

Cetacean abundance and distribution in the North Atlantic

28 & 29 October 2017

Halifax World Trade and Convention Centre

Objectives

1. To generate a set of North Atlantic wide abundance estimates for 2015/16 for those cetacean species for which sufficient data are available.

Species to include: minke whale, fin whale, humpback whale, pilot whale, sperm whale, white-beaked dolphin, white-sided dolphin, common dolphin, bottlenose dolphin, harbour porpoise, beaked/bottlenose whales? others?

Estimates will be design-based, corrected for g(0) (if possible and if appropriate), and have appropriate measures of precision.

Outcomes: a complete set of estimates or, more likely, an incomplete set of estimates and an action plan to achieve a complete set in timely fashion.

2. To discuss modelling the spatial and temporal distribution and habitat use of cetaceans in the North Atlantic using data from 2015/16.

Discussions to include: the most important and available variables to inform modelling; the merits or otherwise of modelling the entire northern North Atlantic; the challenges of combining multiple datasets from different projects/platforms/methodologies; logistics of making this happen (who, how funded, when, etc); other?

Outcomes: an action plan for moving forward.

Schedule: Day 1

1. Introduction (welcome, thanks, schedule, housekeeping, etc)

2. Presentations

- 2.1 Surveys and existing abundance estimates, focusing on 2015-2016

Daniel Pike: Overview of North Atlantic Sightings Surveys

Nils Olsen: Joint Norwegian/Russian ecosystem surveys in the Barents Sea

Gísli Víkingsson & Bjarni Mikkelsen: Iceland/Faroe Islands

Róka Hansen: Greenland

Jack Lawson: Canada

Debi Falka: USA

Phil Hammond: SCANS-II

Emer Rogan: Irish OBSERVE

- 2.2 Modelling distribution and habitat use – previous work

Gísli Víkingsson: Changes in large whale distributions in the central North Atlantic

Nadya Ramirez Martinez: Preliminary modelling of NLS/NASS data pre-2015

Ariette Gilles: Modelling harbour porpoise distribution in the North Sea

Jason Roberts: Modelling in the western Atlantic

Lisa Ballance: Cetacean-Habitat Relationships: From basic science to conservation and management

- 2.3 Oceanographic features influencing animal distribution

Igor Ballon: Fronts and Whales

Håkon Valdimarsson – variability in the Northern North Atlantic