20 licenses were issued for the 2016 season, of which 16 vessels participated. The hunting period was from 1 April to 7 September. No infringements were reported.

The sealing activities are 100 % controlled and monitored because it is mandatory to have inspectors on all vessels. As previous years, the inspector was an experienced veterinarian, who also carried out quality control of the meat on behalf of the Food Security Authorities. Only one vessel participated in the hunt in the West Ice in 2016. No infringements were reported.

Iceland informed that there had been 7 random inspections on board the minke whale boats during the season. 46 minke whales were caught and no infringements reported. In 2016 there was no fin whale hunt.

## **5. FOLLOW UP FROM LAST MEETING**

### **Provisions of the Joint NAMMCO Control Scheme**

Preferably the provisions should be available in all NAMMCO languages and members are encouraged to translate the Provisions into their languages. The Secretariat informed that the provisions of the Joint NAMMCO Control Scheme has been translated into Norwegian and Greenlandic. The various translations will be put on the website as they become available.

### **Competence requirement for national inspectors**

With reference to Section B, article 4.2 of the Provisions of Joint NAMMCO Control Scheme the general rule is that an observer shall have at least the same level of professional competence as that required of inspectors in the country where the observations are to take place. The Committee had recommended that *information on competence requirements for inspectors must be circulated to all members as part of the nomination process*. Duties of national inspectors vary between member countries due to differences in the activities which they control and it is essential that the qualification requirements are known to all member countries so that they are able to nominate competent people.

The Secretariat informed that it had received the requested information from Iceland, Norway and Greenland. The Faroe Islands do not have national inspectors to monitor pilot whale drive hunts, and therefore no information on competence requirements for whaling inspectors is available.

## **6. NEXT MEETING**

The Committee agreed to schedule the next meeting for the fall 2017 in order to comment on the 2018 scope and range of the activities. The exact date will be confirmed later.

## **7. REPORT OF THE MEETING**

The report was approved by correspondence on 24 March 2017.

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### **AGENDA**

1. Opening procedure
  - 1.1 Introductory remarks
  - 1.2 Adoption of agenda and review of documents
2. The 2016 season
3. The 2017 season
4. Update on national monitoring data
5. Next meeting
6. Any other business