

NAMMCO



**COMMITTEE ON INSPECTION AND OBSERVATION
REPORT**

16 FEBRUARY 2018

@ North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission

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The Committee on Inspection and Observation (CIO) met 16 February 2018 from 09:00 to 15:30 hrs. Present were: Ulla Svarrer Wang, Chair (Faroe Islands), Nette Levermann (Greenland), Guðni Magnús Eiríksson (Iceland), Hild Ynnesdal (Norway). From the Secretariat: Geneviève Desportes, Strahinja Ivanovic (intern) and Charlotte Winsnes.

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. REVIEW OF THE OBSERVATION SCHEME AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

Document [NAMMCO/CIO-2018-02/02](#) was presented by Strahinja Ivanovic. The document is an internal review of the Observation Scheme undertaken by the Secretariat.

The NAMMCO International Observation Scheme was established in 1998. The first and only review of *the implementation* of the Observation Scheme was done in 2005 – eight years after the introduction of the scheme. The *provisions of the Observation Scheme* have been revised several times with the last revision in 2009. Revisions to the provisions have mainly been related to the introduction of the electronic monitoring system in Norway and safety issues related to out at sea observations.

Given that 12 years has passed since the first review, the Secretariat proposed the CIO to carry out a review of the implementation of the Scheme and provided them with a review report. The report presents a review of the implementation process, the results obtained and recommend possible improvements.

The implementation of the Scheme is reviewed in light of criteria established by international instruments relevant to NAMMCO as well as guidelines, standards and practices from other regional fisheries bodies. Relevant sources for defining these criteria were:

- The Fish Stocks Agreement
- The FAO Code of conduct and FAO guidelines for responsible fisheries
- RFMO measures pertaining observer programmes and
- Chatham House Recommended Best Practices for Regional Fisheries Organisations.

It was emphasized that these international instruments were only used as a tool and not as comparable entities.

An important parameter for assessing observer programmes is the level of coverage or, for NAMMCO member countries, the percentage of hunting effort observed. The report identified and used three major coverage rates: fleet observation rate for on board observations, catching event observation rate and kill observation rate.

The review was based on reviewing the observer mandatory and voluntary reports and the annual reports of the Secretariat to the CIO.

The report reviewed the different phases of the implementation process:

- Nomination and selection of observers
- Role of the observer
- Identification of the scope of annual observations
- Instructions and information given to observers
- Reporting

It provided information on

- The types of hunts in NAMMCO member countries
- The yearly scopes of the Scheme
- Number of times the different hunts had been observed 1998-2017
- Reported infringements

The evaluation looked at

- Coverage of member countries hunting activities
- Coverage rate and representativeness of activities
- On-land based observations versus on-board observations
- Observers competence and safety
- Cost effectiveness of the Observation Scheme

The review report proposed several recommendations both at a general level, and more specific levels. The overall recommendation is the need to define the objective(s) of the Observation Scheme, as until now only the purpose is defined, to procure better guidance to defining the appropriate coverage level of the Scheme.

The Committee reviewed the report in detail and made changes to text which is reflected in appendix 2 (an internal working document and not attached). Other comments made were:

- A need to define what is meant by “decisions made by the Commission” see Provisions text.
- How to evaluate cost-efficiency
- Is increased coverage an aim?
- Is the aim of the Scheme to produce infraction rates?

It was noted that the different acronyms used to describe different coverage rates had to be more clearly explained.

The Committee noted that hunting activities and fishing activities are not comparable as these are totally different activities.

The Committee complimented the Secretariat for having undertaken this evaluation. The Committee saw the report as constituting a valuable input and starting point for a review of the Observation Scheme. It was agreed that the document would have status as an internal working document and as such would not be presented to Council at this year’s meeting.

The Committee noted that it might be interesting to compare reports of the NAMMCO observer and that of the national observer for specific hunts and season, to see whether they differ and thus indicating some possible issues. It was agreed that the Secretariat would make a table and circulate it to the members for their input.

The Committee also agreed to supply information on what represents the peak time of the hunting seasons for the use of the Secretariat for planning purposes.

The Committee agreed to recommend to Council to continue the review of the Observation Scheme with the aim of providing recommendations regarding the Observation Scheme at the next Council meeting. To this end committee members agreed to initiate an internal process as an input to the Committees deliberations of the Observation Scheme. It was noted that such a review need to both look at the text of the Provisions and the implementation of the Observation Scheme.

3. THE 2017 SEASON

Documents [NAMMCO/CIO-2018-02/03](#) containing the Secretariat’s report from the 2017 season and [NAMMCO/CIO-2018-02/04](#) containing the Observer’s report were presented under this agenda item.

The scope of the observation scheme for 2017 was minke and fin whale hunting in Iceland, planned for two observers. However, as no fin whale hunting would be conducted in 2017, only one observer was contracted to observe minke whale hunting. The observer was contracted for the period 26 June – 18 July with 26 June and 18 July representing travel dates, resulting in 21 days of observation.

