2.2
REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE FOR SEALS AND WALRUS

26 February 2014, Oslo, Norway

1. CHAIRPERSON'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair, Hild Ynnesdal, Norway, opened the meeting and welcomed all participants (Address Section 5.3).

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda was adopted noting that agenda item 9. Trade Issues in the draft agenda would be agenda item 5. and that items 6. to 9. would be discussed in a joint session with the Management Committee for Cetaceans. The report from the joint session will be part of the report from the Management Committee for Cetaceans. The meeting documents were reviewed. Agenda and list of documents are contained in Appendices 1 and 2 respectively.

3. APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEUR

The Secretariat was appointed as rapporteur.

4. CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR SEAL STOCKS

The Chair drew attention to the following documents:

- NAMMCO/22/MC/3 summarising past proposals for conservation and management and responses to these
- NAMMCO/22/MC/4 summarising past requests to the Scientific Committee and responses.
- NAMMCO/22/SMC/5 listing recommendations to member countries in 2012.

New recommendations to member countries on scientific research arising and approved by the Management Committee for Seals and Walrus are contained in Appendix 3.

The vice-chair of the Scientific Committee, Tore Haug, presented the information on seal and walrus stocks from the Scientific Committee report (NAMMCO/22/5) under each species.

4.1 Harp Seals

Status of specific recommendation to member countries agreed on in 2012

In 2012 Norway and Greenland were recommended to limit the catches for the common stock between Norway and Russia for the White Sea/Barents Sea to 15 827 animals and for the Greenland Sea to 16 737 animals.

Greenland reported that harp seals are only hunted near the coast and that traditionally Norway has been granted permit to hunt off shore (EEZ).

Norway reported that in 2012 there had been 2 sealing vessels off the coast of East Greenland and the catch numbered 3 723 harp seals and in 2013 4 vessels had caught 15 939 animals.

Russia informed the meeting that there had been no catches in 2013.

Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee

R-2.1.4 - NAMMCO/12-2003 (standing): to regularly update the stock status of North Atlantic harp and hooded seals as new information becomes available.
R-2.1.6 – NAMMCO/14-2005 (ongoing): to evaluate how a projected decrease in the total population of Northwest Atlantic harp seals might affect the proportion of animals summering in Greenland.
R-2.1.10 – NAMMCO/17-2008 (standing): to provide advice on Total Allowable Catches for the management of harp seals and the establishment of a quota system for the common stocks between Norway

and the Russian Federation, leaving full freedom to the Committee to decide on the best methods to determine this parameter based on an ecosystem approach.
R-2.1.11 - NAMMCO/18-2009 (pending): to evaluate how a projected increase in the total population of Northwest Atlantic harp seals might affect the proportion of animals summering in Greenland.

Advice from the Scientific Committee
The Scientific Committee examined the information provided by the ICES Working Group on Harp and Hooded Seals (WGHARP) which met in August 2013. The meeting focused on estimation of stock abundance and reviewed different catch level scenarios.

For the White Sea/Barents Sea stock a population model based on data and information used in previous assessments with harvest data updated to 2013, estimated a total harp seal stock abundance of 1 419 800 animals in 2013. Different catch levels had been investigated and the Scientific Committee considered the estimated equilibrium catches (17,400 1+ animals) to be the preferred option. It was noted that this option is slightly higher than the previous level given in 2012 and that this was probably the result of very low catches in 2012 and 2013. Data from the new survey conducted in 2013 was not ready for the WGHARP meeting and these will be dealt with at the next WGHARP meeting scheduled for November 2014.

For the Greenland Sea stock there is a new pup population estimate of 89 590 animals which is slightly, but not significantly lower than estimates from 2002 and 2007.

The stock is considered data rich (no data used in modelling are older than 5 years) and all model runs indicate a substantial increase in abundance from the 1970's with the 2013 abundance estimate of 627 410. Current catch level is predicted to give a 21% population increase over the next 10 years. Equilibrium catch level is 14 600 1+ animal. Catch level projecting a reduction is estimated to 21 270 1+ animals in 2014 and subsequent years. It was noted that any TAC should be subject to a monitoring scheme especially if the TAC is set at a level projecting a decline in population

For the Northwest Atlantic stock new pup population estimates (data from 2012 survey) from the Gulf of St Lawrence show a decline of nearly 50% compared to the 2008 estimates. However the survey data from the whole of the Northwest Atlantic was not ready and will be dealt with at the planned 2014 WGHARP meeting. Increasingly poor ice conditions and the year 2012 among the worst ever recorded, has serious implications for the persistence of breeding harp seals in the southern Gulf of St Lawrence.

