

Report of the Fourth Meeting of the Management Committee
Nuuk, Greenland 22 February 1995

1. Chairman's opening remarks

The Chairman of the Management Committee, Einar Lemche, welcomed members to the meeting. He also noted that it had been decided that all observers admitted to the Fifth Meeting of the Council had been invited to attend the present meeting of the Management Committee, and also welcomed their participation.

2. Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda, as contained in Appendix 1, was adopted.

3. Appointment of rapporteur

The Secretary was appointed as rapporteur.

4. Matters arising from the Scientific Committee / Proposals for conservation and management

Items 4 and 5 on the Agenda were dealt with together by the Management Committee

4.1 Impacts of marine mammals on the marine ecosystem

The Management Committee discussed the necessity of the multi-species aspect of management. It was noted that an answer to the request for advice on these issues was not immediately forthcoming from the Scientific Committee.

In the absence of detailed advice allowing assessment of the interspecific (multi-species) effects of changes in stock levels of different components of the ecosystem, the Management Committee agreed that it would be wise not to change the balance between these components significantly.

In order to monitor progress in this field, the Management Committee asked the Scientific Committee to produce annually a table with all available information on stock levels and trends in stock levels for marine mammals in the North Atlantic (see under Research Recommendations, 6.4 below).

4.2 Development of Management Procedures

The Management Committee referred to the Scientific Committee's suggestion in its most recent report for a general discussion of management objectives at Council level. This suggestion was a result of the Scientific Committee's own deliberations on the task it had been set by Council to further develop management procedures. Discussions in the Scientific Committee had addressed outlines of management objectives received from individual member countries. The Scientific Committee concluded that no further work could be carried

out in this area until Council members identified clearly their management objectives on a species/case specific basis.

The Management Committee noted that at its last meeting in Tromsø (February 1994), the Council had requested the Scientific Committee to further develop RMP-like procedures. It also noted the conclusions of the Scientific Committee that it was not considered appropriate to develop a generic approach to assessments and development of advice, but that this was more appropriately dealt with on a case-by-case basis. In the case of the 1.2 bottlenose whales stranded annually in the Faroes, for example, a management procedure for generating advice on such a catch would not be necessary. It was noted that the NAMMCO Agreement provides for the establishment of more than one Management Committee, and that these would presumably identify the most appropriate management approach for the particular stocks and/or species with which they were concerned.

The Management Committee also noted that it may in some cases be difficult to provide a detailed request to the Scientific Committee when there is little available information on the stock/species of interest. A step-by-step approach would in such a case be best, whereby the Scientific Committee would first be asked to generate general advice on the status of the relevant stock/species, which would then provide a basis for formulating more precise requests in relation to management objectives.

The observer from the Inuit Circumpolar Conference asked for clarification of the definition of management in the NAMMCO context, and whether this recognised that management of human behaviour in relation to marine mammals was the real focus. The Chairman noted that NAMMCO could indeed take a lead in formulating a broader definition of management that could also be applied to other forms of human impacts on marine mammals as well as directed catches for human consumption.

4.3 Long-finned pilot whales

The Management Committee noted that work was proceeding in the ICES Pilot Whale Study Group which was dealing with NAMMCO's request for advice. The next meeting of the Study Group would be in November 1995 in Cambridge, UK, the report of which would likely provide the Scientific Committee with the necessary basis to respond to the Council's request on this species.

4.4 Northern bottlenose whale

The Management Committee discussed the advice of the Scientific Committee on the status of the northern bottlenose whale and noted that this was the first conclusive analysis on which management of the northern bottlenose whale could be based.

The Management Committee accepted that the population trajectories indicated that the traditional coastal drive hunt in the Faroe Islands did not have any noticeable effect on the stock and that removals of fewer than 300 whales a year were not likely to lead to a decline in the stock.

A Faroese proposal to request the Scientific Committee to calculate total allowable catches of the northern bottlenose stock was supported by Greenland and Iceland. It was, however,

decided not to forward this request for the time being, but that it could be reconsidered by the Management Committee at the next meeting.

4.5 *Killer whale*

The Management Committee noted that further research was still under way on this species, and that no comprehensive advice from the Scientific Committee could be offered until the results of this research were available.

In response to a question from the Chairman, Iceland, Greenland and Norway reported that at the present time, despite receiving a number of requests, no licences were issued for the live-capture of killer whales for marine display purposes.

4.6 *Harp and hooded seals*

The Management Committee noted that the Joint ICES/NAFO Working Group on Harp and Hooded Seals would be meeting again in Dartmouth in June 1995, and that no further advice could be offered by the Scientific Committee until the report from the Working Group was available for discussion.

4.7 *Atlantic walrus*

The Management Committee examined the advice of the Scientific Committee on Atlantic Walrus and noted the apparent decline which the Scientific Committee identified in respect to "functional" stocks of walrus of Central West Greenland and Baffin Bay.

While recognizing the over all priority of further work to clarify and confirm the delineation and abundance of walrus stocks in the North Atlantic area, the Management Committee recommends that Greenland take appropriate steps to arrest the decline of walrus along its west coast.

Taking into account the views of the Scientific Committee that the Baffin Bay walrus stock is jointly shared with Canada and that the West Greenland stock might be shared, the Management Committee encourages Canada to consider working cooperatively with Greenland to assist in the achievement of these objectives.

6. Research recommendations

The Management Committee made the following recommendations for research:

6.1 *Ringed seal*

The Management Committee requests the Scientific Committee to advise on stock identity for management purposes and to assess abundance in each stock area, long-term effects on stocks by present removals in each stock area, effects of recent environmental changes (ie. disturbance, pollution) and changes in the food supply, and interactions with other marine living resources.

6.2 *Grey seal*

The Management Committee requests the Scientific Committee to review and assess abundance and stock levels of grey seals in the North Atlantic, with an emphasis on their role in the marine ecosystem in general, and their significance as a source of nematodal infestations in fish in particular.

6.3 *NASS-95*

The Management Committee looks forward to the forthcoming abundance estimates which will be obtained from the North Atlantic 1995 NASS surveys, and calls upon the Scientific Committee to review results in the light of recent assessments of the North Atlantic whale stocks.

6.4 *Multi-species aspects*

The Management Committee requests the Scientific Committee to monitor stock levels of all marine mammals in the North Atlantic and present annually a table on stock levels and trends in stock levels to the Management Committee.

7. Report of the Working Group on Inspection and Observation

The Chairman of the Working Group on Inspection and Observation, Halvard Johansen, presented the report to the Management Committee.

The Management Committee noted the common elements identified by the Working Group in its discussions of developing a common inspection scheme for coastal minke whaling. It was agreed that the following elements could be applied in all national inspection schemes, where resources allow:

- regular control of equipment
- direct reporting of position/status of whaling operations
- landing at specially designated landing stations
- checking use of exploding grenades
- checking number of shots fired
- licensing of whaling vessels

It was noted that such elements of an inspection scheme could also apply to coastal whaling for other species besides minke whale.

The Management Committee agreed to ask the Working Group to continue its work on the formulation of a standard checklist for inspectors.

The Management Committee also agreed to ask the Working Group to consider the details of a reciprocal observer scheme between NAMMCO member countries and to further develop these.

8. Adoption of Report

The Report was adopted on 23 February 1995.