The observer joined two whaling vessels – one during 3 trips and one during 1 trip. Several chases were observed and 2 minke whales were taken, both on the same boat, and no whales were struck and lost.

In Iceland two whaling vessels were active during the whole season and a total of 17 whales were taken. No struck and lost were reported. The total hunting season was from 2 June to 2 December with the last animal caught 24 July. The catch per vessel was 10 and 7 animals, respective.

During the observation period on boat no 1, 2 animals were taken out of a total of 10 for the whole season. The observer also observed 8 chases and shots being fired without hitting the whales. On boat no 2, the observer observed 1 chase and one shot being fired without hitting the whale.

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

Prior to the observation period, the observer had been provided with the Provisions of the Joint NAMMCO Control Scheme for the Hunting of Marine Mammals and had received an overview of the national laws and regulations pertaining to hunting of marine mammals in Iceland by the representative from the Fisheries Directorate, his contact person when in Iceland. The observer was informed of the list of control for national inspections and all necessary information on active hunting boats and provided with the necessary contact details.

The Committee noted the reports and recommended that information from Observer diaries be used for improvement of hunt, if possible.

4. THE 2018 SEASON

The Committee was asked to identify the scope of the 2018 season based on discussions under agenda item 2 and also keeping in mind that the Finance and Administration Committee had allocated NOK 70 000 to cover the observation activities in 2018. The FAC decision was based on 2018 being an extraordinary budget year resulting in general major cuts in all NAMMCO activities.

The Committee noted the FAC decision and agreed that the only scope which could give meaningful observation with such a low budget was to send one observer to the Faroe Islands to observe the pilot whale hunt, and to ask him to specifically observe and report on as many individual kills as possible. This proposition will be forwarded to Council.

5. UPDATE ON NATIONAL MONITORING DATA

Faroe Islands

FO reiterated 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

GL 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 2017. TTD data was collected by the hunters for the large whales, narwhal and beluga as part of the mandatory national reporting requirements.

Norway

NO informed that monitoring is carried out by the Electronic Trip Recorder (Blue Box). Inspectors from the Directorate of Fisheries also conduct periodic and random checks of hunting activities, but no inspectors were placed on whaling vessels in 2017.

15 licenses were issued for the 2017 season, of which 11 vessels participated. The hunting period was from 1 April to 15 September. No infringements were reported, and no TTD sampling took place.

Sealing activities are 100 % controlled and monitored as it is mandatory to have inspectors on all vessels. Inspectors are experienced veterinarians and they also carry 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 2017. No infringements were reported, and no TTD sampling were carried out.

It is mandatory for all sealers and inspector(s) to attend a course arranged by the Directorate of Fisheries prior to the hunt, explaining the rules related to carrying out the hunt.

Iceland

IS informed that there had been 1 random inspection on board the minke whale boats during the season. 17 minke whales were caught by the 2 active hunting boats and no infringements reported. TTD measurements had been sampled from June 29 - July 28 with a total of 6 animals measured. Iceland has carried out TTD sampling during three seasons now covering a total of 19 animals. A report is underway and aimed at being presented to the NAMMCO 26 Council meeting.

In 2017, there was no fin whale hunt.

6. SWOT

Document NAMMCO/CHM/CIO/BYCELS-2918-02 SWOT was presented under this agenda item.

As an input to a strategy and capacity building discussion going on in NAMMCO, and as a tool for future evaluation, the Chair of NAMMCO, Amalie Jessen, has initiated a SWOT analysis to see where NAMMCO and the different committees stand in terms of strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

FAC had discussed the status of the SWOTs and agreed that it should be done and kept for internal use only. In that way responses would be more in depth and frank. Timing wise it is optimal to do the SWOTS now prior to the Performance Review (PR) report, so that a comparison can be done with what the PR comes up with.

The meeting reviewed the SWOT, see appendix 3. It was underlined that particular elements in the SWOTS do not necessarily represent the view of all members.

7. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would be in the period 26 – 28 November 2018 with final date to be coordinated with the meetings of CHM and BYCELS.

8. REPORT OF THE MEETING

The report was approved by correspondence on 1 March 2018.

Appendix 1

Agenda

1. Opening procedure
 - 1.1 Introductory remarks
 - 1.2 Adoption of agenda and review of documents
2. Review of the Observation Scheme and its implementation
3. The 2017 season
4. The 2018 season
5. Update on national monitoring data
6. SWOTS
7. Next meeting
8. Any other business

List of Documents

NAMMCO/CIO-2018-02-01 Annotated agenda
NAMMCO/CIO-2018-02/02 Review of the Observation Scheme
NAMMCO/CIO-2018-02/03 Secretariat's report from the 2017 season.
NAMMCO/CIO-2018-02/04 Observer report
NAMMCO/CHM/CIO/BYCELS-2018-02 SWOT