The Scientific Committee advised that new requests to ICES from individual countries would be needed in order to finish assessments of White Sea and Northwest Atlantic harp seals. Preferably such requests should come from Russia and Greenland or Canada (Northwest Atlantic), respectively.

Discussion and Conclusion
The Management Committee took note of the report from the Scientific Committee. It was noted that the results from the surveys in 2013 had not been ready in time for the last WGHARP meeting, and as a result assessments of both the White Sea/Barents Sea and the Northwest Atlantic stocks was not finalised. In order to finalise these assessments Greenland agreed to send a new request to ICES on the Northwest Atlantic stock.

Russia informed the meeting that it was their intention to request ICES to assess the White Sea/Barents Sea.

4.2 Hooded Seals

Status of specific recommendation to member countries agreed on in 2012
In 2012 the Management Committee for Seals and Walruses reiterated the recommendation that catches of hooded seals to be taken from the Greenland Sea should be zero, except for local catches in East Greenland.

Both Norway and Greenland reported that the advice had been followed. In Greenland only near coast catches in East Greenland and no off shore catches have taken place and Norway had only taken a small number of animals for scientific reasons.

Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee

R-2.1.4 - NAMMCO/12-2003 (standing): to regularly update the stock status of North Atlantic harp and hooded seals as new information becomes available.
R-2.1.9 – NAMMCO/16-2007 (ongoing): to investigate possible reasons for the apparent decline of the Greenland Sea stock of hooded seals; assess the status of the stock on basis of the results from the survey in 2007.

Advice from the Scientific Committee
The Greenland Sea stock, protected since 2007, is considered data poor. However a harp seal survey conducted in 2012 also obtained enough data to estimate the pup production of hooded seals to 13 655 pups which are slightly lower than from 2005 and 2007 surveys. The stock has experienced a decline in abundance from 1946 and is now considered to be at a level below 30% of the 1946-level. Recent model runs indicate a current population size of approximately 83 000 and a predicted 7% decrease of the 1+ population over the next 10 years. In line with the Precautionary harvest strategy developed by WGHARP the Scientific Committee recommends no current catches from the population.

Discussion and conclusion
Greenland informed the meeting that they hunt approximately 200 animals annually.

The Management Committee took note of the report from the Scientific Committee and recommends a commercial catch level of zero for this stock, only allowing limited research catches.

Greenland noted with reference to both harp and hooded seals that they had previously sent a request to ICES to look into the redistribution of animals throughout the year. ICES responded at that time that there was not enough data available to answer the question.

The Management Committee recommended that Council ask the Secretariat to review its cooperation with ICES in light of the Scientific Committee work on harp and hooded seals. It further underlined the importance in getting answers to request R 2.1.9.

4.3 Ringed Seals

Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee
R-2.3.1- NAMMCO/5-1995 (standing): to advise on stock identity of ringed seals 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 (*i.e.* disturbance, pollution) and changes in the food supply, and interactions with other marine living resources.
R-2.3.2 - NAMMCO/7-1997 (standing): to advice on what scientific studies need to be completed to evaluate the effects of changed levels of removals of ringed seals in West and East Greenland.

Advice from the Scientific Committee
Currently the existing information on stock structure and size is not sufficient to give any answers to the requests. It may be fruitful to form a Working Group in the next few years (2015 or later) to look into movements versus where catches are occurring in relation to stock structure. It might also be important to assess this species in light of climate change and changing ice conditions. The Scientific Committee suggests to look into the results from the Arctic Council meeting (2013) on ring seals before making a final decision regarding a WG.

Discussion and conclusions
Greenland informed the meeting that the annual catches had declined over the last 10 years from around 90 000 animals to around 60 000 in 2012.

The Management Committee took note of the report from the Scientific Committee and endorsed the idea of a Working Group in 2015 or later when enough information is available.

4.4 Grey Seals

Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee
R-2.4.2 - NAMMCO/11-2002 (standing): provide a new assessment of grey seal stocks throughout the North Atlantic.

Advice from the Scientific Committee

Norway
An age-structured population dynamics model had been developed to assess the Norwegian grey seal population. Model runs indicated an increase in the abundance of the total Norwegian grey seal population during the last 30 years, suggesting a total of 8,740 animals in 2011. A total catch of 707 grey seals would maintain the population size at the 2011 level. Norway has decided not to use the model based TAC, but instead continue to use the more conservative 5% of current abundance until a new pup production estimate becomes available. There are plans for a new complete survey in 2013-2015 and Norway and Russia plan a joint Southern Barents Sea survey in 2014 or later.

Iceland
Aerial survey estimates of pup production in Iceland, have indicated a downward trend in the period 1980 – 2004. A new survey in 2012 confirmed a status-quo in the low pup-production reached in the year 2002. The population size of the Icelandic grey seal is therefore staying at the low level reached in 2002 (about 4,200 animals) and just above the minimum population management objective of the Icelandic government, 4,100 1+ animals.

Faroe Islands
There is still no abundance estimate available. Preliminary data for 2012 indicate that the total removal is in excess of one hundred animals. Satellite tracking has shown that grey seal movements in the Faroes are very local, although there is documentation of seals migrating from UK waters to the Faroes.

There was no new information from Greenland.

The Scientific Committee recommends that the Working Group on Grey and Harbour Seals meet in 2014/2015 to finalise requests 2.4.2 and 2.5.2. The WG should assess the status of all populations, particularly using new abundance estimate data that are available from Iceland and Norway. The meeting should also address by-catch issues (grey seals) in Norway, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands, and a re-evaluation of the Norwegian management plans (implemented in 2011) for grey and harbour seals. It is recommended to include participation from Canada, UK and the Baltic countries.

Discussion and conclusions
The Faroe Islands informed the meeting that they have initiated work to get fish farmers to report their catches. The reporting is still not satisfactory but it is expected to provide reliable removal numbers by 2014. By-catch in the Faroes is insignificant.

Iceland reported that reduced gill net cod fishery and tighter limits on operating days in the lumpsucker net fishery should have led to decreased by-catches. There has been no progress in by-catch reporting.

Greenland has no catches of grey seals as this species has been protected from hunting since 2010, as this is a new species in this area.

Norway informed the meeting that 64 grey seals were taken in 2012 and that the preliminary catches in 2013 are 177.

The Management Committee took note of the report from the Scientific Committee and endorsed that the Working Group on Grey and Harbour Seals meet in 2014/2015 in order to finalise requests 2.4.2 and 2.5.2.

4.5 Harbour Seals

Status of specific recommendation to member countries agreed on in 2012
In 2012 the Management Committee for Seals and Walruses reiterated its recommendation to obtain updated information on abundance and struck and lost figures. In the case of struck and lost data it recommended that a struck and lost factor be developed.

Norway informed the meeting that the latest abundance estimates are very close to the target level of the Norwegian Management plan. With respect to a struck and lost factor there is not data available to develop such a factor.

Greenland informed the meeting that harbour seals have been protected since 2010. There may be some by catch or mix up with ring seals and there are no data reported on struck and lost.

Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee
R-2.5.2 - NAMMCO/16-2007 modified **NAMMCO/19-2010** (pending): To conduct a formal assessment of the status of harbour seals for all areas as soon as feasible.

Advice from the Scientific Committee

Aerial surveys in 2011 - 2013 yielded a new minimum point estimate of 7 081 for the entire Norwegian coast and this is implemented in the 2014 management following the plan reviewed by the Scientific Committee in 2011.

Aerial surveys in Svalbard gave corrected total estimates of 1 888 in 2009 and 1 742 and 1 812 in 2010 (two surveys). The low population size, limited spatial distribution and reduced genetic diversity make this population vulnerable to chance events, such as disease epidemics.

The Scientific Committee recommends that the Working Group on Grey and Harbour Seals meet in 2014/2015 to assess the status of all populations, particularly using new abundance estimate data that are available from Iceland and Norway, see agenda item 4.4 Grey seals.

Conclusion
The Management Committee took note of the report from the Scientific Committee and endorsed that the Working Group on Grey and Harbour Seals meet in 2014/2015 in order to finalise requests 2.4.2 and 2.5.2.

4.6 Bearded seal

Status of past proposals for Conservation and Management
Since 2009 the Management Committee has **recommended** that the status of this species be assessed.

Status of specific recommendation to member countries agreed on in 2012
In 2012 the Management Committee for Seals and Walruses reiterated its recommendation that efforts be renewed towards gathering information on biology, abundance and stock status with the view to an assessment.

The Chair noted that there is no request for advice from the Scientific Committee on this species.

Update from the Scientific Committee
The Scientific Committee communicated that some limited satellite tracking of bearded seals is on-going and continuing in Svalbard and Greenland.

Conclusion
Norway informed the meeting that there is no hunt on this species and that there are plans for a research project by the Norwegian Polar Institute given that funding is available.

Greenland informed the meeting that approximately 1 300 animals are caught annual and that there has been a declining trend.

The Management Committee took note of the update from the Scientific Committee.

4.7 Walrus

Status of past proposals for Conservation and Management
In 2010 the Management Committee agreed that a common management regime should be established between Greenland and Canada on shared stocks of walruses (NAMMCO 19).

Greenland informed the meeting that no initiative has been taken towards Canada to cooperate on management of walrus because Greenland wants to manage this species in NAMMCO. Under the JCNB cooperation exchange of information takes place.

Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee

R2.6.5 – NAMMCO/17-2008: provide assessment of all walrus stocks utilised in Greenland.
R-2.6.3 - NAMMCO/15-2006 (ongoing): provide advice on the effects of human disturbance, including fishing and shipping activities, in particular scallop fishing, on the distribution, behaviour and conservation status of walrus in West Greenland.
R-2.6.6 – NAMMCO/21-2012): investigate the possibility to include a carry-over for quotas in order to include this possibility in the next hearing for the new quota block period.

Advice from the Scientific Committee

The Working Group on walrus met in November 2013 to update assessment and to provide management advice for the three stocks of walrus that occur in Greenland.

The Baffin Bay stock is estimated to 1 430 animals with a sustainable harvest of no more than 93 animals. There has been a decline in the population from 1960s to 2007 while decreased catches subsequently have allowed the population to increase.

The West Greenland / Baffin Island stock is estimated to 2 630 animals with a sustainable harvest of no more than 100 animals. There has been a decline in population from 4000 animals in 1960 to 2 360 in 2007, while decreased catches subsequently have allowed the population to increase.

The East Greenland stock is estimated to 1 400 animals with sustainable harvest levels of no more than 20 animals.

The WG's assessment included a low and a high catch history that includes struck and lost. This results in an average loss rate about 15% for Baffin Bay and West Greenland/Baffin Island, and about 11% for East Greenland. Complete statistics on total removal levels is critical and the Scientific Committee recommended that Greenland obtains reliable reports of all animals struck and lost.

The Scientific Committee discussed R-2.6.6 and concluded that there is no biological argument against carry-over of unused quotas. A problem arises if carry-overs accumulate over time and/or across assessments, it was deemed difficult to give more specific advice without a more specific request from the Management Committee.

The Scientific Committee recommended that Greenland undertake the following scientific research:

- That new estimates of sex and age structure of the catch for West Greenland are obtained. The sex determination that is reported by the hunters should be validated using genetics.
- That the fraction of the catches and abundances in Canada that belong to the West Greenland/Baffin Island population are clarified.
- That complete catch statistics from Canada are collated.
- That reliable reports of struck and lost are obtained for the entire range of the stocks in Greenland and Canada.
- That regular abundance estimates (5-10 years) from Baffin Bay, West Greenland, and the southeast coast of Baffin Island are obtained.

Other information

In a walrus survey of Svalbard completed in 2012 an increase in both total numbers and females with calves compared with the 2006 survey is apparent. The study on disturbance at haulouts using cameras continues. Funding has been acquired for a 2014 tagging project that aims to investigate how individuals are responding to changes in ice conditions. The recent estimate is 2 600 animals, and the struck structure is unresolved.

Greenland plans to conduct an aerial survey of walruses on the ice edge in the North Water in April 2014. There is a new study of walrus in the Pechora Sea related to oil and gas exploration and extraction.

Iceland noted that there have been a higher than usual number of visits from walruses in 2013.

Greenland informed the meeting that they have follow the quota recommendations from NAMMCO. In 2013 a political decision was made to increase the quota with 10 animals in the Qaanaaq area. The preliminary numbers for 2013 are in Nordlandet: quota 62, catch 65 and western Greenland 60 and 47 respectively. Struck and lost will be a focus area in the future and discussions are underway with the Greenland Nature Institute on how to proceed with this.

Greenland informed the meeting that there will be no accumulation over years of carry-over quotas. Only unused quota from the previous year will be allowed to transfer.

Conclusion

The Management Committee took note of the report from the Scientific Committee. The Management Committee furthermore noted there were recommendations for further research addressed to Greenland. It also noted that Greenland had taken steps to obtain reports of all animals struck and lost, and endorsed this effort.

The Management Committee also noted that the Scientific Committee had given their advice on request R 2.6.6 and that this request was now finalised.

5. TRADE ISSUES AND THE EU BAN OF IMPORT OF SEAL PRODUCTS

The dispute concerns regulations of the European Union (EU) that generally prohibit the importing and marketing of seal products. The EU Seal Regime provides for various exceptions to the prohibition if certain conditions are met, including seal products derived from hunts conducted by Inuit or indigenous communities (IC exception) and hunts conducted for marine resource management purposes (MRM exception).

Products derived from the Greenland Inuit hunt fulfils the requirements set up in the IC exception, and it is expected this will also be the case for the Canadian Inuit hunt. The Canadian and Norwegian hunts are not granted market access to the EU under the current seal regime.

Norway and Canada asked the WTO to establish a panel in the seal case on the 21st of April 2011. The first and second hearing of the panel took place in Geneva in February and April 2013.

The panel concluded that the IC exception and the MRM exception were inconsistent with the EUs obligations under the GATT agreement. The panel did not find the regulation to be inconsistent with art. 2.2 of the TBT agreement as the regulation, to a certain extent, fulfil the objective of addressing EU public moral concerns on seal welfare and that no other alternatives were demonstrated to make an equivalent or greater contribution.

24 January 2014 Norway and Canada notified the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) of the WTO of its decision to appeal the panel's findings, and 29 January 2014 the EU notified the DSB of its decision to appeal other parts of the panel's findings. The hearing will take place 17 - 19 March, and it is expected that the appellate body's report will be published in April/May 2014.

Norway reported that it believes that the EU Seal Regulation is incompatible with the EU's international obligations under the WTO Agreement. The sealing industry in Norway is of limited economic value, but this is a matter of principle concerning market access for renewable marine resources. The aim of taking the matter to the WTO is to obtain an objective and impartial review of the regulation. The DSB concluded that the EUs seal regulation violates WTO rules concerning non-discrimination. The panel did not conclude that the regulation is more trade restrictive than necessary. Based on this, Norway filed a notice of appeal regarding the panel's report. Norway believes the dispute can be resolved through the introduction of a labeling scheme for seal products, enabling the consumers to decide whether or not to purchase the product. Norway also finds that the panel has not sufficient considered that the seal stocks hunted are properly managed and not threatened. Furthermore, the Norwegian seal hunt is strictly controlled and regulated in terms of animal welfare requirements.

Greenland underlined that this issue of trade barriers goes back to the 1970s and has since resurfaced and been discussed on various arenas and bodies. Seals and marine mammal hunting are often divided into two major categories – subsistence versus commercial. Greenland has always been opposed to this notion as it undermines the idea of people's right to utilize their natural resources. Greenland's special situation, not being part of EU but at the same time being part of the Kingdom of Denmark, poses certain restrictions and limitation for Greenland to be an active part in the negotiations. Greenland has voluntarily given comments to submissions on factual input to Norway, Canada and the EU. The parties have chosen not to use the corrections from Greenland with the argument that the corrections would diminish their arguments.

The representative from KNAPK gave an intervention informing on the ongoing campaign *Inuit Sila* the organization has staged in response to the EU regulation. He underlined that the regulation is a clear violation of the WTO's overall objectives, and the result is that the market for sealskins is destroyed and this is seriously threatening the identity and existence of Greenland's 60 settlements.

Iceland reported that they strongly support Canada and Norway, and that they had submitted an appeal as a third party to the WTO Panel's Report in the long-standing dispute. In Iceland's third-party submission it subscribes to the legal and factual arguments put forward both by Canada and Norway in their appeal.

Canada gave an update on their position and stated that once a ruling is finalized, if a measure is found to be inconsistent with trade obligations, the country must comply with ruling or face retaliatory measures.

The Canadian arguments for appeal are that the decision by the Panel is based on misinformation and did not fully take into account all of the evidence, e.g. the distinction between seal and other hunts are based on insufficient evidence. Canada remains concerned about the use of the public morality rationale as a justification for maintaining the EU ban as it could have broader implications for other resource-based and agricultural sectors. Lastly Canada noted that the EU seal regime restricts trade more than necessary.

The Faroes expressed their sympathy and respect of the Greenlandic situation and underlined that recognition or authorization of hunting practices in general should not be restricted to any predefined ethnicity or culture.

Denmark reported that they fully support Greenland and that it has been decided not to go into the dispute. Denmark is awaiting the final outcome before deciding on the next steps.

6. TO 9. JOINT SESSION[5]

10. ELECTIONS

The present chair and vice-chair were re-elected for a new 2 year term (2014 – 2016).

Chair: Hild Ynnesdal (Norway)
Vice-Chair: Iceland

[5] Agenda points 6. to 9. are in a joint session with the Management Committee for Cetaceans in Section 2.1

Appendix 1

AGENDA

1. **CHAIRMAN'S OPENING REMARKS**

2. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

3. **APPOINTMENT OF RAPPORTEUR**

4. **CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR SEAL STOCKS**

4.1 Harp Seals

White / Barents seas
Greenland Sea
Northwest Atlantic

- Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee
- Proposals for conservation and management
- Updates

4.2 Hooded Seals

Greenland Sea
Northwest Atlantic

- Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee
- Proposals for conservation and management
- Updates

4.3 Ringed Seals

Greenland
Canada
Faroe Islands

- Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee
- Proposals for conservation and management
- Updates

4.4 Grey Seals

Greenland
Norway
Faroe Islands
Iceland

- Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee
- Proposals for conservation and management
- Updates

4.5 Harbour Seals

Greenland
Norway
Iceland

- Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee
- Proposals for conservation and management
- Updates

4.6 Bearded seal

Greenland
Norway

- Proposals for conservation and management
- Updates

4.7 Walrus

Greenland

- Requests by Council for advice from the Scientific Committee
- Proposals for conservation and management
- Updates

5. TRADE ISSUES AND THE EU BAN OF IMPORT OF SEALSKIN

6. PROCEDURES FOR DECISION-MAKING ON CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT MEASURES

7. ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT

8. USER KNOWLEDGE IN MANAGEMENT DECISION-MAKING

9. RELATED MANAGEMENT ISSUES

9.1 Marine mammal - fisheries interactions
9.2 Environmental questions
9.3 By-catch data and monitoring
9.4 Other topics

10. ELECTIONS

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Items 6. – 9. incl. were discussed in a joint session with the Management Committee for Cetaceans.

Appendix 2

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Document no	Title	Agenda item
NAMMCO/20/SMC/1	List of Documents	
NAMMCO/20/SMC/2	Draft Agenda	2.
NAMMCO/20/MC/3	**Status of Past Proposals for Conservation and Management**	4., 6., 7. and 8.
NAMMCO/20/MC/4	Summary of Requests by NAMMCO Council to the Scientific Committee, and Responses by the Scientific Committee	4.
NAMMCO/20/SMC/5	Recommendations to member countries 2012	4. and 8.
NAMMCO/20/5 and ANNEX 2	Report of the Twentieth Meeting of the Scientific Committee	4., 5., 6., and 8.

Appendix 3

RECOMMENDATIONS TO MEMBER COUNTRIES 2014

Harp seals

Greenland
Greenland agreed to send a new request to ICES in order to finalise the assessment on the Northwest Atlantic stock because the results from the last surveys in 2013 had not been ready, and therefore not been dealt with at the last WGHARP meeting in August 2013.

Hooded seals

Norway, Greenland
The Greenland Sea Stock: recommends a commercial catch level of zero only allowing limited research catches.

Walrus

Greenland
Greenland was recommended to undertake the following scientific research:

- That new estimates of sex and age structure of the catch for West Greenland are obtained. The sex determination that is reported by the hunters should be validated using genetics.
- That the fraction of the catches and abundances in Canada that belong to the West Greenland/Baffin Island population are clarified.
- That complete catch statistics from Canada are collated.
- That reliable reports of struck and lost are obtained for the entire range of the stocks in Greenland and Canada.
- That regular abundance estimates (5-10 years) from Baffin Bay, West Greenland, and the southeast coast of Baffin Island are obtained.